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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
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NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF HATE CRIMES WENT UNREPORTED TO POLICE IN RECENT YEARS

U.S. residents experienced about 259,700 hate crimes annually from 2007 to 2011

WASHINGTON –The percentage of hate crimes reported to the police declined from 46 percent from 2003 to 2006 to 35 percent from 2007 to 2011, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today. The percentage of violent hate crime victims who did not report the crime because they believed the police could not or would not help increased from 14 percent in 2003–06 to 24 percent in 2007–11.

The Hate Crimes Statistics Act defines bias or hate crimes as “crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.” The act has been amended twice—in 1994 to include crimes motivated by bias against persons with disabilities, and in 2009 to include crimes based on gender or gender identity.

The BJS National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) measures nonfatal crimes perceived by victims to be motivated by an offender’s bias against them because they belong to or are associated with a group largely identified by characteristics designated in the act. In 2010, the NCVS began including crimes motivated by bias against gender and gender identity. The inclusion of these crimes did not significantly change the number or rate of hate crime victimizations in 2010 or 2011.

In 2007–11, people age 12 or older throughout the U.S. experienced an annual average of about 259,700 hate crimes. There was no change in the average annual number of hate crimes between 2003–06 and 2007–11. The rate of violent hate crime victimization remained stable at about 0.9 victimizations per 1,000 U.S. residents across the two periods, and the rate of property crime victimization also remained stable.

Across both periods, the majority of hate crime victimizations were motivated by racial or ethnic bias. However, the percentage of hate crime motivated by racial bias dropped slightly, from 63 percent in 2003–06 to 54 percent in 2007–11. The percentage of hate crimes motivated by religious bias more than doubled across the two periods, from 10 percent to 21 percent.

(MORE)

About 92 percent of all hate crimes in 2007–11 were violent victimizations, up from 84 percent from 2003–06. Violent hate crimes accounted for a higher percentage of all nonfatal violent crimes in the U.S. in 2007–11 (4 percent) than in 2003–06 (3 percent).

Other findings from the report include:

- In 2007–11 about a third of hate crime victimizations occurred at or near the victim’s home.
- Whites, blacks, and Hispanics had similar rates of violent hate crime victimization in 2007–11.
- The percentage of violent hate crimes committed by two or three offenders increased from 11 percent in 2003–06 to 25 percent in 2007–11, while the percentage committed by a single offender declined and the percentage committed by four or more offenders remained stable.
- The percentage of violent hate crimes that resulted in an injury to the victim declined over time, from 25 percent in 2003-06 to 17 percent in 2007–11.
- The percentage of violent hate crimes that resulted in an arrest declined from 10 percent in 2003-06 to four percent in 2007–11.

The report, *Hate Crime Victimization, 2003–2011* (NCJ 241291), was written by BJS statisticians Lynn Langton and Michael Planty and BJS intern Nathan Sandholtz. The report, related documents and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics’ statistical publications and programs can be found on the BJS website at <http://www.bjs.gov/>.

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