

Religious hate crimes down in 2007, says FBI: Crimes against gays and lesbians up slightly

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Hate crimes related to a person's religion decreased in 2007, but hate crimes against gays and lesbians increased slightly, according to the FBI's 2007 Hate Crimes Statistics.

In 2006, the FBI reported 1,597 hate crimes motivated by a religious bias. That figure dropped to 1,477 in 2007, according to the report.

Of the religiously based hate crimes, attacks against Jews rose from 64 percent in 2006 to 68 percent in 2007. Anti-Muslim hate crimes, meanwhile, decreased from 12 percent in 2006 to 9 percent in 2007.

Four percent of the hate crimes were motivated by anti-Protestant biases, and 9 percent were directed against people of other religions.

The FBI reported 1,415 hate crimes based on a person's sexual orientation in 2006 and 1,460 such crimes in 2007. Of those offenses, 59 percent targeted gay men, 13 percent targeted lesbians and 25 percent were more generally antihomosexual. - *Religion News Service*