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# **US Hate Crimes Motivated by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation**

**MAY 2023 REPORT**

## US Hate Crimes Motivated by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

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### Assessment

#### US Hate Crimes Motivated by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

This report reexamines hate-crime data and statistics in the United States, providing an update to the current situation regarding hate crime incidents and identifying the groups most frequently targeted in hate crimes motivated by gender identity and sexual orientation. Gay men face the highest number of hate crimes in this category, while trans and non-binary individuals likely face the highest share of hate crimes relative to the size of their community. Hate crimes motivated by bias against gender identity and sexual orientation have overall trended upward over the past five years and will likely continue to increase in the coming years.

#### Key Takeaways:

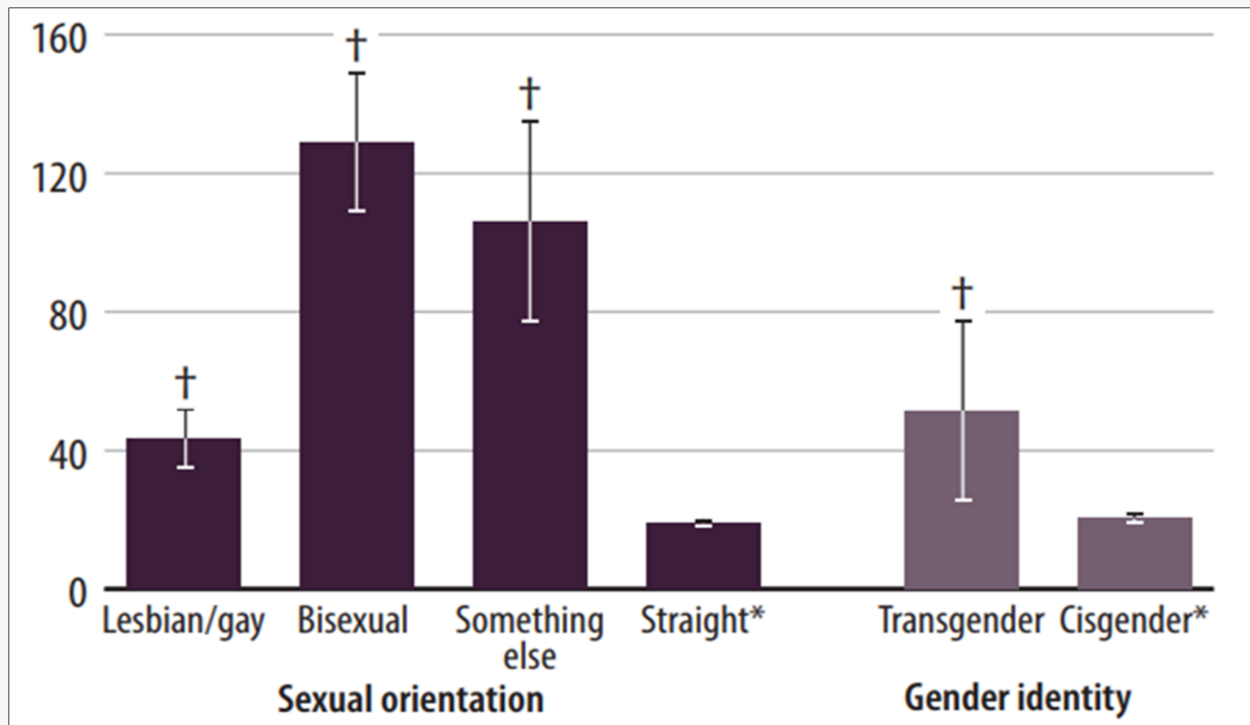
- According to the FBI, a total of 2,049 reported hate crime incidents involved biases against gender identity or sexual orientation in 2021.
- Gay clubs in particular have been targeted in anti-LGBTQ+ crimes
- Anti-gay hate crimes are the highest-reported set of hate crimes within those motivated by bias against gender identity or sexual orientation
- The number of hate crimes motivated by bias against gender identity and sexual orientation has trended upward consistently over the past five years.
- These hate crimes will likely continue to trend upward in the coming years, particularly due to recent political debates surrounding trans issues, such as discussions of gender identity in classrooms and gender-affirming healthcare.

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### Overview

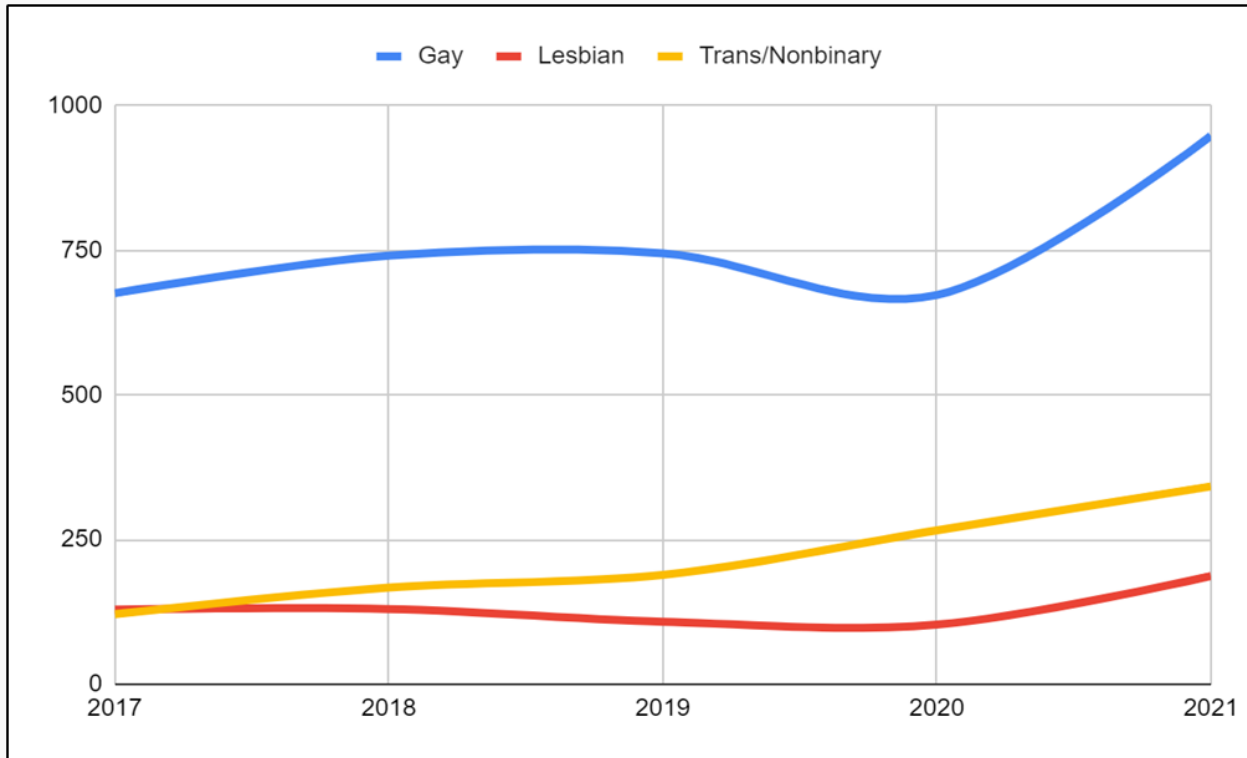
The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) publishes data each year on the number of hate crimes that have been committed in the United States. In March 2023, the FBI issued a supplemental report on previously released statistics on hate crimes committed in 2021, the latest year for which data is available. According to these statistics, a total of 2,049 reported hate crime incidents involved biases against gender identity or sexual orientation.

Hate crimes against members of the LGBTQ+ community have remained one of the most common for decades, and assessments of trends since 2017 indicate that such hate crimes remain high. According to the BJS, the proportion of gay or lesbian individuals who reported being a victim to a hate crime was more than twice that reported by straight individuals. The LGBTQ+ population represents approximately 7 percent of the total US population—though estimates of the LGBTQ+ population are imprecise and can vary significantly based on source—while anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes represent approximately 19 percent of all reported hate crimes according to the most recent FBI data.



Above: Rate of anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes per 1,000 persons aged 16 or older, 2017–2020

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Above: Number of anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes reported by the FBI, 2017–2021

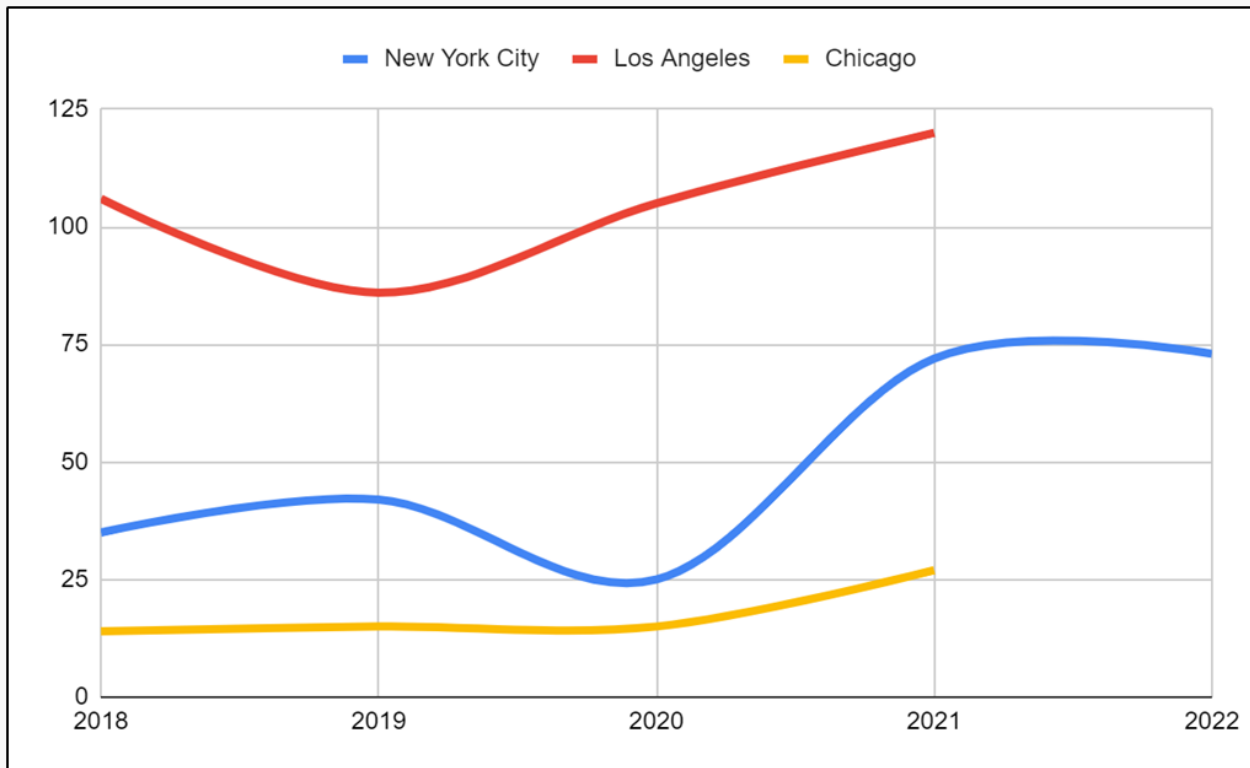
## Anti-Gay Hate Crimes

This trend persists in major cities as well as in rural areas, as the New York Police Department (NYPD) announced in May 2022 that the number of hate crimes against gay men, year to date, was 100 percent higher than a year earlier. Gay clubs in particular have been targeted in anti-LGBTQ+ crimes, with multiple reports identified thus far in 2023 involving perpetrators targeting LGBTQ+ individuals in or near such venues. Data on the relative share of hate crimes affecting gay men may be inaccurate, as gay men who report hate crimes might not indicate that they are gay, and there are no consistent estimates for the number of LGBTQ+ individuals in the United States.

FBI data during the last five years for which hate-crime data is available show a gradual increase in the number of anti-gay hate crimes, with a notable surge in these incidents after 2020. City-level data from the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago is inconsistent in when the number of anti-gay hate crimes surged during the past five years, but there remains an overall increase in the number of anti-gay hate crimes reported in these cities.

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While New York reported that anti-gay hate crimes decreased slightly in 2022, the overall increasing trend in anti-gay hate crimes reported nationally and in Los Angeles and Chicago over the past five years indicates that anti-gay hate crimes are likely to continue increasing in the coming years.



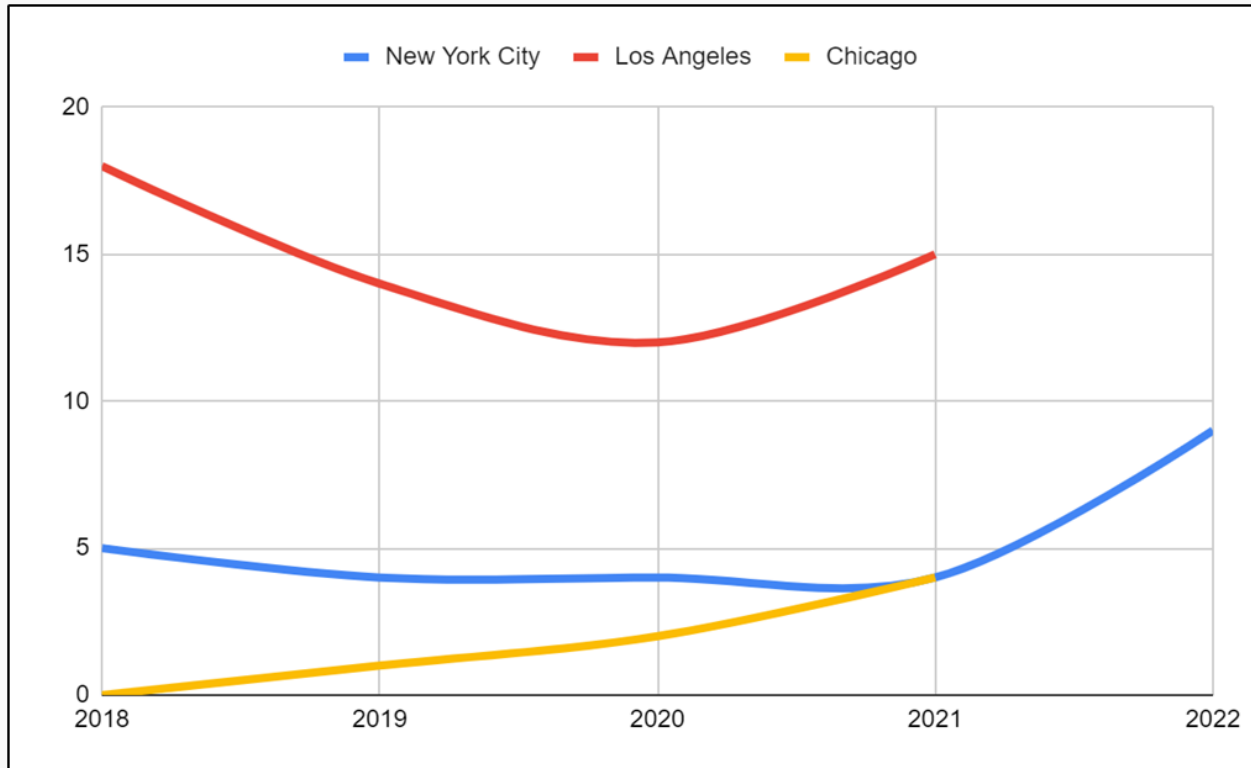
Above: Number of anti-gay hate crimes reported by the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, 2018–2022

## Anti-Lesbian Hate Crimes

Hate crimes targeting lesbian victims in the United States are among the lowest reported in the category of hate crimes motivated by bias against gender identity or sexual orientation. As with gay men, data on the relative share of hate crimes affecting lesbian women may be inaccurate, as gay men who report hate crimes might not indicate that they are lesbian, and there are no consistent estimates for the number of LGBTQ+ individuals in the United States. Data from the past five years for cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago show a general upward trend in anti-lesbian hate crimes since 2020. While the number of anti-lesbian hate crimes reported in these cities over the past five years may be too small to

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make an accurate and isolated assessment of trends for these hate crimes, it is consistent with the trends seen in overall anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes over the past five years. Therefore, the number of anti-lesbian hate crimes will likely continue to increase in the coming years.



*Above: Number of anti-lesbian hate crimes reported by the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, 2018–2022*

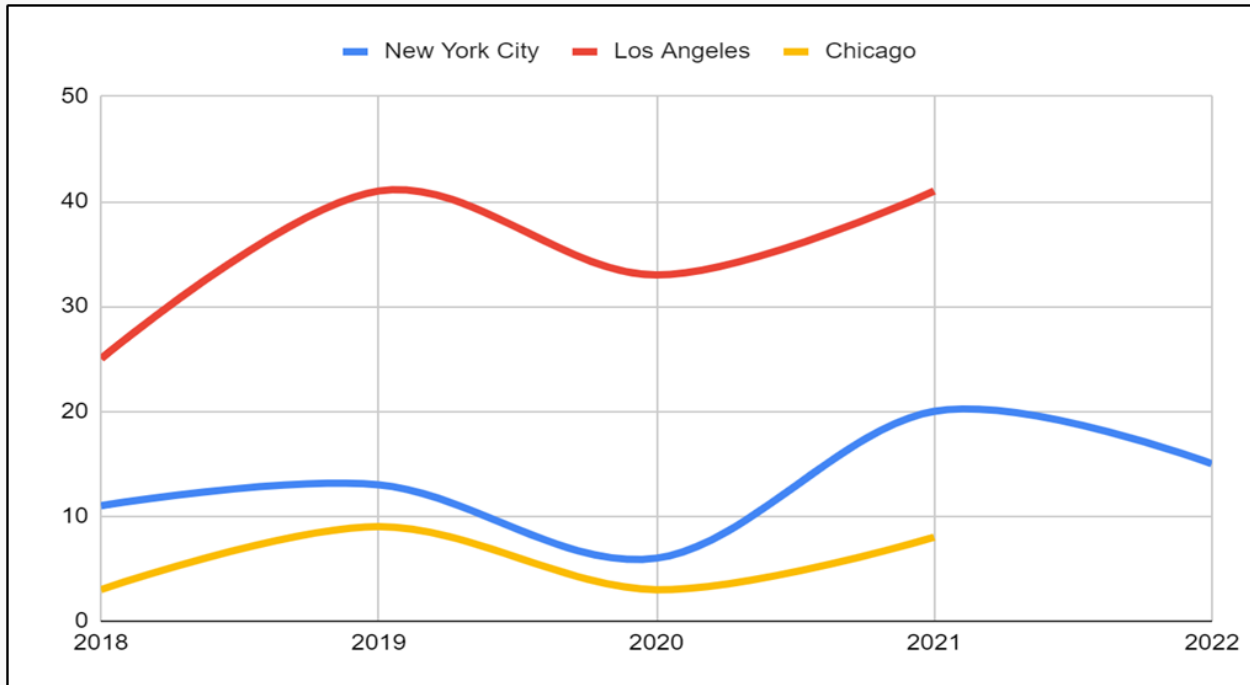
## Anti-Trans and Anti-Non-Binary Hate Crimes

At least 38 trans individuals were killed in 2022, and as of 1 May 2023, at least nine trans individuals have been killed thus far in 2023. Overall, anti-trans and anti-non-binary hate crimes have continued to increase at a steady rate on the national level while being reported inconsistently on the local level for the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Recent political debates surrounding trans issues, such as discussions of gender identity in classrooms and gender-affirming healthcare, may contribute to a rise in anti-trans hate crimes, according to pro-LGBTQ+ organizations.

Over the past five years, federal data shows a consistent and upward trend in anti-trans and anti-non-binary hate crimes, and municipal data shows that anti-trans and anti-non-binary

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hate crimes increased in 2021. While New York City reported a decrease in these hate crimes in 2022, there is likely to be a generally upward trend in anti-trans and anti-non-binary hate crimes throughout the United States in the coming years.



*Above: Number of anti-trans and anti-non-binary hate crimes reported by the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, 2018–2022*

## Conclusions

Except for a relative decrease in 2020, the number of hate crimes motivated by bias against gender identity and sexual orientation has trended upward consistently over the past five years. Local data is more inconsistent on the number of hate crimes reported against these communities, but political developments surrounding discussions of gender identity in classrooms and gender-affirming healthcare will likely trigger a continued increase in the number of hate crimes targeting these communities.

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