Jews Most Targeted Religious Group in 2020 Hate Crimes in the U.S., FBI Says

August 31, 2021

By Ben Samuels

Haaretz

<https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/.premium-jews-most-targeted-religious-group-in-2020-hate-crimes-fbi-says-1.10169147>

Nearly 60 percent of religious-bias hate crimes in America in 2020 targeted Jews, according to data released by the Federal Bureau of Investigations on Monday. Despite the high figure, it still represents a decrease from 2019.

According to the FBI, overall hate crimes rose six percent from 2019, marking the highest total of reported hate crimes in 12 years. Of the 7,759 overall reported hate crimes, 1,174 targeted victims due to their religion — 676 of which (57.5 percent) targeted Jews, down from 953 incidents in 2019.

Further, 53 percent of the [2020 incidents targeting Jews](https://archive.vn/o/abMmb/https%3A/www.haaretz.com/us-news/.premium-antisemitic-attacks-in-nyc-the-gaza-cease-fire-is-temporary-jew-hatred-is-not-1.9846076) involved destruction, damage, or vandalism of property; 33 percent were instances of intimidation; six percent were simple assaults; four [percent were aggravated assaults](https://archive.vn/o/abMmb/https%3A/www.haaretz.com/us-news/pro-palestinian-demonstrators-attack-jews-in-la-in-two-separate-incidents-1.9825977); one percent were instances of burglary or breaking and entering; and one percent were instances of larceny or theft.

“These hate crimes and other bias-related incidents instill fear across entire communities and undermine the principles upon which our democracy stands. All people in this country should be able to live without fear of being attacked or harassed because of where they are from, what they look like, whom they love or how they worship," said Attorney General Merrick Garland.

Jewish establishment organizations decried both the rise in crimes where Jews were targeted, and the decreasing number of law enforcement agencies providing data to the FBI.

“Every hate crime is heinous and unacceptable, no matter its target, and we must stand resolutely with any targeted group. Yet the fact that American Jews — who make up no more than two percent of the U.S. population — are the targets of nearly 60 percent of religious bias crimes should set off alarm bells," said American Jewish Committee CEO David Harris.

"Fighting Jew-hatred in America must become a national priority, and it must be a bipartisan and cross-communal effort. Whether they carry tiki torches or placards [denouncing Zionism](https://archive.vn/o/abMmb/https%3A/www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.HIGHLIGHT-two-jews-three-definitions-new-documents-challenge-mainstream-view-of-antisemitism-1.9722582), antisemites must be confronted no matter their background or ideology,” Harris added.

Anti-Defamation League CEO Jonathan Greenblatt said that while the numbers are disturbing on their own, "the fact that so many law enforcement agencies did not participate is inexcusable, and the fact that over 60 jurisdictions with populations over 100,000 affirmatively reported zero hate crimes is simply not credible. Data drives policy and without having a complete picture of the problem, we cannot even begin to resolve the issues driving this surge in hate and violence.”