

Acts of violence against religious spaces rise 6 pct in Greece during 2018



Authorities in Greece recorded 591 acts of violence against spaces of religious significance in 2018, an increase of 6 percent compared with the year before that, though incidents against Jewish spaces almost doubled.

According to an annual report published on Thursday by the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs' special secretariat, the overwhelming majority (596 incidents) of the incidents were against sacred Christian sites or places of worship and 95 percent of those targeted the Greek Orthodox faith.

The 560 attacks on Greek Orthodox spaces included the December 27, 2018, bombing of Dionysiou Areopagitou Church in central Athens, in which two people were injured.

Three more incidents targeted Jehovah's Witnesses and one the Catholic church.

However, attacks targeting the Jewish faith shot up by 81 percent in 2018, with 20 incidents against 11 the previous year. All were treated as being of an antisemitic

nature.

Incidents against Muslim places of worship came to two, against eight in 2017.

“Human rights are not a zero-sum game between a majority and various minorities. They are the basis of our very civilization, a sine qua non requirement for social peace and one of the most significant factors in the growth of the economy and the prosperity of all citizens,” the ministry’s General Secretary for Religious Affairs Giorgos Kalantzis said.

The ministry report added that of the 591 crimes against religious symbols and spaces last year, 38 were solved by police.

— Source: ekathimerini.com