

Cases and rulings

Country Code	Year	Reference details title	Reference details URL	Hate Bias motivation	Court / Body	Key facts of the case	Results (sanctions, outcome) and key consequences or implications of the case	Main reasoning / argumentation	Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case	Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details
Bulgaria	2014	ECtHR / No. 26827/08 / Judgement / Abdu v. Bulgaria	http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng/?i=002-9392	Racial or ethnic origin	European Court of Human Rights, ECHR	The applicant and one of his friends, both Sudanese nationals, had been involved in a fight with two Bulgarian youths. During the fight the applicant was slightly injured. He alleged that his attackers, two skinheads, had assaulted him on racist grounds. The police conducted an investigation but were unable to ascertain who had started the fight or whether the assault was racially motivated. Their focus though was on establishing the violent acts and not on eventual racial motivation. Considering there was no sufficient evidence, the public prosecutor decided not to prosecute any of the individuals involved.	Therefore, the legal remedies mentioned by the Government, namely a criminal prosecution for minor bodily injuries and an action for damages against those responsible, could not, in the circumstances of the present case, be considered appropriate to fulfil the State's procedural obligations, and the objection raised by the Government as to non-exhaustion of domestic remedies had to be rejected. Conclusion: violation (five votes to two). Article 41: EUR 4,000 in respect of non-pecuniary damage	The prosecuting authorities had concentrated their investigations and analysis on whether it had been the two Sudanese nationals or the two Bulgarians who had started the fight. They had therefore confined themselves to establishing the violent acts, merely noting the lack of evidence that the violence had been motivated by racist considerations. The authorities had therefore not deemed it necessary to question the witness about any remarks he might have heard during the incident, or to question the two Bulgarian youths about a possible racist motive for their actions.	Racially motivated acts of violence against other persons constituted a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment and a preliminary investigation.	"In view of these considerations and the specific substantiated allegations voiced by the applicant during the criminal proceedings, the authorities had been in possession of plausible evidence pointing to a possible racist motive on the part of the applicant's attackers and had failed in their duty to take all reasonable steps to investigate whether the acts of violence had been racially motivated."

DISCLAIMER The information presented here is collected under contract by the FRA's research network FRANET. The information and views contained do not necessarily reflect the views or the official position of the FRA.

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/databases/anti-muslim-hatred/>

Copyright © 2026 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights