

# Religion a factor in one-third of hate crimes in Canada

The number of hate crimes motivated by religion are down, according to the latest statistics, but that doesn't bring much comfort to those who are targeted.

Overall, hate crimes abated slightly in 2018, with a 13-per-cent drop in police-reported incidents, according to Statistics Canada. That follows a spike in 2017 and a dramatic rise in hate crime over four years between 2014 and 2017. However, in 2018 Canada still chalked up its second highest hate crime statistics on record.

Religion is a significant motivator, with 36 per cent of 2018 hate crimes directed at religious targets. That's down from 41 per cent in 2017.

The latest hate crime statistics from Statistics Canada show Jews are the most targeted group in the country, singled out in nearly one-fifth (19 per cent) of all Canadian hate crimes in 2018 despite representing less than one per cent of the population.

Meanwhile, Muslims saw a dramatic 50-per-cent decrease in hate crime incidents in 2018, after hitting a record high of 349 attacks in 2017. Catholics were hit by haters just two per cent of the time, despite constituting 38 per cent of Canada's population.

Anti-Jewish hate has been a long-standing fact of life for Jews in Canada and around the world, said Richard Marceau of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

It persists despite the major turnaround in official Catholic teaching and attitudes following the Second World War and the Holocaust, said CIJA's general counsel and vice president for external affairs.

"Catholics, both formally and informally, have made serious and significant efforts to atone for past anti-Semitism. We maintain very warm and constructive relations with the Catholic community in Canada," Marceau said in an e-mail.

Changes in Christian attitudes and official Church teaching don't have much effect on the irrational, incoherent "virus" of anti-Jewish prejudice, he said.

"We want Catholic Canadians to keep developing close relationships with Jewish Canadians and to call out anti-Semitism when they hear and see it," said Marceau.

Crimes against Canada's Jews increased 63 per cent between 2016 and 2017, and

abated only four per cent in 2018.

For Muslims, attacks are more likely to be violent and more likely to target women. Nearly half (45 per cent) of Muslims who suffered violent attacks were female, compared to just 32 per cent of all violent hate crime victims who were female.

It isn't all graffiti and anonymous Internet posts. Four in every 10 hate crimes in 2018 were violent or potentially violent, including everything from uttering threats and criminal harassment to assaults. Hate crime assaults were up six per cent in 2018.

Catholic individuals and institutions suffered 35 hate crime attacks in 2018, down from 39 in 2017 but still higher than the 27 in 2016.

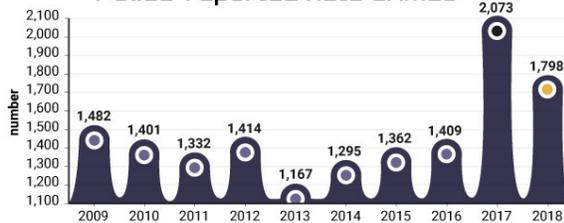
Hate crimes based on race or ethnicity accounted for 44 per cent of a total 1,798 incidents in 2018. There were 173 hate crimes tied to sexual orientation, 10 per cent of the total.

# Police-reported hate crime in Canada, 2018



The number of police-reported hate crimes declined 13% in 2018 but was the second highest since 2009. The decline was due to fewer incidents targeting the Muslim, Black, and Arab and West Asian populations.

## Police-reported hate crimes

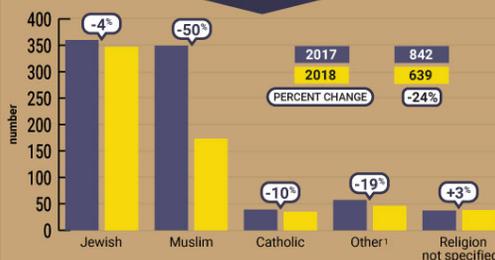


In 2018, 44% of all police-reported hate crimes were motivated by race/ethnicity.



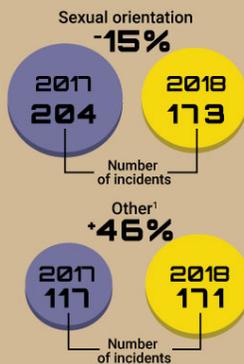
<sup>1</sup> Motivations based upon race or ethnicity not otherwise stated and those which target more than one group.

In 2018, 36% of hate crimes were motivated by religion.



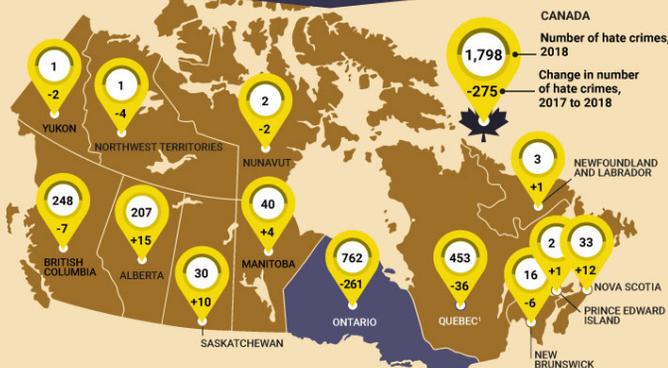
<sup>1</sup> Motivations based upon religions not otherwise stated.

In 2018, 10% of hate crimes were motivated by sexual orientation.



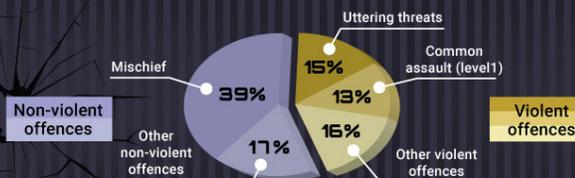
<sup>1</sup> Includes mental or physical disability, language, sex, age and other similar factors.

In 2018, the national trend was driven by a decrease in Ontario.



<sup>1</sup> The Service de police de la Ville de Québec (SPVQ) identified an overcount in the hate crime data originally submitted to Statistics Canada for 2018. The SPVQ has committed to providing a revised count that will be published by Statistics Canada in July 2020 with the release of 2019 and revised 2018 crime statistics. This overcount mitigated the year-over-year decrease in hate crime reported in the province of Quebec in 2018.

The majority of police-reported hate crimes were non-violent offences.



Note: Hate crimes where the type was unknown have been excluded. Therefore, the totals for each hate crime type shown will not add up to the overall total for 2017 and 2018.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

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