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Hate crimes against Muslims were up by 67 percent in 2015

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MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP/FILE 2012

The FBI headquarters in Washington.

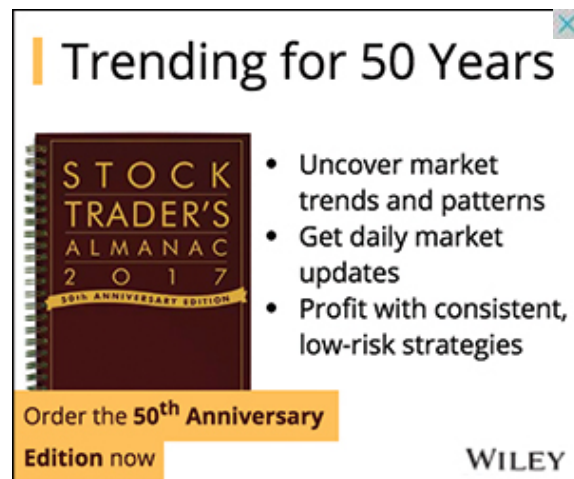
By Christina A. Cassidy

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The number of hate crimes reported to police increased by about 6.7 percent last year, led largely by a 67 percent surge in crimes against Muslims, according to [FBI statistics](#) released Monday.

Civil rights groups had been raising concerns about an anti-Muslim backlash in the U.S. even before the terror attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, Calif., late in the year. The report, which covers calendar year 2015, comes at a time of heightened tensions following last week's presidential election.

There have been reports of racist and anti-religious episodes since Tuesday that have sparked outrage, including students at one school who chanted "white power" and a videotaped assault in Chicago that showed black men beating a white man as onlookers screamed, "You voted Trump!" In 2008, after Barack Obama was elected as the nation's first black president, there were also suspected cases of alleged hate crimes tied to the election.



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In 2015, there were 257 incidents of anti-Muslim bias compared to 154 incidents the prior year. The total is second only to the surge in hate crimes following the 9/11 terror attacks in 2001.

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In 2001, 481 incidents of anti-Muslim bias were reported, the highest total in a single year since at least 1995, the earliest year of hate crime data the FBI had posted online.

Prior to 2001, the number of incidents nationwide ranged between about two and three dozen annually. After the peak year in 2001, the figures have fluctuated between about 100 and 150 reports annually.

Last year's increase could be due, in part, to increased reporting by victims as well as better reporting and tracking by law enforcement agencies, although the number of all law enforcement agencies sending their data to the FBI decreased about 3 percent between 2014 and 2015.

In June, [a report](#) by the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Center for Race and Gender at University of California Berkeley said there was a surge in anti-Muslim incidents at mosques in the United States during 2015. The report blamed the trend on backlash from terrorist attacks and the rhetoric of then-presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump.



The FBI plans to publish 2016 data on hate crimes next fall.

Reports of hate crimes in the US have fluctuated somewhat year to year, but generally have followed a downward pattern since peaking at 9,730 incidents during 2001, the year that anti-Muslim incidents peaked.

However, last year the number of reported hate crimes nationwide increased from 5,479 to 5,850.

The most common type were incidents motivated by race, ethnicity, or ancestry, which accounted for about 57 percent of incidents. That number was up by 29 percent from the year before. About 53 percent of those cases involved anti-black or anti-African-American motivation.

The next most common type of hate crime, religion-based incidents, increased by 23 percent.

Jews and Jewish institutions remained the most frequent target of such crimes, representing 53 percent of all those reported.

While hate crimes have earned a special legal designation because of their cruel nature of targeting minority groups, they account for a small fraction of all crime in the United States.

Created with Highcharts 4.0.4 **Anti-Muslim hate crime incidents reported in the United States, 1995-**

2015 2927282132334811551491561281561151051071601571131351542571995199619971998199920002001200220032004:

Federal Bureau of Investigation

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