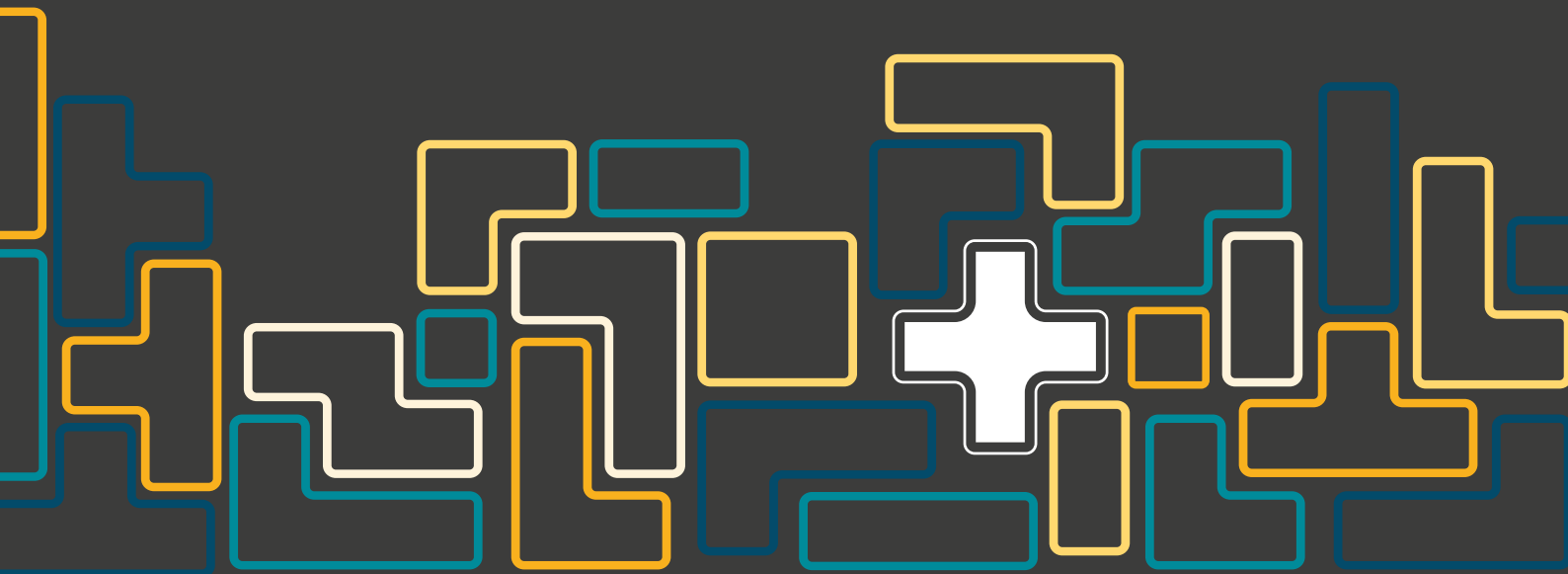
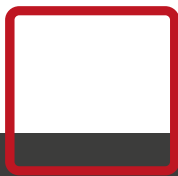


Marco Dugato Carlotta Carbone

# Threats and vulnerabilities of places of worship







UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore

Marco Dugato   Carlotta Carbone

# Threats and vulnerabilities of places of worship



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Raising Awareness for the protection of places of  
worship by promoting interfaith dialogue on the  
use of advanced technologies

This project is co-funded by the  
European Union's Internal  
Security Fund - G.A. 101100431



# Threats and vulnerabilities of places of worship

## Authors:

Marco Dugato | marco.dugato@unicatt.it

Carlotta Carbone

**Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano**

**Transcrime – Joint Research Centre on Innovation and Crime**

Milan office (headquarters):

Largo Gemelli 1 - 20123 Milan (Italy)

Phone: +39 02 7234 3715/3716; Fax: +39 02 7234 3721

www.transcrime.it

**2024 | ISBN: 9788899719463**

**© 2024 Transcrime – Joint Research Centre on Innovation and Crime**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form any form, whether electronically, mechanically or via photocopying, recording or any other method, without the prior written permission of the authors.

**Suggested citation:** Dugato M. and Carbone C. (2024), Threats and vulnerabilities of places of worship, Milan: Transcrime – Joint Research Centre on Innovation and Crime

**Graphic project:** Sara Faccin

This report is a result of the project SHRINES co-funded by the European Union's Internal Security Fund – G.A. 101100431.

Whilst this report is funded by the European Union, the views and opinions expressed herein are strictly those of the author(s) and thus do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Internal Security Fund (ISF). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority accept any responsibility for how the information contained in this report is subsequently used.

This work is the result of a collaboration between the two authors, Marco Dugato and Carlotta Carbone, who jointly contributed towards both the collection and analysis of the data. Carlotta Carbone wrote the first draft of "Part 1," whilst Marco Dugato and Carlotta Carbone co-wrote the first draft of "Part 2". Marco Dugato subsequently edited, integrated and reviewed the report in its entirety and wrote the "Introduction." The authors wish to thank Benjamin O'Hara and all members of the SHRINES' consortium for their invaluable support and feedback in the drafting of the report.

# Table of contents

<b>6</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Part 1 Threats to places of worship</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Terrorist attacks</b>
		<i>Targeted attacks using firearms or melee weapons</i>
		<i>Explosive or arson attacks</i>
		<i>Emerging terrorist threats</i>
<b>14</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Hate crimes and hate speech</b>
		<i>Violent crimes against people</i>
		<i>Vandalism and non-violent crimes</i>
<b>15</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Violent behaviours not motivated by hate</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Property crimes</b>
		<i>Thefts of artwork or religious and historical artefacts</i>
		<i>Thefts of metals</i>
		<i>Other types of theft</i>
		<i>Vandalism</i>
		<i>Squatting</i>
<b>17</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>Structural failures, damage, and improper use</b>
		<i>Structural damage or construction failures</i>
		<i>Malfunctions</i>
		<i>Damage due to improper use or negligence</i>

- 18 \_\_\_ **Public health emergencies**
- 19 \_\_\_ **Crowd risks**
- 19 \_\_\_ **Environmental hazards and natural disasters**
  - Earthquakes and landslides*
  - Flooding and storms*
  - Extreme heat and natural fires*
- 20 \_\_\_ **Part 2 Vulnerabilities of places of worship (and recommendations for how to mitigate them)**
- 21 \_\_\_ **Accessibility and location**
  - Indoor accessibility*
  - Outdoor accessibility*
  - Unclear division between places of worship and neighbouring spaces*
- 22 \_\_\_ **Festivities, religious ceremonies, and tourism**
- 23 \_\_\_ **Symbolic value**
- 23 \_\_\_ **Availability of valuable items**
- 24 \_\_\_ **Poor security management and weak safety protocols**
  - Absent or inefficient security deterrent*
  - Absent or insufficient security procedures*
  - Absent or insufficient health and safety procedures*
  - Absent or insufficient crowd management procedures*
  - Absent or insufficient maintenance procedures*
- 26 \_\_\_ **Lack of awareness, coordination issues and financial constraints**
- 27 \_\_\_ **Geopolitical, socio-economic, and criminal context**
  - Geopolitical context*
  - Socio-economic and criminal context*
- 30 \_\_\_ **References**

# Key Messages

## Key Messages

This report provides a detailed analysis of the **threats to and vulnerabilities of places of worship**. **Eight categories of threats**, ranging from crime and terrorism to natural hazards, and **seven categories of vulnerabilities are identified**. This classification underscores the complexity of the task of ensuring safety and security within these sacred spaces. The report concludes with a series of **recommendations** on how to enhance the level of protection for places of worship.

**8** categories of  
**threats**

**7** categories of  
**vulnerabilities**

### Threats to places of worship

Two macro-categories of threats are considered: crime and antisocial behaviours, and incidents and natural hazards. Crime and antisocial behaviours include terrorist attacks, hate crimes, violent acts and crimes against property. Incidents and natural hazards include structural failures, damage, improper use, public health emergencies, crowd movement risks and natural disasters.

#### Crime and antisocial behaviours



**Terrorist attacks** against places of worship are violent acts that are motivated by religious, political ethnic/national factors. Terrorist threats are increasingly fragmented, insofar as attacks are often carried out by individuals or small groups, who are often radicalised online.



**Hate crimes** are regular offences that are driven by racism or xenophobia. They target individuals or properties, such as places of worship, based on perceived sense of "otherness". **Hate speech** can incite violence or hatred against groups without necessarily culminating in actual physical violence, which, in turn, contributes towards both increased societal polarisation and the targeting of marginalised groups.



**Violent behaviours that are not motivated by hate** within places of worship often derive from personal disputes or mental health issues, which potentially escalate during crowded events.



**Property crimes** against places of worship are primarily driven by economic incentive or incivility, and result in both economic and cultural heritage loss. Thefts and robberies ordinarily target personal items, valuable objects, historical artefacts, or certain metals. Vandalism and desecration are in some instances motivated by thrill-seeking or rebellion, whilst squatting involves the unauthorised occupation of property for either shelter or communal activities. Criminals can be either opportunistic individuals or belong to organised groups.

#### Incidents and natural hazards



**Structural failures, damages and improper use** include structural damage or construction failures, technical malfunctioning of critical systems and facilities, and either the improper use of items or negligence, such as, for example, careless handling of candles and relics or erroneous restoration efforts. These specific issues are the consequence of unintentional human actions, often due to inadequate or wholly absent management, and can cause damage or harm to both buildings and people.



**Public** health emergencies within places of worship raise concerns over the potential spread of diseases, contamination of food, water or air and exposure to extreme temperatures.



The concentration of large numbers of people both in and around places of worship underscores the need for careful management of **crowd movement and incidents** stemming from panic spreading amongst worshippers or visitors.



**Environmental hazards and natural disasters**, including earthquakes, fires, floods, extreme temperatures, storms, and landslides, pose significant risks to places of worship, insofar as they have the potential to damage buildings, endanger lives and destroy historical artefacts.

# Vulnerabilities of places of worship

Several categories of vulnerabilities make places of worship either more likely to experience these aforementioned threats or increase their potential negative impact.



## Accessibility and location

The presence of multiple entry points, lack of restricted areas, use of places of worship as multifunctional spaces, poorly monitored exteriors and the absence of barriers all serve to increase the vulnerability of places of worship to theft, vandalism and attacks.



## Festivities, religious ceremonies, and tourism

The presence of large crowds during religious ceremonies and peak tourist seasons heightens the security risk of terrorist attacks, opportunistic thefts, and crowd incidents.



## Symbolic value

The religious, historical, cultural, and social significance of places of worship makes them more likely to be targeted by terrorist attacks and hate crimes, especially on dates of symbolic importance.



## Availability of valuable items

The presence of valuable items within places of worship, including, amongst other things, the personal belongings of worshippers, objects or materials that are inherent to the place, and historical artefacts, increases their vulnerability towards theft.



## Poor security management and weak safety protocols

The lack of security countermeasures and management procedures, or the inadequate implementation of these protocols, can encourage potential perpetrators or result in ineffective responses to threats.



## Lack of awareness, coordination issues and financial constraints

A low level of awareness towards potential threats, coordination challenges amongst different stakeholders, and financial constraints all serve to hinder both proactive risk mitigation efforts and the implementation of necessary security measures and protocols.



## Geopolitical, socio-economic, and criminal context

Contextual factors such as geopolitical tensions, socioeconomic hardship and crime hotspots can increase the risk of violent and property crimes, particularly when formal and informal controls are limited.

## Recommendations

Specific actions and precautions can help to enhance the level of security within places of worship by addressing these aforementioned vulnerabilities.

- **Implement access control measures** such as locks, alarms, CCTV, restricted zones, as well as key management policies in order to both prevent unauthorised entry and safeguard sensitive areas.
- **Install perimeter fencing or barriers and ensure adequate outdoor lighting** for effective security monitoring and deterring criminal activities.
- Use signage and announcements to both **communicate expected behaviours and demarcate sacred spaces**, thus cultivating a respectful environment within the premises.
- **Intensify security measures during religious events and peak tourist seasons** in order to both mitigate threats and ensure the safety of all congregants.
- **Create and maintain partnerships with local authorities, community leaders, and other religious organisations** in order to develop tailored security strategies and promote dialogue.
- **Keep an updated inventory of valuable items** to allow for both the effective tracking and potential recovery of valuables in the event of them being stolen.
- **Advise against bringing valuable items** to places of worship, and **secure delicate or precious objects** in order to deter theft or other incidents.
- **Utilise landscaping features** to serve as both physical deterrents to unauthorised vehicle entry and protection against attacks.
- **Employ visible security signage** to promote the perception of a secure environment and discourage potential criminal intentions.
- **Establish and regularly update roles** for staff and volunteers during incidents, in order to ensure that adaptive security protocols are responsive to evolving threats and operational changes.
- **Update and promote adherence to health and cleaning protocols** in order to ensure conformity with current guidelines and prevent infectious diseases.
- **Implement and regularly assess crowd management protocols** for places of worship, and continuously evaluate emergency procedures to identify areas for improvement. During **large events**, specifically outline roles for staff and volunteers and cooperate with local authorities.
- **Adopt maintenance protocols**, including structural inspections, upkeep of essential systems, and cultural heritage care, with the support of advanced technologies for structural risk detection and monitoring environmental conditions.
- **Implement training and awareness initiatives** to educate staff and worshippers about security risks.
- **Collaborate with local authorities and communities** in order to bolster security initiatives and address financial constraints.
- **Enhance security measures during critical global or local circumstances** that can heighten the risk of terrorist attacks or hate crimes against places of worship.
- **Support community programmes addressing poverty and social issues** in the areas surrounding places of worship.
- **Collaborate with local groups** to help vulnerable populations and enhance the sense of cohesion within the surrounding community.

# Introduction

**Ensuring security in places of worship is challenging.** On the one hand, places of worship are frequent targets of terrorist attacks or hate crimes due to their symbolic significance or historical relevance. On the other hand, both religious buildings and their attendees face a **wide range of other safety and security issues**, ranging from property crimes to natural hazards. These risks are further amplified by specific nature and characteristics of places of worship. For example, most of these sites are easily accessible and designed to be open and multifunctional, functioning not merely as sacred places, but also as centres for cultural, educational, and other community activities. This means that they attract diverse groups of people, including worshippers, tourists, and workers. Furthermore, many of these places are historical buildings that were simply not constructed with contemporary safety and security requirements in mind.

However, this aforementioned complexity is often overlooked, both by managers of places of worship and public authorities, which, in turn, increases the risk people being harmed, religious communities being disrupted, or economic losses being incurred.

Based on these considerations, this report aims to provide an **extensive classification of the different types of threats and vulnerabilities** that can potentially endanger places of worship.

Specifically, the report considers **eight different categories of threats** faced by places of worship, which encompass both crime and antisocial behaviours, as well as incidents and natural hazards. Moreover, it categorises and discusses **seven common vulnerabilities** characterising religious places (Figure 1). Whilst these classifications are by no means exhaustive, they nevertheless provide a realistic overview of the complexity of managing places of worship. Finally, the report puts forward some **recommendations to enhance security and safety** in these places.

The information included in this report was collected from various sources, including: an analysis of extant literature on this topic, such as academic articles and reports by both private and public institutions; findings from previous EU-funded projects or initiatives about the protection of places of worship; discussions, input and contributions from participants in SHRINEs workshops; conversations with experts on crime and security issues; and a systematic analysis of case studies retrieved from news and press releases.

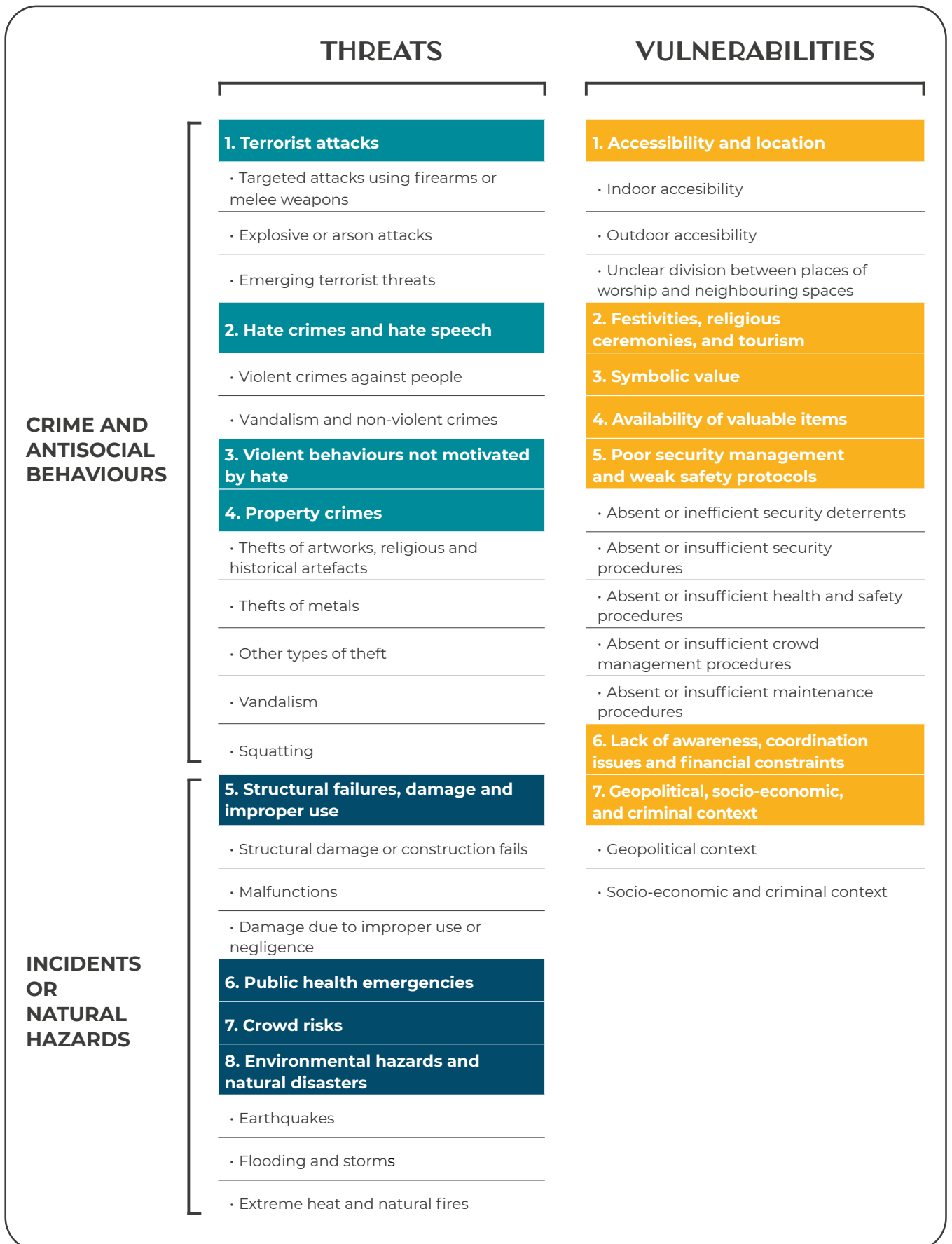
The report is structured as follows:

**Part 1** describes the **different types of threats** affecting places of worship.

**Part 2** provides a classification of the **main vulnerabilities** that are inherent to places of worship and presents some

**Recommendations** for enhancing security and safety within these places.

Figure 1 Typology of threats and vulnerabilities affecting places of worship



# Part 1

## Threats to places of worship

# Threats to places of worship

This part delineates the different types of threats affecting places of worship. Two macro-categories of threats are considered: crime and antisocial behaviours, and incidents or natural hazards.



## Terrorist attacks

The first category includes terrorist attacks against places of worship and the people who frequent them. According to the Directive (EU) 2017/541, such attacks are committed by individuals or groups with the express aim of “seriously intimidating a population; unduly compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; and/or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation”.<sup>1</sup>

Terrorist acts are characterised by the deliberate use of violence to either instil fear or exert pressure in the pursuit of political or ideological objectives (UNESCO, 2017). In some instances, attacks are carried out in the name of religion by individuals or groups who are driven by an unwavering conviction that a divine force has authorised and mandated them to commit acts of violence to uphold and elevate their faith (Martin, 2020). In other instances, terrorists are driven by political objectives, as, for example, grievances against local governments or protecting the interests of a particular ethnic or national group (Europol, 2023). For example, some attacks can be motivated by a wide range of dogmas including nationalism, anarchism, radical environmentalism, and racist or extreme right-wing ideologies (Wojciechowski & Siadkowski, 2014).

**Terrorist attacks are on the rise both** globally and within Europe, which includes a cyclical rise in attacks against places of worship, religious figures, and institutions (European Commission, 2020; START, 2022). Over the past decade, both individuals within European religious communities and participants in liturgical celebrations have lost their lives as a result of terrorist attacks (Sybicki, 2022).

**Terrorist attacks can manifest in various forms**, including mass homicides (e.g., bombings with casualties, shootings, or car ramming attacks), assaults or violence against individuals (e.g., murders, kidnappings), and destruction of buildings (e.g. intentional arson attacks or explosive attacks). Recent evidence suggests that attacks in the EU are increasingly being perpetrated using everyday objects, such as cars or knives (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). The targets of these attacks can vary, involving either civilians, religious leaders, or infrastructure.

At the present juncture, the terrorist landscape is evolving into a more decentralised and unstable environment, with diffuse actors rallying around various grievances rather than specific ideologies or group affiliations (Hamm & Spaaij, 2017). Indeed, recent attacks in places of worship in Europe have primarily involved so-called lone-wolf extremists (European Commission, 2020), a term which encompasses several types of perpetrators, ranging from individuals who act without any connections to extremist groups to those who, despite acting independently, maintain affiliations with larger groups of extremists (Kenyon et al., 2023). The latter of these types of perpetrators aligns with the tendency of many terrorist organisations to prefer sporadic actions over engaging in large-scale attacks (Sybicki, 2022).

Within all these aforementioned cases, the perpetrators often draw inspiration from previous attacks and propaganda linked to the same ideology (Gill et al., 2014). The most recent EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report underscored the ongoing threat posed by online propaganda, which continues to fuel radicalisation (Europol, 2023). Terrorists exploit social isolation and the absence of strong support networks to disseminate their messages and recruit new followers (United Nations, 2020). This context fosters self-radicalisation and encourages lone actors to plan and carry out attacks. The fact that law enforcement agencies find it more difficult to detect and stop these actors prior to attacks poses significant challenges for EU counterterrorism efforts (Bakker & de Graaf, 2011; Europol, 2023; UNODC, 2022).

The following sections describe examples of terrorist attacks against places of worship.

### Targeted attacks using firearms or melee weapons

These attacks are often carried out by individuals or small groups and either take place within the building itself or within the immediate surroundings (Marone, 2021). Terrorists frequently target individuals attending places of worship based on their alleged belonging to a religious community or minority group, including worshippers, religious figures, or volunteers (González-Varas Ibáñez, 2018). The most recent EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report outlined that perpetrators employ a range of weapons, including firearms and bladed weapons (Europol, 2023).

<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32017L0541>

## Explosive or arson attacks

Explosive or incendiary devices are often used by both lone or organised terrorists to cause significant damage to places of worship and harm people. These devices range from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), such as bags or small pipes containing explosives, to car bombs, which is when an explosive material is placed inside a car parked near the target (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023).

These devices are often made from materials that are available to the average consumer (Australian National Security, 2017; Doctor & Hunter, 2023). The latest EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report showed that terrorists continue to share online guides and instructions on how to make homemade explosives and IEDs (Europol, 2023). They also display a certain adeptness in circumventing the EU's restrictive measures and surveillance regarding explosive precursors. The use of fire accelerants or incendiary devices is notably prevalent within right-wing and left-wing terrorist groups and violent extremist circles (Europol, 2023).

## Emerging terrorist threats

Terrorist attacks on places of worship can potentially also involve the use of more sophisticated or new weapons, such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN)<sup>2</sup> devices, drones, and automated vehicles. Although the likelihood of these attacks is currently relatively low, it is nevertheless crucial to acknowledge their potential impact.

- **CBRN attacks.** These attacks release CBRN substances or agents for the express purpose of harming people or causing infrastructural damage (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). Although terrorist attacks involving CBRN materials are exceedingly rare, there remains ongoing concern amongst both policymakers and the general public due to the potentially devastating impact of these weapons, namely mass casualties and widespread panic (Binder & Ackerman, 2023; Rimpler-Schmid et al., 2021).
- **Drones.** Terrorists can also use drones to either transport firearms or explosives or to disperse CBRN agents (United Nations, 2022). Whilst drones may not become the primary means of terrorist attacks in the near future, there is growing evidence to suggest that terrorists are actively exploring their use beyond areas affected by military operations (United Nations, 2022).
- **Automated vehicles.** Automated vehicles represent an emerging technology that extends far beyond mere consumer benefits related to vehicle safety and instead holds profound implications for security, including, amongst other things, their potential exploitation by terrorists (Lewis, 2015). Indeed, driverless vehicles could pose a significantly greater threat than commercially accessible drones (Poulsen, 2015).



## Hate crimes and hate speech

This category includes **hate crimes and hate speech** against places of worship and the people who frequent them.

At the EU level, **hate crime** encompasses any criminal offence other than hate speech, that is committed with a racist or xenophobic motivation (Article 4, Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA).<sup>3</sup> According to the European Commission's guidance on implementing the Framework Decision, the concept of hate crime comprises two essential elements: firstly, there must be an **ordinary criminal offence**, and secondly, the offender must exhibit a **bias motivation** (European Commission, 2018).

Hate crimes encompass a wide array of criminal offences, including violent attacks, such as murders, injuries, or assaults, along with other offences, like defamation or property damage, provided they are criminalised under national laws (European Commission et al., 2021).<sup>4</sup> A bias motivation distinguishes hate crimes from ordinary crimes and underscores the additional seriousness of the offence, considering its impact upon individuals, groups, and society as a whole (European Commission, 2018).

These crimes target individuals or communities who are perceived as 'others' (European Commission, 2021b). The targets are chosen based on either their actual or perceived characteristics (such as ethnicity, race, ideology, religion, sexual identity, and gender) as they are seen as opposing the values ostensibly upheld by the perpetrators. Targets may also involve properties, including places of worship or religious artefacts, which are chosen based on their association, whether real or perceived, with the targeted groups, such as immigrants, or ethnic and religious minorities. The ideologies behind these acts primarily revolve around exclusionary nationalism, racism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance (European Commission, 2021b).

<sup>2</sup> CBRN encompasses substances and agents that are conceived, synthesised, extracted, processed and ultimately manufactured, distributed and utilised by various entities. This includes chemical agents (e.g., pharmaceuticals, nerve, blistering agents), biological agents (e.g., toxins), radiological materials (e.g., gamma/X-ray, neutrons) and nuclear agents (i.e., material associated with the nuclear power or weapons industry, or possessing fissile characteristics) (Bland, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913>

<sup>4</sup> Offences like genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes fall outside the scope of the definition of a hate crime insofar as they are not considered to be 'ordinary' crimes.

**Hate speech** refers to the public incitement of violence or hatred against either a group or an individual perceived as being part of that group due to specific characteristics, including race, religion, and gender (Article 1, Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA). Hate speech encompasses spoken and written statements as well as symbolic representations that belittle, accuse, deride, and shame targeted groups, which are deemed to constitute a form of verbal violence (European Commission, 2021c). Hate speech differs from hate crimes by virtue of it involving **verbal violence** (e.g., verbal assaults or offensive graffiti), whilst hate crimes entail physical **violence** directed towards people or objects.

In recent decades, Europe has witnessed a significant surge in hate speech and hate crimes (Bayer & Bård, 2020; ECRI, 2020, 2021; Juntunen & Maristo, 2022). Data from the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) indicates that between 2018 and 2022, hate crimes in the EU increased by 17% (ODIHR, 2022).<sup>5</sup> This surge in hate crimes can largely be attributed to the **role of the internet and social media**, where emotions and vulnerabilities are exploited to disseminate racist and xenophobic rhetoric, exacerbating societal polarisation and the targeting of marginalised groups. In order to address these issues, in 2021 the European Commission initiated the procedure to expand the list of EU crimes to include hate speech and hate crimes, thus recognising the urgent need for action on this issue (European Commission, 2021c).

### Terrorism or hate crimes?

Whilst the terms "**terrorism**" and "**hate crimes**" are often used interchangeably, they in fact typically represent distinct events with different motivations and implications. One of the most crucial differences between these two categories is that terrorist attacks invariably have socio-political objectives, whilst hate crimes often have quasi-political objectives supported by personal biases (Vergani, 2023).

Terrorist attacks are ordinarily characterised by a higher level of planning as well as involving the use of extreme violence, including firearms, sharp objects, arson or explosives (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). In contrast, hate crimes are more spontaneous in nature and are frequently unclaimed by the perpetrators in public (Koehler, 2016).

The confusion between the two terms derives from the fact that, as underscored by the European Commission (2021c), some hate crimes can be considered to be terrorist offences, especially when they clearly aim to seriously intimidate a population. However, it is crucial to stress that not all hate crimes fall under the category of terrorism, and the legal definitions of terrorism cannot be universally applied to criminalise hate crime. It is for this precise reason that these two categories are treated separately within the present report. Nevertheless, we readily acknowledge that drawing clear-cut operational distinctions between the two is often challenging.

The sections below provide some examples of hate crimes and hate speech against places of worship.

#### Violent crimes against people

This category includes violent hate crimes that are committed against people frequenting places of worship, with violence specifically referring to physical harm. This includes stabbings, homicides, shootings, and assaults that are motivated by hatred based on race, religion, ethnicity, or other biases. These acts not only cause immediate physical harm but also cast a long-lasting shadow of fear and insecurity within the targeted communities.

#### Vandalism and non-violent crimes

This category includes offences against the place of worship itself (e.g., vandalism) as well as non-violent crimes against people frequenting and/or managing them (e.g., hate speech) (European Commission et al., 2021). Within this context, vandalism designates the wilful damage, defacement, or destruction of religious artefacts and the structure of places of worship driven by a bias motivation. Hate speech encompasses verbal expressions that target specific religious or ethnic groups, which can occur both offline and online. Whilst these offences in and of themselves do not cause direct physical harm to people, previous studies have demonstrated that they nevertheless can lead to inciting violence and, hence, result in violent crimes (Williams et al., 2020).

### Violent behaviours not motivated by hate

This section addresses other violent crimes that are not motivated by any political or ideological bias which occur within places of worship or against people who frequent them.

Acts of violence or aggression within places of worship can in some instances arise from personal conflicts or mental



<sup>5</sup> The ODIHR dataset includes official data on hate crimes as reported by National Points of Contact on Hate Crimes of national governments. The numbers reported above should be interpreted with caution, however, in light of the different legal definitions of 'hate crime' across EU Member States. Moreover, the actual prevalence of the phenomenon is expected to be much greater than is reported in the official figures, as a result of both underreporting and severe inadequacies in collecting data on such crimes (Peršak, 2022).

health issues. Such incidents might include altercations between individuals over personal disputes or disagreements. In some instances, individuals with mental health issues may exhibit aggressive behaviour in these sacred spaces. Moreover, stressful events, such as, for example, the gathering of large number of people within a restricted place, can also increase the perceived jeopardisation of people's personal condition (e.g., health and safety) or psychological resources (e.g., self-esteem, sense of justice)(Surachman & Almeida, 2018). As the stress intensifies, individuals' ability to regulate their emotions is diminished, thereby escalating the likelihood of retaliatory anger and resorting to violent behaviours (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2009).

These behaviours are often not premeditated and can involve stabbings, shootings, and either verbal or physical assaults.



## Property crimes

This category refers to **property crimes that target places of worship as well as their attendees**, where the principal motivations of the perpetrators are **not driven by any hate bias** against religious communities.

Property crimes targeting places of worship encompass a wide array of offenses, including theft, robbery, burglary, vandalism, and squatting. Ordinarily, these crimes are driven by economic motivations or stem from general incivility (Abed & Aljibarat, 2023; Larsson, 2006; Papaioannou, 2017; Phillips & Smith, 2006; Spelman, 2004). Moreover, some property crimes are fuelled by a desire for amusement or excitement (Goldstein, 2013; Matsueda et al., 2006).

Although the impact of these particular offences is less severe than terrorist attacks or other violent offences, property crimes can nevertheless result in significant economic losses, damage to cultural and historical heritage, and serve to spread a sense of insecurity amongst worshippers. This underscores the importance of adopting proper measures to counteract these specific kinds of threats.

### Routine Activity Theory and crime opportunities

Many property crimes can be explained through recourse to Routine Activity Theory, which was conceived by Cohen and Felson (1979). According to this theory, criminal opportunities emerge when a motivated offender and suitable target converge without the presence of a capable guardian. The suitability of a target encompasses several factors, such as, for example, value and accessibility, whilst the motivation of offenders involves criminal inclinations and the capacity to act upon them. Finally, capable guardians comprise those actors who, formally or informally, can either protect the target or deter the perpetrator.

Within the context of places of worship, property theft and vandalism frequently occur as opportunistic crimes, insofar as criminals are seeking easy targets (Ojedokun & Oduoye, 2020). They can exploit either overlooked or susceptible areas of properties, such as unlocked windows or doors, as well as poorly illuminated sections. See Part 2 of this report for a more in-depth discussion of the vulnerabilities of places of worship.

The following sections recount some examples of property crimes that have occurred against places of worship.

### Thefts of artwork or religious and historical artefacts

Artworks, religious, cultural, or historical artefacts are frequent targets for thieves (Scheitle, 2016). These items are often stolen from places of worship via burglaries or deceptive thefts (Europol, 2021).

Criminals target a range of items, including religious icons such as statues or paintings, liturgical items like chalices and religious vestments that are used in ceremonies, historical documents, manuscripts, ancient texts with religious or cultural significance, reliquaries, jewellery, and valuable items that are donated to places of worship.

The theft of such precious artefacts or items is typically orchestrated by organised groups who are aiming to profit from selling them. Examples of such illegal trade involves stolen masterpieces sold through traditional black-market channels or in online marketplaces. These digital platforms also provide new avenues for criminals to sell lower-value items that may have been overlooked previously (Europol, 2021).

### Thefts of metals

Various metals such as copper, lead, iron, and zinc are frequently stolen from places of worship (Ecclesiastical, 2022; Historic England, 2021b; Scheitle, 2016). Thieves target these metals either for personal use, including, for example, individuals who are looking to salvage metal-bearing items, or for trading purposes, which is especially the case when the theft is orchestrated by organised groups (Sidebottom, 2012).

A comprehensive study across the United States of places of worship of various religious denominations found that copper was a common target, often stripped from air-conditioning units due to its increased market value (Scheitle, 2016). Similarly, thieves frequently target lead, zinc, and stainless steel used in roofing, lead rainwater pipes, bronze statues, metal garden ornaments, iron gates, and even church bells (Ecclesiastical, 2022; Historic England, 2021b).

## Other types of theft

Other thefts within places of worship involve items belonging to the place itself as well as the belongings of worshippers or visitors. The thieves may target, amongst other things, electronic equipment like audio-video systems or laptops, and essential furniture. Moreover, donations—money or goods—intended to support the religious community can also be subject to these crimes. The stolen personal belongings of worshippers can range from cash, jewellery, bags, and mobile phones to vehicles parked outside the premises (Ojedokun & Oduoye, 2020; Scheitle, 2016).

Overall, the targets can be broken down into two categories:

- **Portable items.** These include donations, electronic items (e.g., microphones), purses, or mobile phones. Such thefts are often carried out by lone individuals and typically do not require extensive organisation or planning (Ojedokun & Oduoye, 2020).
- **Non-portable items.** This category encompasses furniture (e.g., chairs, pews), vehicles, and certain technological equipment (e.g., televisions). These thefts are frequently orchestrated by organised groups and, hence, involve a higher level of planning and coordination (Historic England, 2021a, 2021b; Thompson, 2019).

## Vandalism

Vandalism within places of worship can take various forms, including, amongst other things, graffitiing or destruction of objects and furniture, breaking of glass doors or windows, graffitiing and damaging signs or structures (Bourns & Wright, 2004; Johnson, 2019). It can also involve acts of desecration that violate the sanctity of the place itself. Whilst vandals may also occasionally enter buildings to cause interior damage, this tends to be less frequent (Johnson, 2019). Vandalism primarily occurs when buildings are unoccupied or closed (Allen & Greenberger, 1980; Zsako, 2013).

The majority of vandals are driven by a desire for excitement, engaging in acts of vandalism to both experience the emotional thrill of risk-taking and rebel against authority or prevailing social norms (Johnson, 2019). This category does not include vandalism that are driven by political or religious motives, which was discussed previously.

## Squatting

Squatting refers to the act of occupying an abandoned or unused property without the owner's permission. This practice involves individuals or groups taking residence in vacant buildings, often with the express intent of either establishing makeshift dwellings or using the setting for various purposes, such as raves, satanic rituals, shooting music videos, and so on (Esposito & Chiodelli, 2023; Grashoff, 2019; Herbert, 2018a, 2018b; Pruijt, 2013).

Squatting within public places is driven by various motivations. Scholars commonly attribute squatting to political strategies that are aligned with organised urban social movements who are pursuing political and counter-cultural objectives (Esposito, 2022; Martinez Lopez & Cattaneo, 2014). However, the spectrum of squatting motivations extends far beyond politics. Indeed, squatting can also be understood as a response by individuals who encounter urgent shelter needs, which are often entirely unrelated to social movements or activist networks, and thus underscore the role of socio-economic status within this phenomenon (Esposito & Chiodelli, 2023; Grashoff, 2019; Herbert, 2018a, 2018b; Pruijt, 2013). Furthermore, some engage in squatting purely for recreational purposes, that is, as a means through which to procure enjoyment, amusement, or engage in communal activities (Esposito & Chiodelli, 2023).



## Structural failures, damage, and improper use

This category encompasses incidents within places of worship that result in either direct or indirect damage to place of worships themselves or harm to the people frequenting them (Ravan et al., 2023; Valesio, 2023).

Specifically, these damages can affect:

- **Buildings:** Structural damage to the building itself, including load-bearing walls, foundations, roofs, and joints. Threats to the building may include open or degraded joints, cracks, structural deformations, and collapse, which can be exacerbated by wear and tear and adverse weather conditions. Damage to structural materials includes cracks, fractures, fissures, material detachment (e.g., bursting, crumbling, powdering, fragmentation), erosion, scratches, biological colonisation (e.g., lichen, mould, bird droppings, termite attacks), discoloration, and deposits (e.g., moist areas, black crust, salt crust).
- **Furniture and objects:** Threats include cracks in wood, deformations, and discolouration or lifting of painted surfaces.
- **People frequenting places of worship** (e.g., worshippers, tourists, religious figures, etc.): Examples of these threats include tripping and slipping hazards or accidents. Improperly secured carpets in aisles may cause tripping incidents during religious services. Further, unexpected fragments falling from detached plaster ceilings in historic places of worship may also cause injuries.

- **Essential systems:** Heating, electric, and hydraulic systems are susceptible to interruptions and various hazards. Heating systems may pose various risks, such as, for example, fires, gas emissions, and potential poisoning from gas leakage. Electric systems may encounter interruptions, burning, and fire hazards. Hydraulic systems may experience issues like water leaks, infiltration leading to slipping hazards, and accidents (Italian Fire Prevention Unit, 2016; Valesio, 2023).

These threats arise from either the absence of, or inadequate, management rather than intentional human actions, as discussed in Part 2. Therefore, effective oversight and maintenance practices are crucial for both mitigating these potential damages and ensuring safety within places of worship (Ortiz & Ortiz, 2016; Tolles et al., 2002).

The following sections provide examples of how these threats manifest in practice as well as their attendant consequences, both for places of worship and the people who frequent them.

### **Structural damage or construction failures**

Structural damage or construction failures refer to any form of impairments that can negatively impact upon the essential framework, stability, or load-bearing elements of a building (e.g., cracks, deformations, collapses). These events not only have a negative impact upon the physical structure of the building itself, but also upon the safety of individuals and preservation of religious artefacts. Examples of such threats include:

- Detachment and falling of heavy decorative elements, such as chandeliers or ornate fixtures;
- Collapses of architectural features, like arches or balconies;
- Falling of protective barriers, such as choir lofts or elevated platforms;
- Falling debris due to decaying architectural elements;
- Infestations damaging wooden elements or sacred artefacts;
- Breaking of stained-glass windows;
- Inaccurate restoration.

### **Malfunctions**

Technical malfunctions within places of worship can **disrupt the functioning of essential systems and facilities**. Examples of such malfunctioning include:

- Hazards related to electrical systems, such as faulty wiring or malfunctioning lighting fixtures;
- Water leaks, which, in turn, can foster structural decay and the growth of mould;
- Fires or gas emissions stemming from a malfunctioning heating system.

### **Damage due to improper use or negligence**

Improper use of facilities or negligence within places of worship can lead to various forms of damage, such as:

- Candles or lamps causing fires, damaging the building and its artworks;
- Mismanagement of religious relics, architectural ornamentation, or decorative elements during ceremonies, which, in turn, leads to deterioration or damage;
- Negligent conservation practices or inaccurate restoration activities that damage buildings and other objects.

Such actions often stem from carelessness and an inadvertent disregard for the potential repercussions.

## **Public health emergencies**



This category includes **public health emergencies that can occur within places of worship**. Health threats within places of worship encompass a wide range of concerns, ranging from the potential spread of diseases, contamination of food, water or air, to exposure to extreme temperatures which in turn can lead to dehydration or other adverse health issues (Raj & Griffin, 2018). These threats pose significant risks, with the potential consequences ranging from injury and illness to more severe outcomes, including fatalities.

The potential **spread of diseases** (e.g., COVID-19) becomes especially dangerous during specific religious practices. Communal activities involving shared objects or food during rituals may amplify the risk of contagion (Lee et al., 2022; Quadri, 2020). Practices like kissing consecrated items or sharing meals during religious gatherings present profound challenges with respect to maintaining stringent public health standards, thereby increasing the risk of disease transmission. Moreover, illnesses can spread to the extensive accumulation of dust, allergens, and pathogens within places of worship. Dust and allergens can exacerbate respiratory issues, particularly amongst worshippers with pre-existing conditions, thus creating a breeding ground for health problems (Xue et al., 2023).

Instances of **water, food or air contamination** can pose significant threats to people. For example, the contamination of water sources within places of worship can result in the proliferation of harmful bacteria or pollutants, which, in turn, lead to waterborne illnesses amongst worshippers (Chasmar, 2013; Innes, 2013). Similarly, either the mishandling or improper storage of food during religious events can contribute to contamination. If perishable items are not stored at the correct temperature or if food preparation surfaces are inadequately sanitised, then this may facilitate the spread of foodborne pathogens, potentially leading to attendees getting ill (Al Jazeera, 2018; BNN, 2023). Moreover,

air contamination within places of worship may arise from either insufficient ventilation or the accumulation of pollutants in the building. For instance, the use of incense and candles during religious rituals can release dangerous levels of particulate matter and carcinogenic particles, which pose a significant risk to air quality (de Kok et al., 2004).

**Exposure to extreme temperatures** within places of worship constitutes an additional dimension of potential harm. Inadequate ventilation coupled with high temperatures can subject attendees to adverse health issues, namely **fainting, heat exhaustion, or even heatstroke**. Conversely, cold temperatures can also pose health challenges, as insufficient heating during colder times of the year may expose attendees to the risk of illnesses related to cold weather, such as respiratory infections or hypothermia (Conti, 2019; Fang & Chhetri, 2013).



## Crowd risks

A **crowd** can be generally defined as a large gathering of people (Illiyas et al., 2013). The key characteristics of a crowd include its size, density, duration, sense of a shared identity, and common goals amongst its members. For instance, a group of twenty people gathered near a particular location to observe an hour-long event and share a common interest in that event can be deemed to be a crowd, even though they might be complete strangers, by virtue of the fact that they exhibit consistent and coherent behaviour due to a shared identity and goal (Challenger et al., 2009). Recognising the importance of addressing threats related to crowd movements is crucial, particularly considering that places of worship inherently draw numerous individuals during specific moments, which underscores the need for careful management and safety considerations within such settings.

Within places of worship, and other public spaces for that matter, crowd incidents can be caused by the spread of panic amongst worshippers or visitors (Illiyas et al., 2013; Raj & Griffin, 2018). **Panic** often arises when either a vital resource is perceived to be scarce or threatened or when people feel unsafe (Helbing et al., 2002). Panic can be influenced by a range of factors, such as, for example, a lack of reliable information, a sense that there are limited exit routes, triggering events (e.g., explosions or rumours of danger), and a pre-existing sense of fear or anxiety (Illiyas et al., 2013). Within these circumstances, people tend to prioritise short-term self-interest over social norms, which, in turn, leads to the disregarding of alternative escape routes, a phenomenon that is known as **social contagion**. This collective form of decision-making can be irrational and counterproductive, resulting in crowding and slower escape. The defining features of panic are rapid, uncoordinated movements, increased physical interactions, pressure on structures, neglect of injured individuals, conformity to crowd behaviour, and underutilised alternative escape routes (Helbing et al., 2002).



## Environmental hazards and natural disasters

This category of threats involves any **natural and environmental hazards** that could have a destructive impact upon human beings, artwork, and facilities within places of worship. Examples of such threats include:

### Earthquakes and landslides

Earthquakes and landslides pose a significant threat to the physical stability of places of worship. These buildings, which are often constructed without modern anti-seismic standards, are especially vulnerable to severe structural damage, which, in turn, can lead to the loss of cultural heritage and endanger the lives of worshippers.

### Flooding and storms

Flooding and storms can have a devastating impact upon places of worship across the globe. Heavy rains, storm surges, and rising water levels can inundate religious buildings, causing structural damage, as well as the loss of invaluable religious artefacts and displacement of congregations.

### Extreme heat and natural fires

Extreme heatwaves and natural fires can pose grave threats to places of worship. Intense heat can weaken the structural integrity of these sacred buildings, leading to cracks and damage. Moreover, in regions that are susceptible to wildfires, places of worship can become victims of natural blazes, which can lead to fires spreading uncontrollably due to the dry conditions. These devastating events not only endanger the physical structures of the buildings but also jeopardise religious artefacts as well as the historical treasures housed within them.

**Climate change** is expected to increase both the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including heavy precipitation, flooding, and drought (Cacciotti et al., 2021). The likelihood of increased heavy rainfall in the future varies by region, with noticeable shifts in extreme precipitation patterns (IPCC, 2012). The impact of climate change upon cultural heritage is intricately connected with various factors, such as, for example, the presence of alterations in structures or materials that are ill-suited to withstanding heightened climate loads. For instance, intense precipitation coupled with strong winds, exacerbated by the porosity of historic materials, can lead to uneven moisture distribution within building envelopes, thus presenting durability challenges for cultural heritage assets. This, combined with other factors like freezing/melting temperatures, salt action, and cracks, has the potential to compromise the structural integrity and stability of building components (Cacciotti, 2020). Moreover, the absence or inadequacy of interventions and maintenance practices may serve to further exacerbate the projected effects of climate-change-induced disasters (Raj & Griffin, 2018).

# Part 2

## Vulnerabilities of places of worship (and recommendations for how to mitigate them)

# Vulnerabilities of places of worship (and recommendations for how to mitigate them)

This part of the report delineates the main **vulnerabilities** affecting places of worship, each of which increase both the likelihood and potential impact of the threats discussed in Part 1. The relationship between these vulnerabilities and the attendant threats is graphically presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

This part of the report also includes some **recommendations** for how to enhance security and safety within places of worship. Specific advice is provided for each of the vulnerabilities identified. Whilst this list of recommendations is by no means exhaustive, it nevertheless provides some examples and guidance of potential solutions. It is important to stress, however, that the effective protection of these sites is dependent on a combination of several technological and organisational factors (UNESCO, 2012).



## Accessibility and location

### Indoor accessibility

The presence of **multiple entry points** that are both readily accessible and lacking strong locks or sufficient security measures to prevent break-ins makes places of worship vulnerable to various crimes, including terrorism, violent behaviours, and property crimes (Brian, 2010; European Commission, 2020). **Side or rear entrances** further increases the likelihood of these threats occurring.

Many places of worship serve as **community centres** that host various activities for manifold groups or associations. The frequent use of these facilities by external groups serves to reduce the overall level of vigilance towards unfamiliar individuals (Denney et al., 2022). Moreover, the **absence of restricted areas** where valuables, money, or important documents can be kept, along with private areas like living quarters, poses a number of risks (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). Within some places of worship, these areas are easily accessible to anyone, while in others, access is restricted but there are no clear indications of who is authorised to have accessed.

Whilst these issues affect all places of worship, those located within **remote or suburban areas** are particularly prone to criminal access (Countryside Alliance, 2020; Wilkinson, 2020). Weaker security measures and less frequent vigilance within these areas can create an environment that is conducive to criminal activities.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Secure access points:** Ensure all access points, including side and rear entrances, are secured with strong locks to prevent unauthorised access. Strengthen the security of doors and windows by implementing additional features like security bars, protective window films, and reinforced frames or laminated glass
- **Install perimeter security systems:** Install perimeter intrusion alarms, intrusion detection systems, CCTV systems, glass breaking sensors, access control measures (e.g., electronic key card systems or biometric scanners), or sensors to detect unauthorised entry. If possible, connect the alarm directly to law enforcement agencies for a more effective response.
- **Restrict access to sensitive areas:** Limit access to sensitive areas within places of worship, such as administrative offices, storage rooms for valuable items, and private living quarters. Restrict access to authorised individuals, and specify designated personnel like staff members, religious figures, or approved volunteers.
- **Manage key access:** Ensure adequate management of access to keys. Distribute exterior-door keys to a limited number of people and mark them in some way to prevent duplication.
- **Rapid closure capability:** Ensure that access points to the facility can be swiftly closed and securely locked during threatening situations outside. This rapid response capability is crucial for both preventing unauthorised access and ensuring the safety of worshippers (European Commission, 2021a).
- **Supervise Entrances:** Limit the number of entrances or exits in accordance with the number of staff on the premises in order to allow for sufficient supervision of people entering the site. The simple presence of a person (e.g., caretakers or volunteers) at the gate to greet visitors can deter potential criminals from acting (UNESCO, 2012).

### Outdoor accessibility

Risks are not solely limited to the interior of religious premises but also extend to the **outside areas**. Research indicates that both terrorist and hate crime attacks are more likely to occur outdoors, such as, for example, in car parks or gardens, as criminals may feel safer and less likely to be apprehended by the police in these spaces (Pethő-Kiss, 2020).

The **possibility of parking vehicles** around places of worship, particularly when these areas are not properly monitored, such as, for example, in car parks, nearby streets, and entrances to the site, combined with a lack of physical barriers to limit the movement of cars, enhances the probability of vehicles being used as instruments for assaults. This could involve detonating explosives concealed within a vehicle or ramming the vehicle into individuals or buildings.

The accessibility of outdoor areas also affords opportunities for other forms of violent behaviours and vandalism. Furthermore, this may also facilitate crimes that are not directly linked to places of worship (e.g., drug use), therefore adding an additional layer to the security challenges associated with these areas (Denney et al., 2022).

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Install perimeter fencing or barriers:** Establish perimeter fencing or barriers around the exteriors of places of worship (Siadkowski et al., 2022). This fencing should be sturdy and well-maintained in order to provide a physical barrier against intruders, whilst, simultaneously, ensuring visibility for security monitoring.
- **Ensure adequate outdoor lighting:** Implement adequate outdoor lighting around the premises, including parking areas, walkways, and entrances, in order to minimise dark areas where criminal activities could occur (Siadkowski et al., 2022). Utilising energy-efficient and motion-activated light fixtures optimises visibility and deters potential threats during low-light conditions.

### Unclear division between places of worship and neighbouring spaces

The **absence of clear boundaries or distinct demarcations** that signify that you are transitioning into a space where different behavioural norms should be observed (e.g., speaking softly, refraining from using mobile phones or consuming alcohol) can also increase the likelihood of criminal activities (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023; Sybicki, 2022). This situation is in accordance with Brantingham and Brantingham's theoretical framework, which posits that criminal activities are more likely to occur at the **borders or transitional zones** between two distinct areas (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993).

For instance, places of worship situated in densely populated urban areas that are near other zones designated for various activities, such as parks, can attract criminals. This is particularly the case when the boundaries between these areas are not clearly defined. This is because criminals can easily blend into the crowd that are frequenting parks and surrounding spaces near places of worship, where other people are legitimately present, without arousing any suspicion.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Clearly communicate expected behaviours:** Use signage or announcements either within or around the premises to inform visitors of the behavioural norms. For example, signs at entry points should state the rules clearly, such as "Quiet Zone: Please Respect the Silence" or "No Smoking Area: Smoking Prohibited on the Premises".
- **Implement physical demarcations:** Establish physical boundaries either inside or around the perimeter of places of worship where different behavioural norms should be observed. This could involve decorative fencing or installing low walls that not only mark the entrance to a sacred space but also visually guide visitors to adjust their behaviours accordingly and avoid any misunderstandings.
- **Maintain the site's surroundings in a neat condition:** Regularly maintain the areas immediately surrounding places of worship in order to both enhance control over these areas and deter criminal activities.

## Festivities, religious ceremonies, and tourism



During **religious ceremonies, peak tourist seasons, and seasonal events**, places of worship become more vulnerable to security threats such as terrorism, hate crimes, and theft (European Commission, 2020, 2021a; Scheitle, 2016).

The presence of large crowds during these times increases the potential **severity of the consequences in the event of an attack**, resulting in more injuries and fatalities due to the large number of attendees. Furthermore, the **risk of theft** also rises significantly during these gatherings, especially when tourists and high-profile individuals are present (Ojedokun & Oduoye, 2020). Visitors' unfamiliarity with the surroundings allied with potential lapses in vigilance regarding their belongings creates an opportunistic environment for thieves.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Special security measures:** Increase security measures during religious ceremonies, peak tourist seasons and seasonal events. These measures could include implementing bag checks and metal detectors in order to both deter potential threats and ensure the safety of congregants and visitors (European Commission, 2021a).

- **Proper training:** Ensure all staff members are adequately trained and prepared to effectively handle emergency situations.
- **Collaborate with authorities:** Develop comprehensive security plans that are tailored to specific religious ceremonies and seasonal events in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, first responders and other relevant authorities.



## Symbolic value

The symbolic value of places of worship derives from their **religious significance, historical legacy, cultural essence, and social importance** within their communities (European Commission, 2021a; Sybicki, 2022). The multifaceted significance of places of worship increases their vulnerability to **terrorist and hate crimes** (US Homeland Security, 2003), especially during dates of symbolic significance for these religions (European Commission, 2020).

Moreover, places of worship that serve as the **sole religious gathering sites for specific minority groups** are especially vulnerable. Their exclusivity exposes them to heightened risks, insofar as the potential loss of such a unique space disrupts not only routine religious practices but also serves to undermine the cultural and communal foundation of the affected community (Orton, 2016). Consequently, the dual symbolic value of places of worship as both religious sanctuaries and cultural landmarks underscores the challenges associated with effectively safeguarding these spaces.

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Collaborate to develop tailored security strategies.** Strengthen security by collaborating with law enforcement agencies, community leaders, neighbourhood associations, and other religious organisations. This partnership could facilitate the implementation of comprehensive security measures aimed towards ensuring the safety of worshippers and visitors.
- **Support interfaith dialogue.** Promote interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and understanding through implementing various initiatives. Specifically, engage respected individuals from diverse societal backgrounds and representatives from religious groups in dialogue and relationship-building activities. Organise cultural exchange events such as food festivals and art exhibitions to celebrate the richness of religious and cultural traditions. Collaborate on community service projects that address shared social concerns and foster solidarity towards achieving the common good.



## Availability of valuable items

The presence of valuable items within places of worship makes them susceptible to theft in a number of respects. For individuals attending services, carrying cash for donations or valuable personal items like mobile phones can attract **opportunistic thieves**, especially if these items are left unattended during prayers or communal activities (Scheitle & Ulmer, 2018). Furthermore the facilities themselves may contain electronics, furniture, and other valuable materials that can be targeted by thieves looking for quick gains (Scheitle & Ulmer, 2018). Finally, the valuable religious and historical artefacts that are housed within these places can also be prime targets for **organised theft** due to their significant cultural, historical, and monetary value (Ojedokun & Oduoye, 2020).

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Keep track of valuable items:** Create and maintain an up-to-date inventory of all valuable items located within buildings. Regular monitoring can help to keep track of the status of objects or artefacts and improve the chances of recovering stolen items after a theft has occurred (UNESCO, 2012).
- **Reduce valuable objects:** Encourage worshippers to minimise the amount of cash and valuables that they bring to places of worship, especially during events like fundraising. Offer alternative donation methods such as electronic transfers or online platforms in order to enhance convenience and security, whilst, simultaneously, ensuring contributions reach their intended destination securely.
- **Secure vulnerable, precious or delicate items:** store smaller and delicate items within locked cabinets or secure alcoves to prevent easy access. Implement measures to secure statues, paintings, and other precious items to deter theft (UNESCO, 2012).



## Poor security management and weak safety protocols

This section outlines several vulnerabilities that are connected to the **lack of security countermeasures or management procedures** that can expose places of worship to increased risk, either by encouraging potential perpetrators or by reacting ineffectively to specific threats.

### Absent or inefficient security deterrents

When **protective measures** intended to safeguard places of worship, their objects, and attendees are either absent or insufficient, then the risk of various crimes escalates irrespective of perpetrators' motives. This is because perpetrators may perceive such environments as safer and easier targets.

Factors such as poor lighting, absence of signs indicating security measures, lack of guards or CCTV surveillance collectively contribute towards an impression of **weak security** (European Commission, 2021a, 2022; Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). This perception of vulnerability significantly heightens the likelihood of violent acts, including terrorism, hate crimes, and other violent behaviours, as well as non-violent offences like thefts, squatting, and vandalism.

For instance, places of worship that lack security deterrents, such as, for example, benches, fences, pots, flowerbeds, stairs, or walls are especially vulnerable to terrorist and hate crime attacks (European Commission, 2021a; Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023). Similarly, leaving valuable artefacts and artworks unprotected, that is, not encased in glass or without alarm systems, means that they are more susceptible to theft. These vulnerabilities extend across various types of crimes, thus underscoring the critical need for robust security measures through which to both deter potential perpetrators and protect the sacred space as well as its contents.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Install physical protective measures:** Place walls, benches, and flowerbeds strategically around the building to serve as protective barriers. These measures can help to deter unauthorised vehicles from entering as well as providing some protection against potential debris or firearm attacks (Siadkowski et al., 2022).
- **Highlight security measures:** Deploy visible signs that clearly indicate the presence of security measures, such as, for example, CCTV surveillance, regular security patrols, or alarm systems. This can create a perception of heightened security amongst visitors and deter criminal activity (European Commission, 2021a; Siadkowski et al., 2022).

### Absent or insufficient security procedures

The vulnerability of places of worship to potential threats is exacerbated by absent or **insufficient security procedures**, particularly with respect to countering violent attacks by terrorists, hate criminals, or common criminals operating without political motivations. These protocols include clear procedures for how to deal with attackers and prevent incidents, such as monitoring suspicious behaviours or unattended packages (European Commission, 2021a, 2022)

Moreover, these protocols would **outline specific roles and responsibilities** during attacks, and inform staff in terms of their actions and interactions with law enforcement, civil protection agencies, and emergency responders. This is important, because without coordinated emergency responses and effective communication channels with these authorities, attempts to address or prevent attacks could be hindered (European Commission, 2021a, 2022).

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Define roles:** Clearly outline roles and responsibilities for staff, volunteers, and congregants, specifying exactly who should act and how to engage with the authorities during an adverse event.
- **Maintain security protocols:** Regularly review and update security protocols in order to address evolving threats, changes in the environment, or lessons from prior incidents.
- **Security routines:** Establish daily or regular routines for maintaining facility security, such as checking locks, windows, and doors, or searching for dangerous objects or IEDs.

### Absent or insufficient health and safety procedures

Absent, insufficient or outdated health protocols within places of worship can result in a greater **risk of disease transmission** amongst congregants (Jayroe et al., 2023). Similarly, failure to adhere to essential health guidelines, such as, for example, social distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing hygiene, poses significant risks.

The challenges associated with implementing and adhering to health protocols, which were particularly highlighted during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, underscore the complex hurdles that religious congregations face in protecting their members' safety and well-being. This involves balancing public health measures with the freedom of worship

and long-standing traditions (Hodge, 2015; Hodge et al., 2020; Quadri, 2020). The tensions between public health guidelines and the preservation of religious practices again underscore the need for collaborative efforts to address public health concerns within the unique context of places of worship.

Additionally, health risks within places of worship can also derive from **inadequate cleaning practices or insufficient sanitation**, which, in turn, may create a breeding ground for bacteria and viruses, thereby increasing the risk of infectious diseases (Ilies et al., 2018).

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Adopt health and safety protocols:** Review and update health and safety protocols within places of worship so that they are in accordance with current public health guidelines and recommendations, especially regarding social distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing hygiene.
- **Create awareness.** Encourage congregants to adhere to health and safety protocols and guidelines whilst attending religious services or participating in communal activities. Emphasising the importance of collective responsibility for public health underscores the need for everyone to play their part in preventing the spread of infectious diseases. This can also be achieved through signposting, including via warnings and prohibitions.

### Absent or insufficient crowd management procedures

Many places of worship are of course ancient structures that were not designed with **adequate safety criteria** to manage crowd risks. This issue is often exacerbated by complex legal frameworks, particularly for places of worship that are designated as cultural heritage sites. These structures are subject to legal constraints that may hinder the implementation of modern safety standards, despite potential safety imperatives mandated by other legislation. For instance, cultural heritage regulations may **prohibit the installation of new evacuation options** or the replacement of traditional doors with more accessible alternatives.

Furthermore, absent or insufficient crowd management procedures during the outflow or movement of people, particularly during important occasions such as festivities, events, and ceremonies, poses increased crowd risks.

These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing a **shortage of staff** to oversee designated event entrances, guide people flows, and assist attendees (OSHA, 2012). The lack of a comprehensive plan **assigning specific positions** to security personnel further compounds this issue, leading to confusion and disorder. Notably, the lack of individuals designated to contact emergency personnel, direct people, and explain event proceedings further exacerbates the risk. Inadequate communication tools, such as radios, hinder coordination between event management personnel. Alongside this, the **absence of proper communication channels**, including visual messages, contributes towards a chaotic environment. The deficiencies extend to the **physical infrastructure**, with insufficient barriers and unclear signage for entrances and exits contributing towards disorder and heightened safety risks within crowded settings (Italian Ministry of Interior, 2017; NRF, 2011; OSHA, 2012).

It is also worthwhile to note here that, in some instances, crowd management procedures may exist, but the **inadequate implementation** of these procedures provides opportunities for incidents to occur. For example, evacuation routes may be in place, but without regular testing to ensure that there are unobstructed pathways and doors, the expected flow of evacuation could be compromised (European Commission, 2021a).

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Specific crowd management protocols:** Establish clear and comprehensive crowd management protocols tailored to the unique characteristics of the specific place of worship. Define the specific roles and responsibilities for staff, volunteers, and security personnel involved in managing crowded events, including designated positions for emergency contacts, directing people, and explaining event proceedings.
- **Regular test:** Conduct regular testing and evaluation of crowd management procedures, including evacuation routes and emergency response plans, in order to identify and address potential weaknesses or obstacles.
- **Inform authorities:** Always inform local law enforcement agencies, first responders, and relevant authorities when a crowded occasion is expected.

### Absent or insufficient maintenance procedures

Places of worship are exposed to vulnerabilities stemming from **either absent or insufficient protocols to maintain the building and its objects**, and to **ensure the safety of attendees**. These include procedures for ensuring the maintenance of the building structure, structural materials, furniture, or essential systems (e.g., heating, electric and hydraulic) and of cultural heritage (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023).

**Neglecting the status of building structures, materials, and furniture** can lead to structural damages and construction failures, impacting upon both the place of worship and its attendees. For instance, poorly maintained walls, fences, and gates may compromise their structural integrity, especially during incidents, potentially causing injuries to worshippers. Inadequate **pest control measures** can result in infestations, which, in turn, can damage wooden elements or sacred artefacts. Design flaws, including those that do not adhere to rules protecting buildings from environmental hazards, material deficiencies, and executional errors can all contribute towards construction failures and cause injuries.

Moreover, the lack of explicit **guidelines regarding prohibited activities** within places of worship (e.g., taking photos, touching objects, accessing restricted areas) can result in damage to objects, even if unintentional. **Inadequate upkeep of fire, electrical and hydraulic systems** can entail various risks (e.g., fires, electrical short-circuits, water, gas leakages), all of which can have a detrimental impact upon both human safety and the integrity of the worship space and its objects.

**Poorly maintained religious and historical artworks** can lead to a variety of issues, ranging from gradual decay and deterioration to severe losses (Ortiz & Ortiz, 2016; Tolles et al., 2002). This can occur when the conditions of the cultural heritage assets are not regularly assessed, their integrity is not maintained, and both their functional efficiency and identity are compromised. Finally, places of worship that are completely lacking in terms of maintenance and lying in a **state of abandonment** become more susceptible to break-ins, acts of vandalism, and squatting due to the absence of protective measures and surveillance typically employed by actively maintained places of worship (Stachyra & Batkowski, 2023).

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Maintenance procedures:** Develop and implement comprehensive maintenance protocols that encompass regular inspections, repairs and upkeep of the building structure, furniture, and essential systems (e.g., heating, electric, hydraulic) within places of worship.
- **Preserve cultural heritage:** Establish protocols for both the regular assessment and preservation of religious and historical artwork within places of worship, including monitoring their condition, implementing conservation measures, and promptly addressing any deterioration or damage.
- **Technological support:** Consider using specific sensors or systems capable of detecting imminent collapse and other structural damage of the building or inefficiencies in essential systems (e.g., gas detectors). This can also apply to other sensors that are used as part of the early detection of specific conditions (e.g., seismic activity, humidity, temperature) that could endanger artefacts or other valuable items.

## Lack of awareness, coordination issues and financial constraints



The lack of awareness about potential threats, coordination issues, and financial constraints are significant vulnerabilities faced by places of worship.

Many places of worship suffer from either a **lack of awareness or insufficient understanding of potential threats and vulnerabilities** (Mazurczak & Godzisz, 2017). In many instances, vulnerabilities remain unrecognised and unaddressed until they are eventually exploited by criminals (Bigley, 2018). In some cases, managers of places of worship are cognisant of specific threats based on historical experiences but overlook other potential risks. This oversight often results in a lack of training or awareness initiatives aimed towards both educating staff and volunteers about various risks and equipping them with the requisite skills to proactively address and mitigate these threats (European Commission, 2021a). This lack of awareness also contributes to the **underreporting** of threats to authorities, in turn leading to the **inadequate allocation of resources and attention** from law enforcement agencies to securing places of worship and potentially weakening the communication and collaboration with religious organisations.

Issues especially arise when a **building is shared between** multiple entities, such as religious organisations and municipal authorities. This shared ownership can lead to communication challenges and difficulties related to coordinating maintenance efforts. The division of responsibilities amongst different stakeholders can also result in a lack of cohesive planning and effective execution of maintenance protocols, which, in turn, could jeopardise the overall safety, structural integrity, and preservation of cultural heritage within the place of worship (Battiloro, 2023).

Financial constraints further hinder proper maintenance, increasing the likelihood of security and safety threats. According to findings from the EU-funded Project SOAR, a critical challenge for faith communities in terms of enhancing security and safety is inadequate funding. The participants in the project emphasised the urgent need for improved security measures along with procedural knowledge, but cited a lack of necessary funds to acquire these resources (Project SOAR, 2023).

## Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Internal awareness:** Conduct regular training sessions and awareness programmes to educate staff, volunteers, and congregants about the potential threats and security risks places of worship face. For example, awareness programmes can include guest speakers or presentations from security experts who share insights and best practices on how to identify suspicious behaviour, mitigate risks, and enhance security measures within places of worship.
- **External awareness:** Raise awareness amongst members of the local community or authorities about the cultural or historical value of places of worship via conferences, events, or leaflets (UNESCO, 2012).
- **Collaborate with authorities and other stakeholders:** Collaborate with local authorities, law enforcement agencies, and community organisations in order to leverage resources and expertise for implementing security measures and addressing financial constraints.



## Geopolitical, socio-economic, and criminal context

### Geopolitical context

The political and social situation within a region significantly increases the vulnerability of places of worship. Within areas characterised by **political unrest, conflict, or heightened tensions**, places of worship often become the targets of terrorist and hate crime attacks (Hansen et al., 2020). Moreover, the persecution of a religious minority within one country can have global repercussions, insofar as it also escalates the risk of attacks against that minority or related communities within other countries (National Association of Evangelicals, 2022).

Political instability can lead to **inadequate resources and attention** being allocated to protect these religious sites, which, in turn, makes them more susceptible to vandalism, terrorism, or sectarian violence. The challenging political climate may also **hinder effective collaboration** between religious communities and governmental authorities, which is absolutely integral to developing coordinated efforts through which to enhance security measures and ensure the safety of worshippers and cultural heritage within these sacred spaces.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Monitor global events:** Enhance security measures during specific local, national, or global events that may increase the vulnerability of particular places of worship to terrorist attacks or hate crimes.
- **Support interfaith dialogue:** Engage in interfaith initiatives and collaborative advocacy efforts in order to uphold religious freedoms and protect the rights of minority religious groups. This can involve organising rallies, signing petitions, or suggesting to government officials that they need to implement policies that promote religious pluralism and safeguard the rights of all religious communities. These actions should be carefully planned, taking into account the local socio-political context and potential implications, such as, for example, the risk of incendiary rhetoric leading to hate speech or hate crimes, and opposition from certain segments of society.

### Socio-economic and criminal context

Communities characterised by high **poverty rates, social deprivation, and frequent criminal activities** are often at an increased risk of both violent and property crimes (Krivo & Peterson, 1996). Within these neighbourhoods, the socio-economic hardships residents face can foster an environment that is conducive to criminal behaviour or social tensions. Moreover, places of worship located within areas with **limited law enforcement monitoring** are vulnerable targets for such crimes due to reduced security oversight.

This vulnerability is heightened when places of worship are situated within geographical areas that have **previously experienced attacks** (Pethő-Kiss, 2020). Prior incidents in or around the place of worship set a precedent that increases the likelihood of similar attacks occurring in the future.

### Suggested actions or Recommendations

- **Address socio-economic marginality:** Implement community development initiatives aimed towards tackling poverty and social issues within the surrounding neighbourhoods of places of worship. Partner with local social service organisations and non-profits to provide resources such as food assistance, mental health services, and affordable housing programs.
- **Foster community cohesion:** Organise events and initiatives designed to enhance community cohesion,

resilience, and crime prevention. Examples of these include, amongst other things, hosting cultural festivals, neighbourhood clean-up days, and revitalisation projects in underserved areas. Local authorities can play a crucial role in this regard by incentivising and facilitating these efforts.

- **Security initiatives:** Engage religious stakeholders in proactive security initiatives. Foster collaboration amongst religious groups, local residents, and businesses. Establish online platforms for quick information sharing and maintain regular communication with law enforcement agencies in order to report potential risks, threats, and criminal activities promptly.

Table 1 Connections between crime or antisocial behaviours and vulnerabilities of places of worship

	Terrorist attacks	Hate crimes and hate speech		Violent behaviours not motivated by hate	Property crimes				
		Violent crimes against people	Other crimes		Thefts of artwork, religious and historical artefacts	Theft of metals	Other thefts	Vandalism	Squatting
Indoor accessibility	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Outdoor accessibility	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Unclear division between places of worship and neighbouring spaces	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Festivities, religious ceremonies, and tourism	•	•	•	•			•		
Symbolic value	•	•	•		•				
Availability of valuable items					•	•	•		
Absent or insufficient security deterrents	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Absent or insufficient security procedures	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Absent or insufficient health safety procedures									
Absent or insufficient crowd management procedures	•								
Absent or insufficient maintenance procedures								•	•
Lack of awareness, coordination issues and financial constraints	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Geopolitical context	•	•	•						
Socio-economic and criminal context	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Table 2 Connections between incidents or natural hazards and vulnerabilities of places of worship

	Structural failures, damage and improper use			Public health emergencies	Crowd risks	Environmental hazards
	Structural damage and construction falls	Malfunctions	Damage due to improper use or negligence			
Indoor accessibility				•	•	
Outdoor accessibility						
Unclear division between places of worship and neighbouring spaces						
Festivities, religious ceremonies, and tourism				•	•	
Symbolic value						
Availability of valuable items						
Absent or insufficient security deterrents						
Absent or insufficient security procedures						
Absent or insufficient health safety procedures				•		
Absent or insufficient crowd management procedures					•	
Absent or insufficient maintenance procedures	•	•	•			•
Lack of awareness, coordination issues and financial constraints	•	•	•	•	•	•
Geopolitical context						
Socio-economic and criminal context						

- Abed, A., & Aljibar, S. (2023). The impact of physical incivility signs on perceived safety in informal settlements in *Jordan. City, Territory and Architecture*, 10(1), 13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40410-023-00198-1>
- Al Jazeera. (2018, December 15). Suspected food poisoning kills 11 at Indian temple ceremony. *Al Jazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/15/suspected-food-poisoning-kills-11-at-indian-temple-ceremony>
- Allen, V. L., & Greenberger, D. B. (1980). Destruction and perceived control. In A. Baum & J. Singer (Eds.), *Advances in Environmental Psychology*. Erlbaum. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203780800/advances-environmental-psychology-baum-singer-jerome-singer>
- Australian National Security. (2017). Improvised Explosive Device (IED) *guidelines for crowded places*. <https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/crowded-places-subsite/Files/ied-guidelines-crowded-places.pdf>
- Bakker, E., & de Graaf, B. (2011). Preventing Lone Wolf Terrorism: Some CT Approaches Addressed. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 5(5/6), 43–50.
- Battiloro, R. (2023, May). *Collegiata church and friary—San Ginesio* (Italy). 1st Workshop on assessment of threats and vulnerabilities to places of worship (EU project SHRINES), Nice (France).
- Bayer, J., & Bård, P. (2020). *Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches*. European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL\\_STU\(2020\)655135\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655135/IPOL_STU(2020)655135_EN.pdf)
- Bigley, J. (2018). Places of Worship: Leadership Influence on *Threat Vulnerability*. *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, 12(1), 41–63.
- Binder, M. K., & Ackerman, G. A. (2023). CBRN Terrorism. In M. K. Binder & G. A. Ackerman, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.706>
- Bland, S. A. (2013). Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Casualty Management Principles. *Conflict and Catastrophe Medicine*, 747–770. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4471-2927-1\\_46](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4471-2927-1_46)
- BNN. (2023, March 26). Over 100 people fall ill after consuming Iftar at a mosque in West Bengal. *BNN*. <https://bnnbreaking.com/world/over-100-people-fall-ill-after-consuming-iftar-at-a-mosque-in-west-bengal/>
- Bourne, W., & Wright, W. D. (2004). A study of church vulnerability to violence: Implications for law enforcement. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 32(2), 151–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2003.12.005>
- Brantingham, P. L., & Brantingham, P. J. (1993). Nodes, paths and edges: Considerations on the complexity of crime and the physical environment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 13(1), 3–28. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944\(05\)80212-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(05)80212-9)
- Brian, M. H. (2010). Security Challenges for Houses of Worship. *Journal of Physical Security*, 4(2), 1–9.
- Cacciotti, R. (2020). Brick masonry response to wind driven rain. *Engineering Structures*, 204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.engstruct.2019.110080>
- Cacciotti, R., Kaiser, A., Sardella, A., De Nuntiis, P., Drdácák, M., Hanus, C., & Bonazza, A. (2021). Climate change-induced disasters and cultural heritage: Optimizing management strategies in Central Europe. *Climate Risk Management*, 32, 100301. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crm.2021.100301>
- Challenger, R., Clegg, C. W., & Robinson, M. A. (2009). *Understanding Crowd Behaviors: Guidance and Lessons Identified*. The Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College.
- Chasmar, J. (2013, September 15). Most holy water contaminated with fecal matter: Study. *Washington Times*. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/sep/15/most-holy-water-contaminated-fecal-matter-study/>
- Cohen, L. E., & Felson, M. (1979). Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach. *American Sociological Review*, 44(4), 588–608. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2094589>
- Conti, S. (2019). Heat Wave and Mortality of the Elderly. In J. Nriagu (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Environmental Health (Second Edition)* (pp. 477–484). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-409548-9.11231-X>
- Countryside Alliance. (2020). *Annual report into crimes on churches and religious buildings in the UK 2019-20*. Countryside Alliance. <https://www.countryside-alliance.org/resources/news/special-report-into-crimes-against-churches-and-re>
- de Kok, T. M. C. M., Hogervorst, J. G. F., Kleinjans, J. C. S., & Briedé, J. J. (2004). Radicals in the church. *The European Respiratory Journal*, 24(6), 1069–1070. <https://doi.org/10.1183/09031936.04.00113404>
- Denney, A. S., Torres, C. E., Oram, C., & Sutton, M. A. (2022). Crime at places of worship: A geospatial analysis. *Criminal Justice Studies*, 35(4), 347–363. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1478601X.2022.2141890>
- Doctor, A. C., & Hunter, S. (2023). The Future of Terrorist Use of Improvised Explosive Devices: Getting in Front of an Evolving Threat. *CTC Sentinel*, 16(11). <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CTC-SENTINEL-112023.pdf>
- Ecclesiastical. (2022). *Church Guidance Note: Theft of metal*. Ecclesiastical. <https://ecclesiastical.com/documents/churchMetalTheftGuidance.pdf>

- ECRI. (2020). *Annual report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019*. European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-annual-report-2019/16809ca3e1>
- ECRI. (2021). *Annual report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020*. European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/annual-report-on-ecri-s-activities-for-2020/1680a1cd59>
- Esposito, E. (2022). Deprivation-based squatting as a choice from necessity: The housing pathways of low-income squatters in public housing in Naples, Italy. *Cities*, 124(103623). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2022.103623>
- Esposito, E., & Chiodelli, F. (2023). Beyond proper political squatting: Exploring individualistic need-based occupations in a public housing neighbourhood in Naples. *Housing Studies*, 38(8), 1436–1458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2021.1946017>
- European Commission. (2018). *Guidance Note On The Practical Application Of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/Jha On Combating Certain Forms And Expressions Of Racism And Xenophobia By Means Of Criminal Law*. EU High Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance (European Commission). [https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55607](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc_id=55607)
- European Commission. (2020, December 4). *Protection of Places of Worship*. <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/ppts/items/696367/en>
- European Commission. (2021a). *EU Quick Guide to support the protection of Places of Worship*. European Commission (DG HOME). [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/EU%20Quick%20Guide%20to%20support%20protection%20of%20Places%20of%20Worship\\_en.pdf](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/EU%20Quick%20Guide%20to%20support%20protection%20of%20Places%20of%20Worship_en.pdf)
- European Commission. (2021b). *Project Based Collaboration (PBC) on Violent Right-Wing Extremist (VRWE)*. [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/VRWE%20working%20definition\\_en.pdf](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/VRWE%20working%20definition_en.pdf)
- European Commission. (2021c). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. A more inclusive and protective Europe: Extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0777>
- European Commission. (2022). *Commission Staff Working Document. Security by Design: Protection of public spaces from terrorist attacks*. [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Staff%20working%20document%20-%20Security%20by%20Design%20-%20Protection%20of%20public%20spaces%20from%20terrorist%20attacks\\_en.PDF](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Staff%20working%20document%20-%20Security%20by%20Design%20-%20Protection%20of%20public%20spaces%20from%20terrorist%20attacks_en.PDF)
- European Commission, TIPIK, & Spark Legal Network. (2021). *Study to support the preparation of the European Commission's initiative to extend the list of EU crimes in Article 83 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU to hate speech and hate crime: Final report*. Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2838/04029>
- Europol. (2021). *European Union Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA)*. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta-2021#downloads>
- Europol. (2023). *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2023*. Publications Office of the European Union. [https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/Europol\\_TESAT\\_2023.pdf](https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/Europol_TESAT_2023.pdf)
- Fang, C. M., & Chhetri, N. (2013). 1.06—What Have We Learned about Climate Variability and Human Health? In R. A. Pielke (Ed.), *Climate Vulnerability* (pp. 79–86). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-384703-4.00111-8>
- Gill, P., Horgan, J., & Deckert, P. (2014). Bombing Alone: Tracing the Motivations and Antecedent Behaviors of Lone-Actor Terrorists,, *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 59(2), 425–435. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.12312>
- Goldstein, A. P. (2013). *The psychology of vandalism*. Springer Science & Business Media. [https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_lookup?title=The%20psychology%20of%20vandalism&publication\\_year=1996&author=A.P.%20Goldstein](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_lookup?title=The%20psychology%20of%20vandalism&publication_year=1996&author=A.P.%20Goldstein)
- González-Varas Ibáñez, A. (2018). International protection of places of worship\*. *JusOnline*, 1. <https://jusvitaepensiero.mediabiblos.it/news/allegati/Fascicolo-I---2018-3-29%20Ibanez.pdf>
- Grashoff, U. (2019). Cautious occupiers and restrained bureaucrats: Schwarzwohnen in the German Democratic Republic. Somewhat different from squatting. *Urban Studies*, 56(3), 548–560. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098017734813>
- Hamm, M., & Spaaij, R. (2017). *The Age of Lone Wolf Terrorism*. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/hamm18174>
- Hansen, H. E., Nemeth, S. C., & Mauslein, J. A. (2020). Ethnic political exclusion and terrorism: Analyzing

- the local conditions for violence. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 37(3), 280–300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894218782160>
- Helbing, D., Farkas, I. J., & Vicsek, T. (2002). *Crowd Disasters and Simulation of Panic Situations*. In A. Bunde, J. Kropp, & H. J. Schellnhuber, *The Science of Disasters* (pp. 330–350). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-56257-0\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-56257-0_11)
- Herbert, C. W. (2018a). Like a Good Neighbor, Squatters Are There: Property and Neighborhood Stability in the Context of Urban Decline. *City & Community*, 17(1), 236–258. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12275>
- Herbert, C. W. (2018b). Squatting for Survival: Precarious Housing in a Declining U.S. City. *Housing Policy Debate*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2018.1461120>
- Historic England. (2021a). *Theft of Metal from Church Roofs: Prevention and Response* (Metal Theft and Heritage Crime). Historic England. <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/theft-metal-church-roofs-prevention-response/heag306-theft-metal-church-roofs-prevention-response/>
- Historic England. (2021b). *Theft of Metal from Church Roofs: Replacement Materials* (Metal Theft and Heritage Crime). Historic England. <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/theft-metal-church-roofs-replacement-materials/heag305-theft-metal-church-roofs-replacement-materials/>
- Hodge, J. G. (2015). Respecting Religious Freedoms and Protecting the Public's Health. *Public Health Reports*, 130(5), 546–549.
- Hodge, J. G., Reinke, H., & Reeves, C. (2020). *Balancing Religious Freedoms and Public Health Protections During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World. <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/responses/balancing-religious-freedoms-and-public-health-protections-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
- Ilieș, D. C., Oneț, A., Wendt, J. A., Ilieș, M., Baias, Ș., & Herman, G. V. (2018). Study on microbial and fungal contamination of air and wooden surfaces inside of a historical Church from Romania. *Journal of Environmental Biology*, 39(6), 980–984. <https://doi.org/10.22438/jeb/39/6/MRN-658>
- Illiyaş, F. T., Mani, S. K., Pradeepkumar, A. P., & Mohan, K. (2013). Human stampedes during religious festivals: A comparative review of mass gathering emergencies in India. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 5, 10–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2013.09.003>
- Innes, E. (2013, September 13). Not so pure after all: Most holy water “is contaminated with faecal matter” and could be harmful to health | Daily Mail Online. *The Daily Mail*. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2419851/Not-pure-Most-holy-water-contaminated-faecal-matter-harmful-health.html>
- IPCC. (2012). *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation: Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (C. B. Field, V. Barros, T. F. Stocker, D. Qin, D. J. Dokken, K. L. Ebi, M. D. Mastrandrea, K. J. Mach, J. K. Plattner, S. K. Allen, M. Tignor, & P. M. Midgley, Eds.). Cambridge University Press.
- Italian Fire Prevention Unit. (2016). *Le cause d'incendio e/o di esplosione nelle caldaie e generatori di calore in ambienti domestici*. Italian Fire Prevention Unit. [https://www.associazionebrescianacaldaisti.it/\\_doc/archive/Documenti/VVFF\\_caldaie\\_16022016](https://www.associazionebrescianacaldaisti.it/_doc/archive/Documenti/VVFF_caldaie_16022016)
- Italian Ministry of Interior. (2017). *Modelli organizzativi per garantire alti livelli di sicurezza in occasione di manifestazioni pubbliche*. Italian Ministry of Interior.
- Jayroe, M., Aguilar, D. R., Porter, A., Cima, M., Chai, S., & Hayman, K. (2023). Transmission Analysis of COVID-19 Outbreaks Associated with Places of Worship, Arkansas, May 2020–December 2020. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 62(1), 650–661. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01653-y>
- Johnson, R. R. (2019). *Reducing Vandalism at Places of Worship*. Dolan Consulting Group. <https://www.dolanconsultinggroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Reducing-Vandalism-at-Places-of-Worship.pdf>
- Juntunen, M., & Maristo, J. (2022). *Strengthening the security and resilience of at-risk religious sites and communities* (SOAR) [EU project SOAR - Strengthening the security and resilience of at-risk religious sites and communities]. <https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/T2.2.-Baseline-Research-SOAR.pdf>
- Kenyon, J., Baker-Beall, C., & Binder, J. (2023). Lone-Actor Terrorism – A Systematic Literature Review. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 46(10), 2038–2065. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2021.1892635>
- Koehler, D. (2016). Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in Europe Current Developments and Issues for the Future. *PRISM*, 6(2), 84–105.
- Krivo, L. J., & Peterson, R. D. (1996). Extremely Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Urban Crime. *Social Forces*, 75(2), 619–648. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2580416>
- Larsson, D. (2006). Exposure to Property Crime as a Consequence of Poverty. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 7(1), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14043850500342009>
- Lee, M., Lim, H., Xavier, M. S., & Lee, E.-Y. (2022). “A Divine Infection”: A Systematic Review on the Roles of

- Religious Communities During the Early Stage of COVID-19. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 61(1), 866–919. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01364-w>
- Lewis, J. W. (2015, September 28). *A Smart Bomb in Every Garage? Driverless Cars and the Future of Terrorist Attacks* | START.umd.edu. START - National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. [https://www.start.umd.edu/news/smart-bomb-every-garage-driverless-cars-and-future-terrorist-attacks#\\_edn5](https://www.start.umd.edu/news/smart-bomb-every-garage-driverless-cars-and-future-terrorist-attacks#_edn5)
- Marone, F. (2021). A Farewell to Firearms? The logic of weapon selection in terrorism: the case of jihadist attacks in Europe. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 33(3), 221–240. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781158.2021.1960813>
- Martin, G. (2020). Violence in the Name of the Faith. Religious Terrorism. In *Understanding Terrorism. Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues* (7th ed., p. 592). Sage Publications. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/understanding-terrorism/book259199>
- Martinez Lopez, M. A., & Cattaneo, C. (Eds.). (2014). *The squatters' movement in Europe: Commons and autonomy as alternatives to capitalism*. Pluto Press. [https://scholars.cityu.edu.hk/en/publications/the-squatters-movement-in-europe\(842d598e-8cd1-4bb6-8861-f76be900ba4a\).html](https://scholars.cityu.edu.hk/en/publications/the-squatters-movement-in-europe(842d598e-8cd1-4bb6-8861-f76be900ba4a).html)
- Matsueda, R. L., Kreager, D. A., & Huizinga, D. (2006). Deterring Delinquents: A Rational Choice Model of Theft and Violence. *American Sociological Review*, 71(1), 95–122.
- Mazurczak, A., & Godzisz, P. (2017). *Przestępstwa motywowane uprzedzeniami. Analiza i zalecenia (Eng. Crimes motivated by prejudice. Analysis and recommendations)* (6; Biuletyn Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich). <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/sites/default/files/Przestepstwa%20motywowane%20uprzedzeniami%20ZRT%20nr%2023%202017.pdf>
- McColl-Kennedy, J. R., Patterson, P. G., Smith, A. K., & Brady, M. K. (2009). Customer Rage Episodes: Emotions, Expressions and Behaviors. *Journal of Retailing*, 85(2), 222–237. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2009.04.002>
- National Association of Evangelicals. (2022, January 1). Worldwide Religious Persecution. *National Association of Evangelicals*. <https://www.nae.org/worldwide-religious-persecution-2002/>
- NRF. (2011). *Effective Crowd Management Guidelines on how to maintain the safety and security of your customers, employees and store*. National Retail Federation.
- ODIHR.(2022). *Hatecrimes database [dataset]*. OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. [https://hatecrime.osce.org/incidents?country=AT%2CBE%2CBG%2CHR%2CCY%2CCZ%2CDK%2CEE%2CFI%2CFR%2CDE%2CGR%2CHU%2CIE%2CIT%2CLV%2CLT%2CLU%2CMT%2CNL%2CPL%2CPT%2CRO%2CSK%2CSI%2CES%2CSE&year=2023&types\\_of\\_crime=3%2C](https://hatecrime.osce.org/incidents?country=AT%2CBE%2CBG%2CHR%2CCY%2CCZ%2CDK%2CEE%2CFI%2CFR%2CDE%2CGR%2CHU%2CIE%2CIT%2CLV%2CLT%2CLU%2CMT%2CNL%2CPL%2CPT%2CRO%2CSK%2CSI%2CES%2CSE&year=2023&types_of_crime=3%2C)
- Ojedokun, U. A., & Oduoye, O. O. (2020). Property theft in places of worship in Osogbo City, Nigeria. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 73(4), 475–490. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-019-09879-w>
- Ortiz, R., & Ortiz, P. (2016). Vulnerability Index: A New Approach for Preventive Conservation of Monuments. *International Journal of Architectural Heritage*, 10(8), 1078–1100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15583058.2016.1186758>
- Orton, A. (2016). *Tackling Prejudice and Engaging with Religious Minorities*. Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/16806c84db>
- OSHA. (2012). *Crowd Management Safety Guidelines for Retailers*. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- Papaioannou, K. J. (2017). “Hunger makes a thief of any man”: Poverty and crime in British colonial Asia. *European Review of Economic History*, 21(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ereh/hew019>
- Peršak, N. (2022). Criminalising Hate Crime and Hate Speech at EU Level: Extending the List of Eurocrimes Under Article 83(1) TFEU. *Criminal Law Forum*, 33(2), 85–119. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10609-022-09440-w>
- Pethő-Kiss, K. (2020). Countering Terrorist Acts against Christian Places of Worship. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 14(3), 74–86.
- Phillips, T., & Smith, P. (2006). Rethinking Urban Incivility Research: Strangers, Bodies and Circulations. *Urban Studies*, 43(5–6), 879–901. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980600676196>
- Poulsen, K. (2015, February 5). Why the US Government Is Terrified of Hobbyist Drones. *Wired*. <https://www.wired.com/2015/02/white-house-drone/>
- Project SOAR. (2023). *Policy brief. Key findings and recommendations on safeguarding religious sites, houses of worship and communities* [EU project SOAR - Strengthening the security and resilience of at-risk religious sites and communities]. <https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/soar-policy-brief.pdf>
- Pruijt, H. (2013). The Logic of Urban Squatting. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(1), 19–45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2012.01116.x>

- Quadri, S. A. (2020). COVID-19 and religious congregations: Implications for spread of novel pathogens. *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 96, 219–221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijid.2020.05.007>
- Raj, R., & Griffin, K. (2018). *Risk assessment and disaster management for religious events*. In M. E. Korstanje, R. Raj, & K. Griffin (Eds.), *Risk and safety challenges for religious tourism and events* (pp. 18–25). CABI. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781786392282.0018>
- Ravan, M., Revez, M. J., Pinto, I. V., Brum, P., & Birkmann, J. (2023). A Vulnerability Assessment Framework for Cultural Heritage Sites: The Case of the Roman Ruins of Tróia. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 14(1), 26–40. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13753-023-00463-4>
- Rimpler-Schmid, A., Trapp, R., Leonard, S., Kaunert, C., Dubucq, Y., Lefebvre, C., & Mohn, H. (2021). *EU preparedness and responses to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) threats*. European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Policies. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/653645/EXPO\\_STU\(2021\)653645\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/653645/EXPO_STU(2021)653645_EN.pdf)
- Scheitle, C. P. (2016). Crimes occurring at places of worship: An analysis of 2012 newspaper reports. *International Review of Victimology*, 22(1), 65–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269758015610855>
- Scheitle, C. P., & Ulmer, J. T. (2018). Profane Concerns in Sacred Spaces: The Challenges and Consequences of Implementing Security Measures in Religious Congregations. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 13(1), 29–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2018.1387736>
- Siadkowski, A. K., Szymankiewicz, Ł., Kujawa, K., & Bańka, S. (Eds.). (2022). *Security by Design Guidebook for Religious Sites*. WSB University in Dąbrowa Górnicza.
- Sidebottom, A. (2012). Metal theft [JDI Brief Series]. [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/sites/jill-dando-institute/files/metal\\_theft\\_1-5\\_all.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/sites/jill-dando-institute/files/metal_theft_1-5_all.pdf)
- Spelman, W. (2004). Optimal Targeting of Incivility-Reduction Strategies. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 20(1), 63–88. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOQC.0000016700.27654.76>
- Stachyra, M., & Batkowski, R. (2023). *Guidebook on security measures for religious sites & communities*. EU ISF ProSPeReS project, Grant Agreement No. 101034230. [https://prosperes.eu/wp-content/uploads/PROSPERES\\_Guidebook\\_on\\_security\\_measures\\_V.1.2.pdf](https://prosperes.eu/wp-content/uploads/PROSPERES_Guidebook_on_security_measures_V.1.2.pdf)
- START. (2022). *Global Terrorism Database 1970–2020* [dataset]. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>
- Surachman, A., & Almeida, D. M. (2018). Stress and Coping Theory Across the Adult Lifespan. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190236557.013.341>
- Sybicki, A. (2022). Anti-terrorist protection of places of worship. *Terroryzm - Studia, Analizy, Prewencja*, 7(1), 425–452. <https://doi.org/10.4467/27204383TER.22.015.15431>
- Thompson, T. (2019, June 19). Violent organised crime gangs now targeting church roofs. *Police Professional*. <https://policeprofessional.com/news/violent-organised-crime-gangs-now-targeting-church-roofs/>
- Tolles, E. L., Kimbro, E. E., & Ginell, W. S. (2002). *Planning and Engineering Guidelines for the Seismic Retrofitting of Historic Adobe Structures*. Getty Conservation Institute. [https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/pdf\\_publications/seismic\\_retrofitting.html](https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/seismic_retrofitting.html)
- UNESCO. (2012). *Securing Religious Heritage* (6; Cultural Heritage Protection Handbook). UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2017). *Preventing violent extremism through education: A guide for policy-makers*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/preventing-violent-extremism-through-education-guide-policy-makers>
- United Nations. (2020). *The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on terrorism, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism*. United Nations Security Council, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. [https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/files/documents/2021/Jan/cted\\_paper\\_the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-counter-te.pdf](https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/files/documents/2021/Jan/cted_paper_the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-counter-te.pdf)
- United Nations. (2022). *Protecting vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks involving unmanned aircraft systems (UAS)*. United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism. [https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/2118451e-vt-mod5-unmanned\\_aircraft\\_systems\\_final-web.pdf](https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/2118451e-vt-mod5-unmanned_aircraft_systems_final-web.pdf)
- UNODC. (2022). *Manual on Prevention of and Responses to Terrorist Attacks on the Basis of Xenophobia, Racism and Other Forms of Intolerance, or in the Name of Religion or Belief*. UNODC.
- US Homeland Security. (2003). *Houses of Worship Security Practices Guide*. US Homeland Security. <https://fedweb-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/fed-91/2/Houses%2520of%2520Worship%2520Security%2520Practices%2520Guide%25207%252023%25202013.pdf>
- Valesio, V. (2023, May). *Safety risks and accidents*. 1st Workshop on assessment of threats and vulnerabilities to places of worship (EU project SHRINES), Nice (France).
- Vergani, M. (2023). *Defining hate, violent extremism and terrorism: Issues and perspectives*. Tackling Hate. <https://tacklinghate.org/trainingmodule/defining-hate-incidents-hate-crime-and-hateful->

extremism-issues-and-perspectives/

- Wilkinson, P. (2020, October 30). *Criminals target places of worship during pandemic*. <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/30-october/news/uk/criminals-target-places-of-worship-during-pandemic>
- Williams, M. L., Burnap, P., Javed, A., Liu, H., & Ozalp, S. (2020). Hate in the Machine: Anti-Black and Anti-Muslim Social Media Posts as Predictors of Offline Racially and Religiously Aggravated Crime. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 60(1), 93–117. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz049>
- Wojciechowski, S., & Siadkowski, A. K. (2014). *Understanding Contemporary Terrorism and Counterterrorism*. Academy of Business in Dąbrowa Górnicza.
- Xue, Q., Zou, M., Guo, J., Teng, Q., Zhang, Q., Sheng, L., Xu, S., Fang, C., Yao, N., Li, Y., & Zhao, J. (2023). Detection and assessment of dust mite allergens in an indoor environment in Anhui, China. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 30(2), 3045–3055. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-022-22395-0>
- Zsako, J. (2013). *Defacing America—The Rise of Graffiti Vandalism* (2nd ed.). CreateSpace Independent Publishing independent Publishing Platform. Houses %2520of%2520Worship%2520Security%2520Practices%2520Guide%25207%252023%25202013.pdf







Raising Awareness for the protection of places of worship by promoting interfaith dialogue on the use of advanced technologies



This project is co-funded by the European Union's Internal Security Fund - G.A. 101100431

