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US Hate Crimes Motivated by Religion

AUGUST 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 religiously motivated hate crimes. Anti-Semitic hate crimes continue to represent the largest share of religiously motivated hate crimes, while anti-Muslim and anti-Sikh hate crimes have shown only minor changes in recently reported incidents. This situation is likely to continue through the rest of the year and for the foreseeable future.

Key Takeaways:

- Religiously motivated hate crimes have increased over the past five years, in the three largest US cities and in states that most recently published hate crime data.
- Jews are among the most frequently targeted demographic groups on the national, state, and local levels in the United States.
- Despite relative decreases in anti-Semitic hate crimes in some cities, state and national data shows increases in anti-Semitic hate crimes throughout the country, and this trend is likely to continue.
- Only minor changes in the total number of anti-Muslim and anti-Sikh hate crimes, and these trend is likely to continue.

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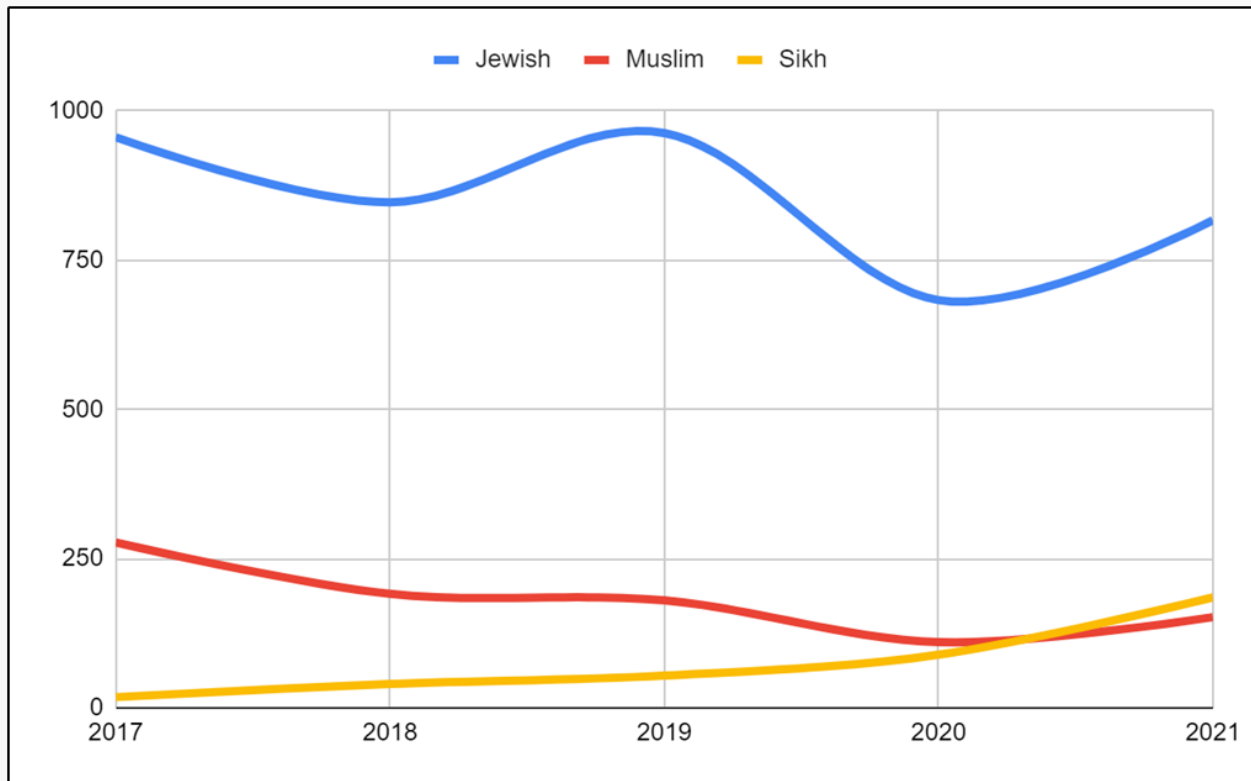
Overview

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 1,590 reported hate crime incidents involved biases against race or ethnicity, representing approximately 15 percent of all hate crimes according to the FBI. No further updates to the FBI's annual hate crime report were identified, and the 2022 report has not yet been released.

Trends in religiously motivated hate crimes have shown overall increases over the past five years, including most recently from 2021 to 2022, in the three largest US cities and at the state level in the most recently released hate crime reports for California, Oregon, and Texas. From 2021 to 2022, hate crimes motivated by anti-Jewish, anti-Muslim, or anti-Sikh bias increased by 35 percent in New York City, nine percent in Los Angeles, and 230 percent in Chicago, with increases of 39 percent in California, 45 percent in Oregon, and 37 percent in Texas. Anti-Jewish hate crimes are the most frequently reported category of religiously motivated hate crime.

Data published for 2023 has shown much smaller changes compared to previous years, with a 4.6 percent increase in religiously motivated hate crimes in Texas but decreases of 13 percent in New York City and 2.8 percent in Los Angeles.

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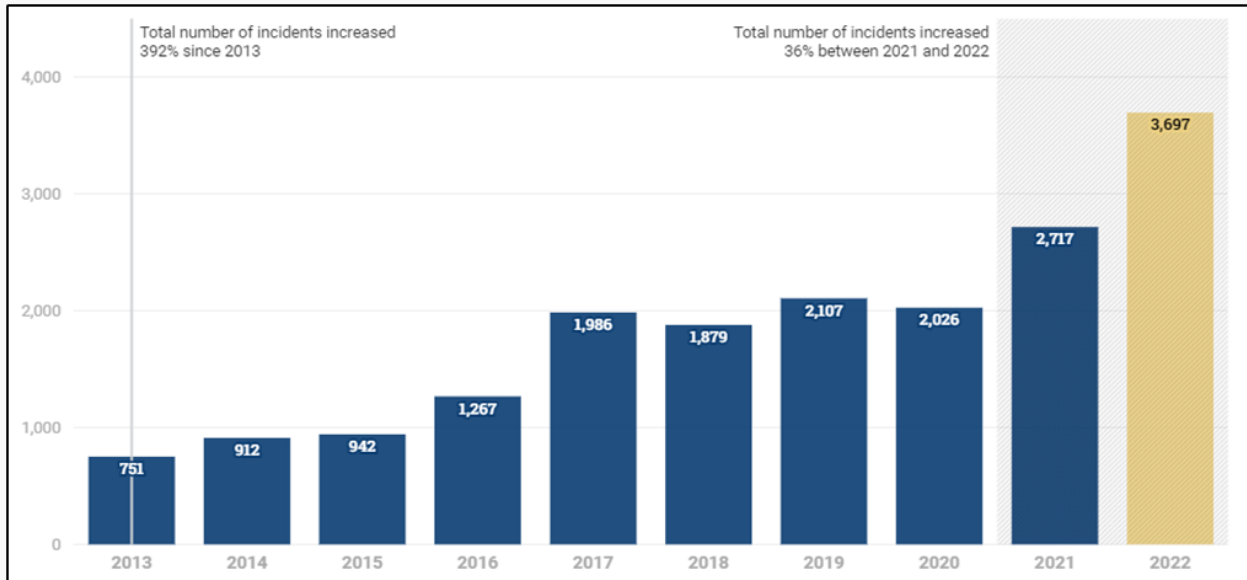


Above: Number of hate crimes committed with an anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, or anti-Sikh bias according to FBI data, 2017–2021

Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes

Jews are among the most frequently targeted demographic groups in many major cities. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reported in March 2023 that it had identified 3,697 anti-Semitic hate crimes in 2022, and it noted that this was the highest number of anti-Semitic hate crimes it had identified at any point since it began gathering reports in 1979. The Jewish population represents approximately 2.2 percent of the total US population, while anti-Jewish hate crimes represent approximately 7.5 percent of all reported hate crimes according to FBI data.

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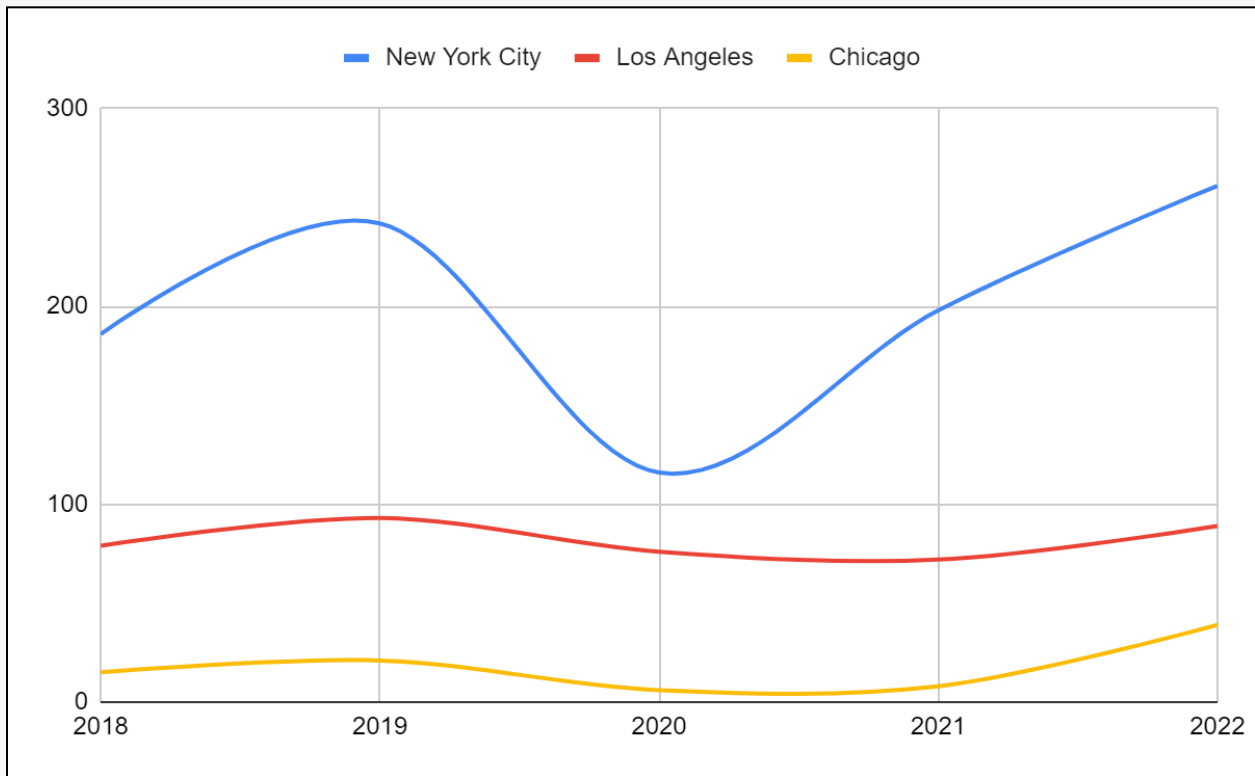
Above: Number of reported anti-Semitic hate crimes, 2013–2022, according to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)

From 2021 to 2022, increases in anti-Semitic hate crimes were reported in the three largest US cities and in states of California, Oregon, and Texas, which most recently released data for 2022. These increases from 2021 to 2022 amounted to a 31 percent increase in New York City, a 24 percent increase in Los Angeles, and a 386 percent increase in Chicago. On the state level, increases in anti-Semitic hate crimes from 2021 to 2022 amounted to a 24 percent in California, a 102 percent increase in Oregon, and a 22 percent increase in Texas.

In early June 2023, the New York Police Department (NYPD) reported an overall decrease in anti-Semitic hate crimes thus far in 2023, and this is reflected in the approximately 10 percent decrease in anti-Semitic hate crimes reported in New York City from Q1 2023 to Q1 2022. The state of Texas reported a decrease of approximately 6.7 percent in anti-Semitic hate crimes thus far in 2023, while Los Angeles reported an increase of 11.3 percent in anti-Semitic hate crimes during the first six months of 2023.

Despite the decreases reported in parts of the United States thus far in 2023, the overall trend in anti-Semitic hate crimes indicates the likelihood that anti-Semitic hate crimes will remain a significant concern throughout the country for the foreseeable future, based on trends over the past five years from the FBI and more recent data from the state level.

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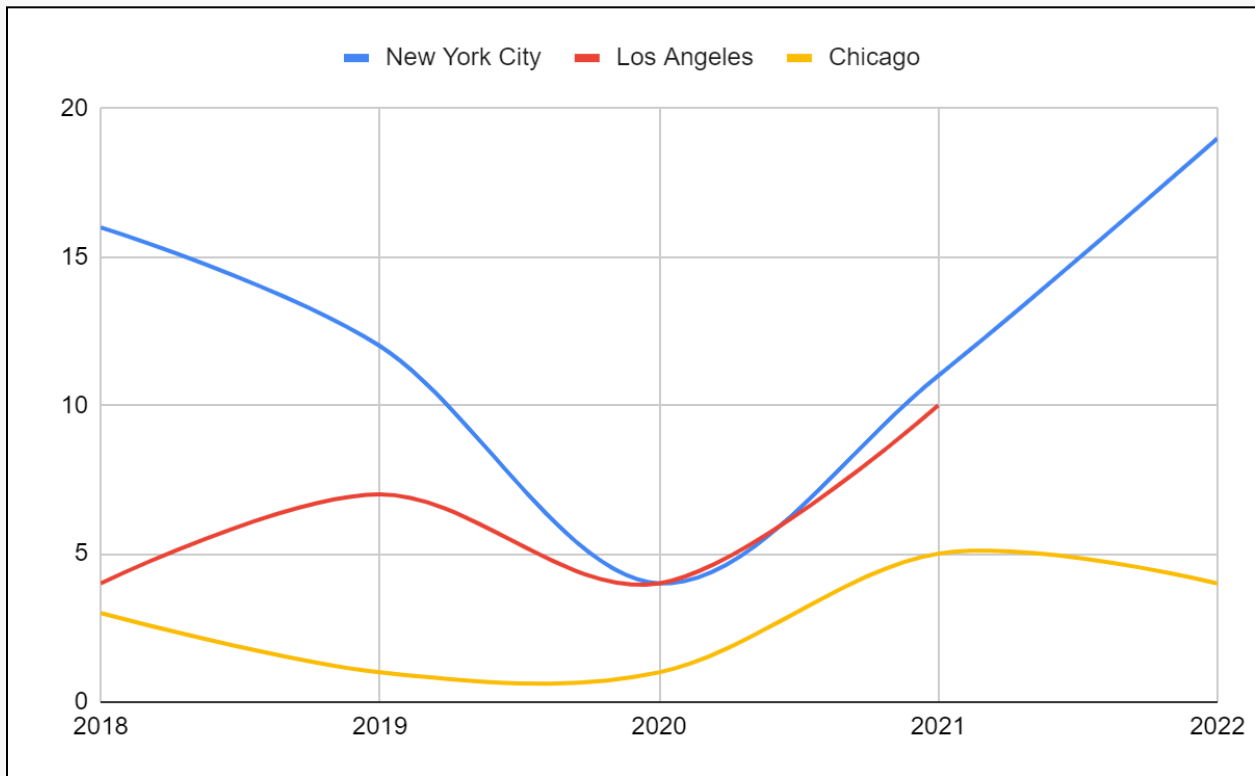
Above: Number of anti-Semitic hate crimes reported by the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, 2018–2022

Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes

Anti-Muslim hate crimes often spike during times when Muslims and Islam are targeted or highlighted in political statements. A spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes was initially reported in 2001 following the 9/11 attacks, and an additional spike was reported in 2016 that some members of the Muslim community blamed on statements from former US President Donald Trump. The Muslim population represents approximately 1 percent of the total US population, while anti-Muslim hate crimes represent approximately 1.4 percent of all reported hate crimes in 2021, according to FBI data.

Data on anti-Muslim hate crimes from the three largest US cities and from the most recently released state-level reports show numerically small but large percentage changes in the numbers of reported hate crimes from 2021 to 2022. While New York City reported an increase of eight anti-Muslim hate crimes from 2021 to 2022, Chicago reported one fewer such crimes. During this same period on the state level, California reported seven more anti-Muslim hate crimes, Oregon reported no change, and Texas reported two fewer such hate crimes.

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

New York City reported two fewer anti-Muslim hate crimes between Q1 2022 and Q1 2023, while Los Angeles reported one more anti-Muslim hate crime during the first six months of 2023 compared to the first six months of 2022. The state of Texas has similarly reported one fewer anti-Muslim hate crime thus far in 2023 compared to the same period in 2022.

Despite the large percentage changes in anti-Muslim hate crimes reported throughout the United States in recent years, the numbers of these hate crimes has not changed significantly and continues to show minor changes well into 2023. The overall number of anti-Muslim hate crimes reported throughout the United States continues to decrease, and this trend is likely to continue in the coming years.

Anti-Sikh Hate Crimes

A review of trends in anti-Sikh hate crimes indicates a possible connection to Islamophobic sentiment rather than biases specifically against the Sikh community. This assessment is supported by the surges in anti-Sikh hate crimes reported alongside surges in anti-Muslim hate crimes. Following the 9/11 attacks, for example, the Sikh community saw a significant

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increase in hate crime reports, and anecdotal reports of anti-Sikh hate crimes often attribute the incidents to the perpetrators' mistaken and racist perceptions of Sikhs as Arab Muslims. The Sikh population in the United States is approximately 500,000, representing 0.1 percent of the total population, while anti-Sikh hate crimes represented approximately 1.7 percent of all reported hate crime incidents in 2021, according to FBI data.

An insignificant number of anti-Sikh hate crimes have been reported by the cities of New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago over the past five years and in the most recently announced statewide hate crime reports from California, Oregon, and Texas. No major changes in these trends regarding hate crimes committed against the Sikh population were identified in recent months.

Conclusions

Anti-Jewish hate crimes remain the most religiously motivated hate crime most often reported in the United States, resulting in consistent increases in these hate crimes in recent years and into 2023. Conversely, only minor numerical changes in the total number of anti-Muslim and anti-Sikh hate crimes that have been reported over the past five years, and these trend is unlikely to change in 2023 or in future years based on the overall decrease in the coming years.

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