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US Hate Crimes Motivated by Race and Ethnicity

MAY 2023 REPORT

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Assessment

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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 race and ethnicity. The Black community faces the highest number and relative share of these hate crimes in the United States. Five-year trends identified in federal and local data on hate crimes motivated by racial or ethnic bias show that the number of these hate crimes will likely continue to increase in the coming years.

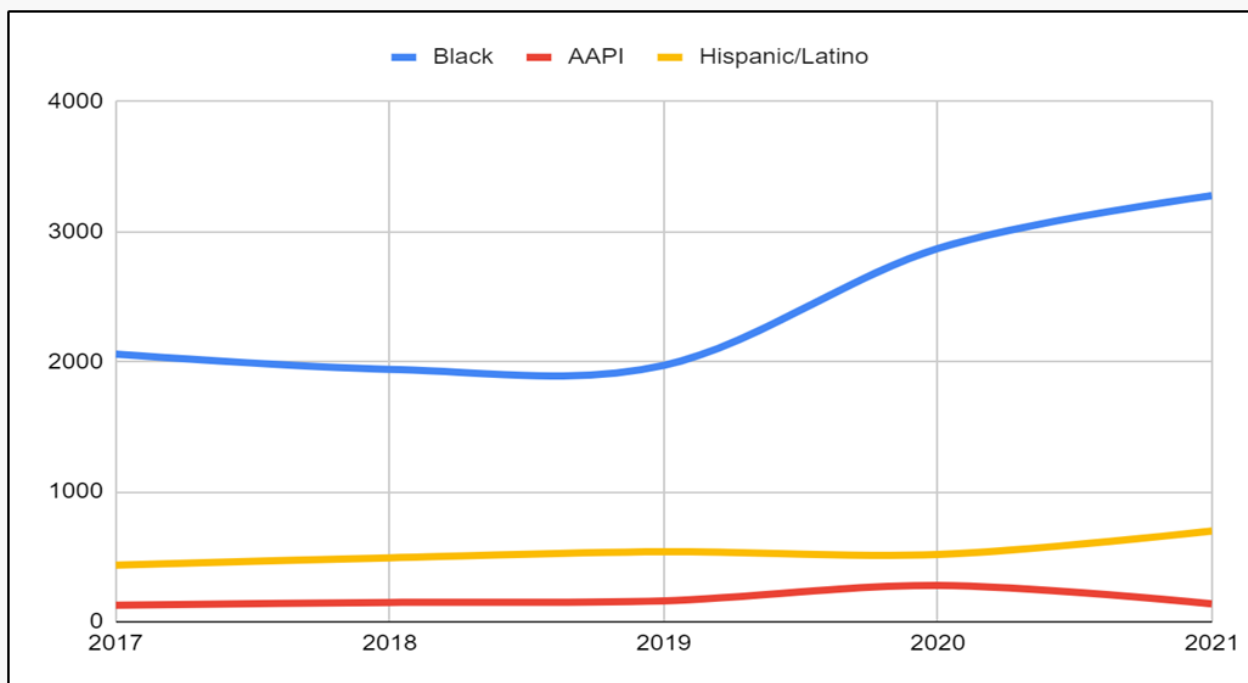
Key Takeaways:

- According to FBI data from 2021, a total of 6,643 reported hate crime incidents involved biases against race or ethnicity
- A surge in anti-AAPI hate crimes began in early 2020, coinciding with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and the public accusations directed at China for allegedly allowing the virus to spread around the world.
- Anti-Black hate crimes are the most frequently reported hate crimes, and the Black community also faces the highest share of hate crimes relative to the size of the Black population in the United States.
- Five-year trends in hate crimes motivated by racial or ethnic bias indicated that the number of these hate crimes will likely continue to increase in the coming years.

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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 6,643 reported hate crime incidents involved biases against race or ethnicity, representing approximately 61 percent of all reported hate crimes according to the FBI.



Above: Number of hate crimes committed with an anti-Black, anti-AAPI, or anti-Hispanic/Latino bias according to FBI data, 2017–2021

Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Hate Crimes

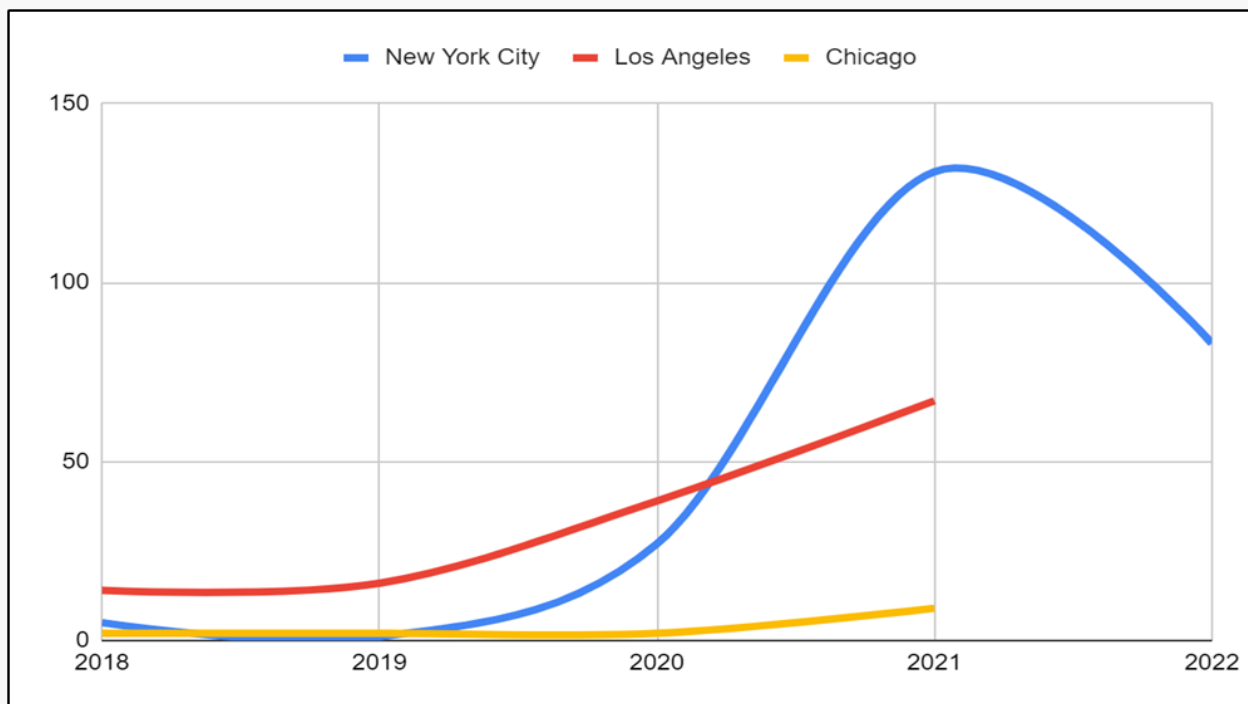
Between 2020 and 2021, for example, an analysis of reported hate crimes in 24 major US cities found that hate crimes against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) increased by an average of 189 percent in these cities. While the number of anti-AAPI hate crimes remains at historic highs, this number has been gradually trending downward since peaking in early 2022: Such hate crimes decreased by 48 percent in New York City, New York, and by 17 percent

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in Los Angeles, California. The surge in anti-AAPI hate crimes began in early 2020, coinciding with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and the public accusations directed at China for allegedly allowing the virus to spread around the world.

The AAPI population represents approximately 5.5 percent of the total US population, while anti-AAPI hate crimes represent approximately 6.9 percent of all reported hate crimes, according to the most recently updated FBI data.

Over the past five years, anti-AAPI hate crimes were low in 2018 and 2019 but surged during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, a trend that was blamed on negative views of China’s response to the pandemic. FBI data shows that anti-AAPI hate crimes leveled out and began to decrease during 2021, and while reports from the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago show that anti-AAPI hate crimes continued to increase through 2021, New York City’s data for 2022 showed a notable decrease in anti-AAPI hate crimes. Data for 2022 is not yet available for Los Angeles or Chicago. Anti-AAPI hate crimes are likely to gradually trend downward in the coming years but will also likely remain high due to more widespread negative views of China that are prevalent in US politics.



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

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Anti-Black Hate Crimes

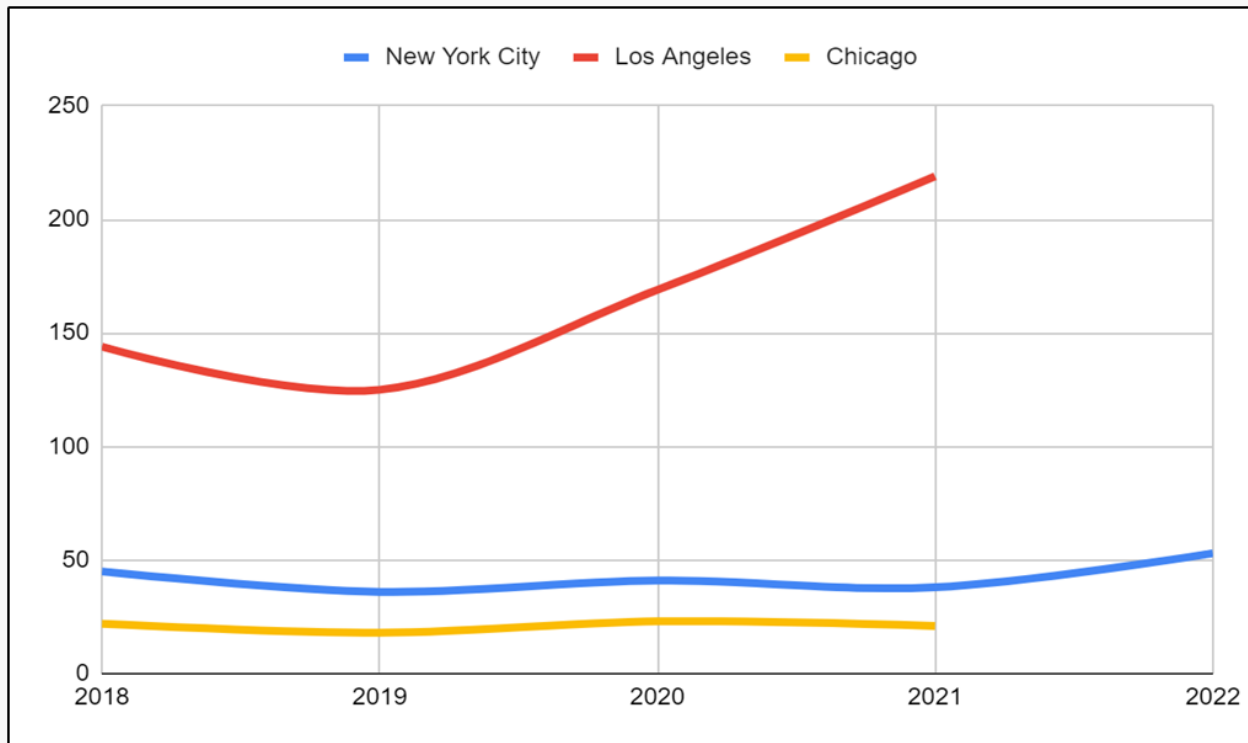
Hate crimes targeting Black Americans represent the greatest share of hate crimes committed with a racially or ethnically motivated bias, with approximately half of all racially or ethnically motivated hate crimes in the United States affecting the Black community. Since the FBI began collecting hate crime data in 1991, the majority of reported hate crimes have been anti-Black. Notably, FBI hate crime data indicates that the number of reported hate crimes committed against Black Americans spiked in 2020 before decreasing somewhat the following year. In 2019, 1,972 anti-Black hate crimes were reported, and this rose to 2,871 in 2020 before falling to 2,233 in 2021.

Municipal data, however, shows that anti-Black hate crimes continued to increase into 2022. In Chicago, Illinois, the city's Commission on Human Relations reported in November 2022 that anti-Black hate crimes were 50 percent higher in October 2022 compared to a year earlier. In Los Angeles, California, anti-Black hate crimes actually increased by 13 percent in 2021 compared to 2020 despite the decrease in the FBI's official data. And in New York City, New York, anti-Black hate crimes increased by almost 40 percent between 2021 and 2022.

The Black population represents approximately 12.5 percent of the total US population, while anti-Black hate crimes represent approximately 30 percent of all reported hate crimes, according to the most recently updated FBI data.

Over the past five years, data from the FBI and from the cities of Los Angeles and Chicago have shown an overall increase in the number of anti-Black hate crimes. The number of anti-Black hate crimes are likely to continue increasing in the coming years.

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

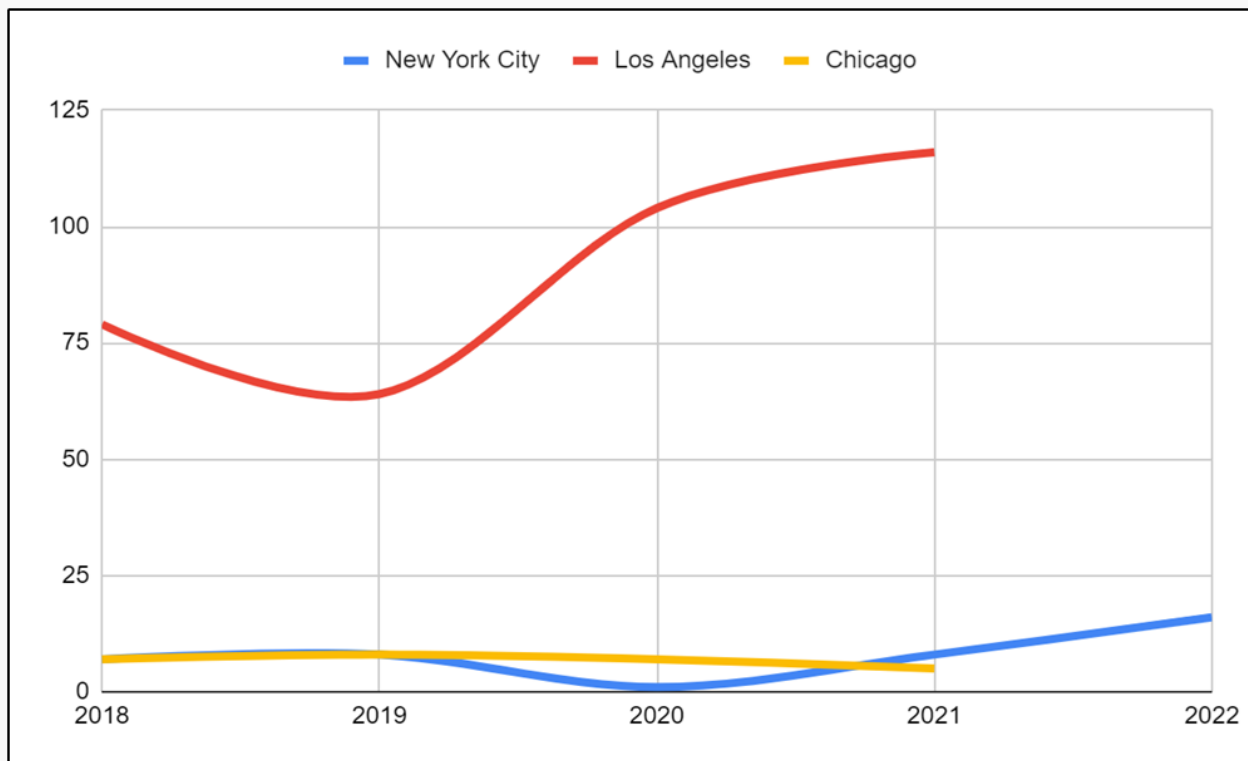
Anti-Hispanic and Anti-Latino Hate Crimes

Hate crimes targeting the Hispanic or Latino have been increasing consistently throughout the United States, according to FBI hate crime data, peaking at 517. Data from major cities also showed continuous increases in the number of reported hate crimes targeting this community. In Los Angeles, California, for example, hate crimes targeting the Hispanic or Latino community increased 30 percent from 2020 to 2021. A federal survey of Hispanic and Latino communities in 2022 found that the number of members in these communities who reported being the victim of an ethnically motivated hate crime increased year-on-year from approximately 31 percent to 51 percent. Over the past five years, municipal data from Los Angeles over the past five years shows that hate crimes targeting this community have continued to increase, while data from New York City and Chicago show largely the same number of hate crimes targeting this community

The Hispanic and Latino population represents approximately 19 percent of the total US population, while anti-Hispanic and Latino hate crimes represent approximately 5.9 percent of all reported hate crimes according to FBI data for 2021.

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Due to the prevalence of Hispanic and Central American immigrants in the United States, changes in immigration policies, comments from prominent politicians, or public debates around immigration have the potential to trigger an increase in hate crimes targeting the Hispanic and Latino community. The number of hate crimes targeting the Hispanic and Latino communities has continued trending upward over the past five years, and this trend is highly likely to continue, particularly in areas near the US-Mexico border due to the higher share of Hispanic and Latino residents.



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

Conclusions

Data from the past five years from federal and local agencies shows a consistent and upward trend in the number of hate crimes motivated by racial or ethnic bias. Anti-Black hate crimes are the most frequently reported hate crimes, and the Black community also faces the highest share of hate crimes relative to the size of the Black population in the United States. Surges in hate crimes motivated by racial or ethnic bias often reflect political developments in the United States, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or debates surrounding immigration. These hate crimes will likely continue to increase in the coming years.

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