

Identifying Anti-immigration movements: Mapping Hate Crimes and Groups in the US

In the last two decades, there has been a significant rise of anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S.¹ The severe economic recession following the financial crisis in 2008, the terrorist attacks, in particular the 9/11 attacks, and the growing number of foreign residents and undocumented immigrants are some of the factors that have fueled the rise of anti-immigrant movements (i.e. policies, groups, ideologies) and xenophobic actions (e.g. hate crimes, hate propaganda).

Additionally, the anti-immigrant rhetoric of President Trump has served as a bridge to criminalize immigrants and promote anti-immigrant policies: ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (attempted but unsuccessful), banning of people from several Muslim countries, family separation at the border, reducing refugee admissions, and recently, the temporal suspension of foreign work visas (labeled by the Trump administration as an “effort” to preserve US jobs). Also, some top officials in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have been identified with “close ties” to several anti-immigrant hate groups². For example, Ken Cuccinelli who was named the acting director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is one of the founders of the State Legislators for Legal Immigration Group. This group has been labeled as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law base on the group’s close ties to white supremacists.

In this context, it is relevant to study hate groups and hate crimes in the U.S. as an alternative way to understand how the anti-immigrant sentiment has evolved in the U.S. In this report, we used two sources of data: identified hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center and reported hate crimes by the Uniform Crime Report.

Hate Groups in the US

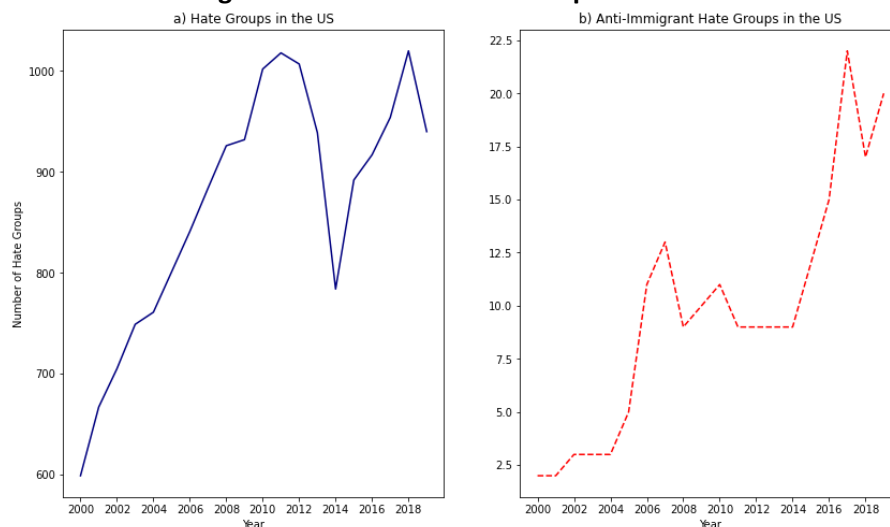
In the last four years, we have seen a persistent increase in the number of hate groups. Particularly, a significant raise in Anti-Immigrant groups is observed with an approximate of 20 anti-immigrant groups in 2019 (Figure 1). In this sense, it is worth noting that Anti-Immigrant groups are not as predominantly as White Nationalist or Black-separatist groups. Anti-Immigrant groups in 2019 represented only 2% of the

¹ [The Rise of Anti-Immigrant Sentiments in the U.S.: Arizona and Alabama, emblematic cases](#). Mónica Vereá.

² [The Anti-Immigrant Extremists in Charge of the U.S. Immigration System](#). Jessica Cobian, June 2019.

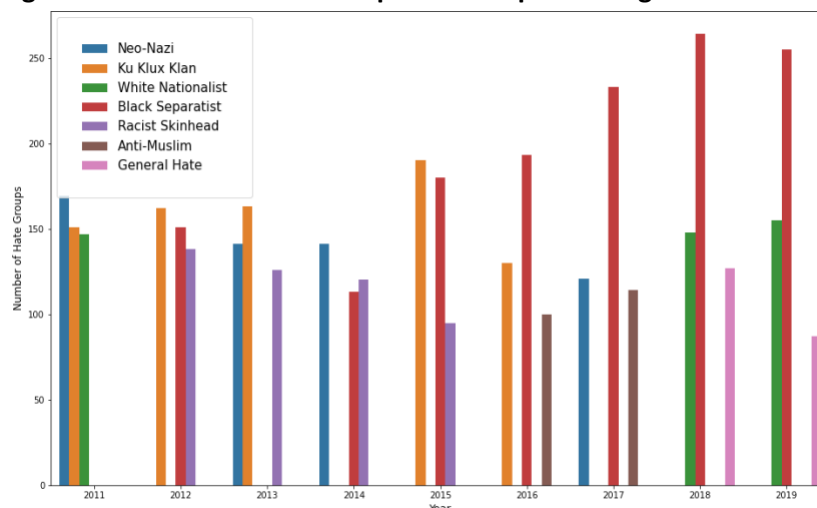
total hate groups in the US. However, several hate groups with white nationalist or neo-Nazi ideologies have also targeted immigrant communities³. For example, on August 3rd, 2019, Patrick Crusius, a white nationalist shot and killed 23 people and injured 23 individuals intending to target Mexicans. As shown in figure 2, in the last decade, the most prominent ideology in hate groups has been black separatist followed by white nationalist ideologies, which shows that racism is the most important determinant of hate groups in the U.S.

Figure 1. Number of Hate Groups in the US



Source: Southern Poverty Law Center

Figure 2. Number of Hate Groups in the Top 3 Ideologies of Each Year

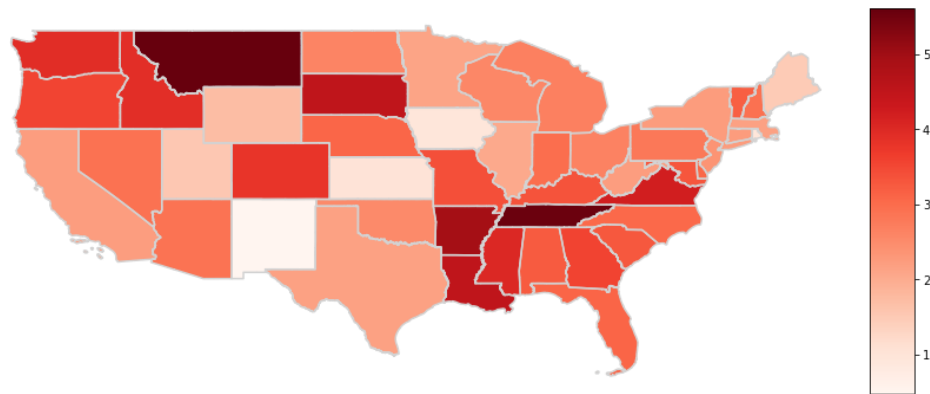


Source: Southern Poverty Law Center

³ ['White power ideology': why El Paso is part of a growing global threat](#). August 2019.

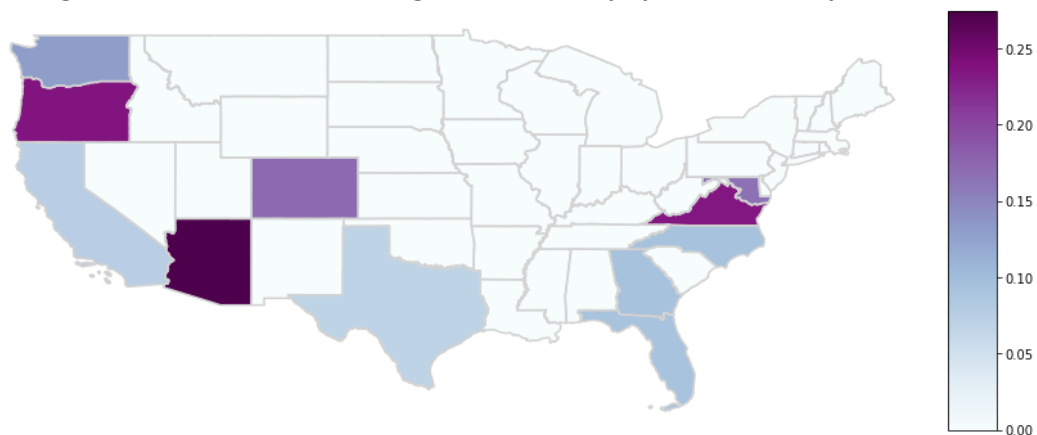
Looking at the number of total hate groups at the state level⁴, figure 3 shows that the northeast and southwest regions had a relatively high number of hate groups per million people in 2019. However, when we only analyze anti-immigrant hate groups per million people, some states like Arizona, Colorado, Virginia, Maryland, and Oregon have the highest number of anti-immigrant hate groups per million people, followed by high-populated states such as California, Texas and Florida (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Number of Hate Groups per Million People in 2019⁵



Source: Southern Poverty Law Center and US Census Bureau Estimates

Figure 4. Number of Anti-Immigrant Hate Groups per Million People in 2019



Source: Southern Poverty Law Center and US Census Bureau Estimates

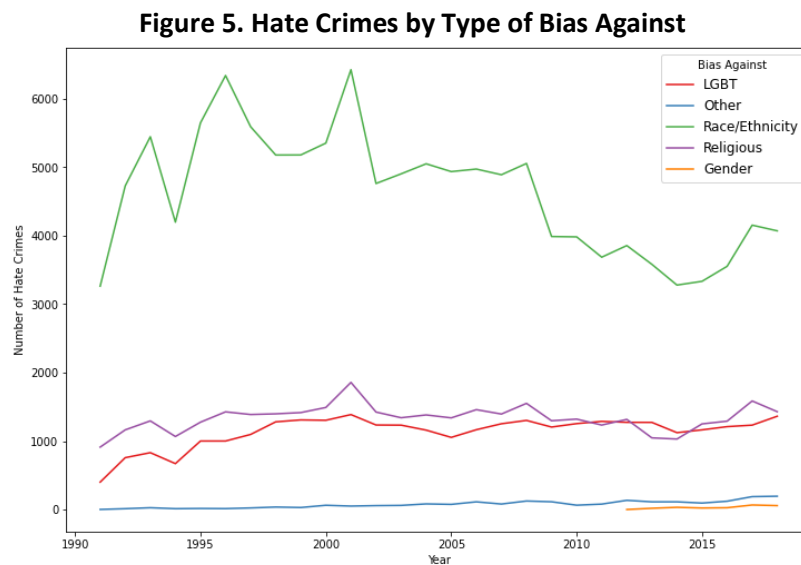
⁴ The size of hate groups is normalized by population size.

⁵ Alaska and Hawaii are not shown; however, their number of hate groups and anti-immigrant hate groups per million people is low.

Hate Crimes

Another way in which we can get an insight into anti-immigrant sentiment is by looking at the hate crimes towards the immigrant community. The Uniform Crime Report (UCR) provides data on hate crimes specifying the motivation of crime (e.g. anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-black, etc.), however, it is worth noting that these reports may be highly underestimating the real number of hate crimes (See: Pezzella et al. (2019)⁶). Additionally, we don't have information about whether the victim is a citizen or an immigrant, so, the analysis assumes that several categories in the hate crime data such as anti-Hispanic, anti-Asian, anti-Muslim or anti-Arab have an anti-immigrant motivation.

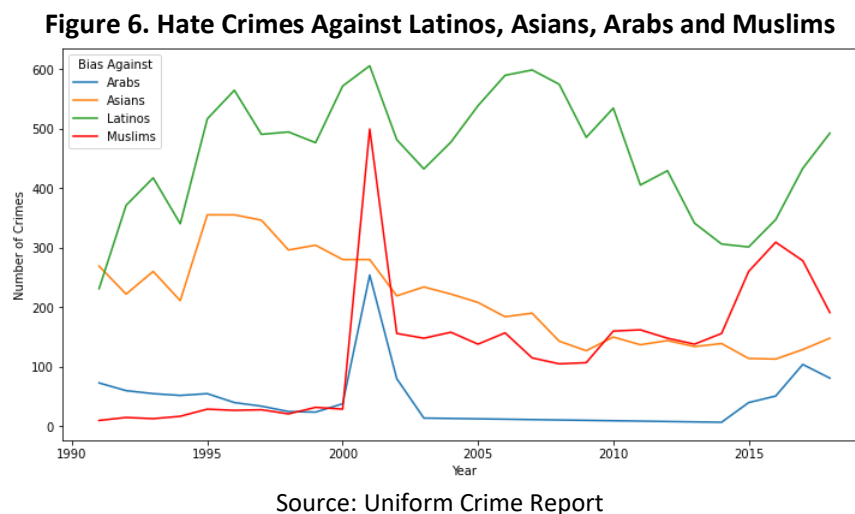
Figure 5 shows the evolution of the number of hate crimes by type of motivation or bias against. Since 1990, race or ethnicity bias is the most predominant motivation of hate crimes in the U.S., which is not surprising as most of the hate groups formed in the U.S. are based on race ideologies (e.g. white supremacy, neo-Nazi). In less proportion of the total hate crimes, religious and LGBT are other groups highly affected by hate crimes.



After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, we can observe a spike in hate crimes against race/ethnic groups and religious groups. If we break down these categories and only look at anti-Muslim or anti-Arab motivations

⁶ Pezzella, F. Fetzer, M. & Keller, T. (2019) [The Dark Figure of Hate Crime Underreporting](#). American Behavioral Scientist.

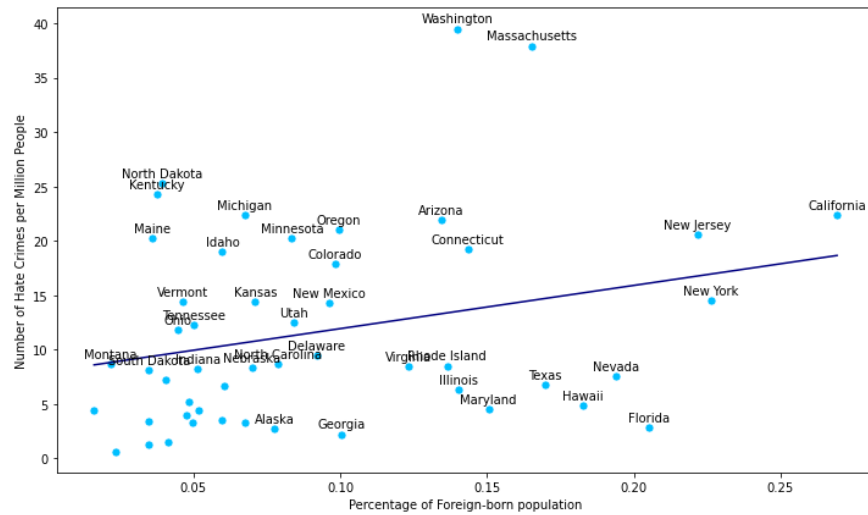
in hate crimes, the spike is more evident (Figure 6). Additionally, in the last 4 years, there has been a significant increase in hate crimes towards Latin or Hispanic individuals. If we assume that hate crime offenders perceive as an immigrant or alien from U.S. specific races or ethnicities such as Asian, Hispanic and Arab individuals and religious groups such as Muslim individuals, then, we can state that hate crimes with an anti-immigrant motivation have shown a significant rise in the last years.



As mentioned before, the UCR doesn't specify if the victim of the hate crime is an immigrant or a citizen, there is only information about the bias or motivation for the hate crime (i.e. anti-Latino, anti-black, anti-Jewish, anti-gay, etc.). In this sense, we aggregated the number of anti-Latino, anti-Asian, anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, anti-Hindu, and anti-Sikh into an ***anti-immigrant category***. We compare the percentage of the foreign population in each state with the number of these hate crimes between 2013-2018 and observe a positive correlation (Figure 7). However, there is a high variation between states, and some states like North Dakota and Kentucky have a relatively low percentage of foreign-born population with a relatively high number of anti-immigrant hate crimes per million people. So, even though the percentage of foreign population is weakly and positively related to the number of anti-immigrant hate crimes, foreign-born population is not a determinant for a state to show a high number of anti-immigrant hate crimes⁷.

⁷ The relation between foreign population and anti-immigrant hate crimes shows to be weakly positive, however, it is worth noting that the number of hate crimes are highly underreported, and this number could be higher for undocumented immigrant communities that fear to be deported.

Figure 7. Percentage of Foreign Population and Anti-Immigrant Hate Crimes* in 2013-2018



*Anti-Immigrant Hate Crimes includes hate crimes against Latin, Asian, Arab, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities. These crimes could be committed against immigrants or citizens, UCR does not specify this information.

Note: District of Columbia is excluded. See Appendix Figure 1

Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates) and Uniform Crime Report

Anti-Immigrant sentiment towards the Latino Community

As shown in figure 6, in the last years there has been a significant increase in the number of hate crimes towards the Latino community. In 2018, about 40% of the Latin community in the U.S. said they have experienced discrimination, and these experiences are more likely for Hispanic individuals who are not perceived as white⁸. These discrimination incidents included experiences such as being criticized for speaking Spanish, being told to go back to their home country, treated unfairly and being called offensive names.

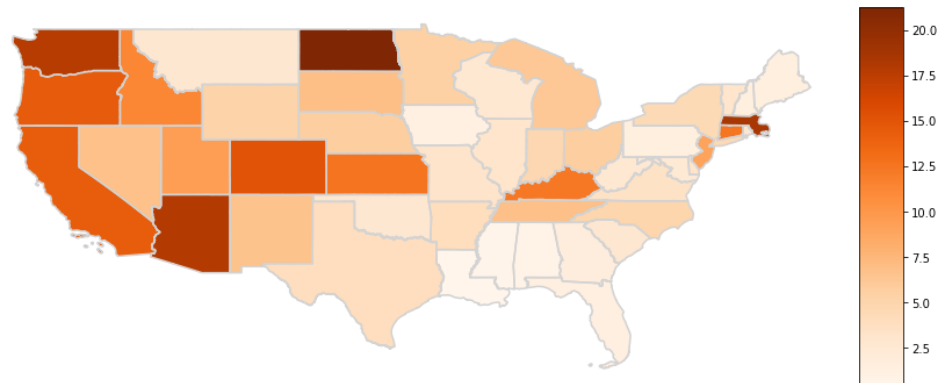
Some states within the U.S. may have a higher rate of discrimination towards immigrants. Using hate crime data, we mapped anti-Hispanic hate crimes per million people between 2013-2018. Figure 8 shows that several states in the west such as California, Washington and Arizona have a high level of anti-Latino hate crimes per million people. Also, North Dakota and Massachusetts show high levels of anti-Latino hate crimes.

To assess how the anti-Latino hate crimes have evolved in the last years within the states, we use the annual average change between 2015 and 2018. In this context, several states such as Florida, Minnesota,

⁸ Lopez, M. Gonzalez, A. & Krogstad, J. (2018) [Latinos and Discrimination](#) in More Latinos have serious concerns about their place in America under Trump. Pew Research Center.

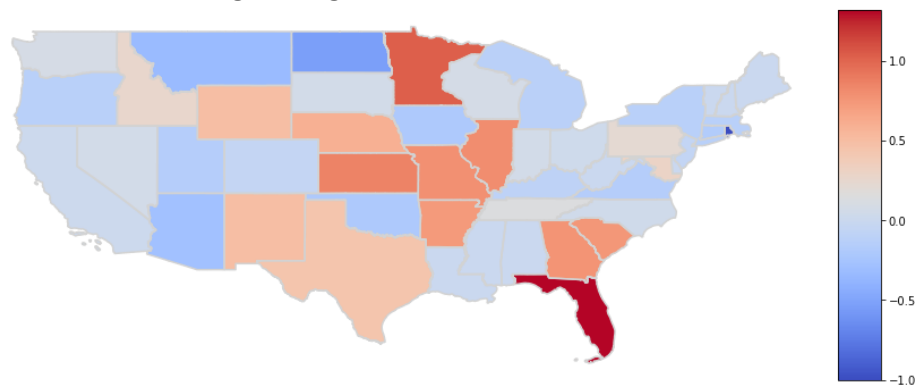
and Kansas show a significant (and worrisome) increase in anti-Latino Hate Crimes, followed by Illinois, Missouri, and Georgia (Figure 9).

Figure 8. Anti-Hispanic/Latino Hate Crimes Per Million People in 2013-2018



Source: Uniform Crime Report and US Census Bureau Estimates

Figure 9. Annual Average Change of Anti-Latino Hate Crimes between 2015-2018

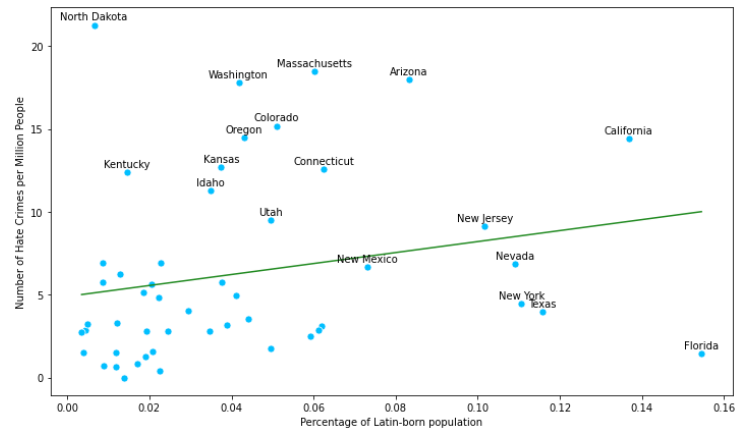


Source: Uniform Crime Report

Finally, we compare the percentage of the Latin-born population in each state with the number of anti-Latino hate crimes between 2013-2018, which show a very weak positive correlation (Figure 10). Again, there is a high variation between states, which suggests that the percentage of Latin-born population may not be a relevant determinant in the number of hate crimes towards the Hispanic community.

We suggest to further study the anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S. and to keep pushing for an inclusive agenda that protects immigrants.

Figure 10. Percentage of Latin-born population and Anti-Latino Hate Crimes in 2013-2018

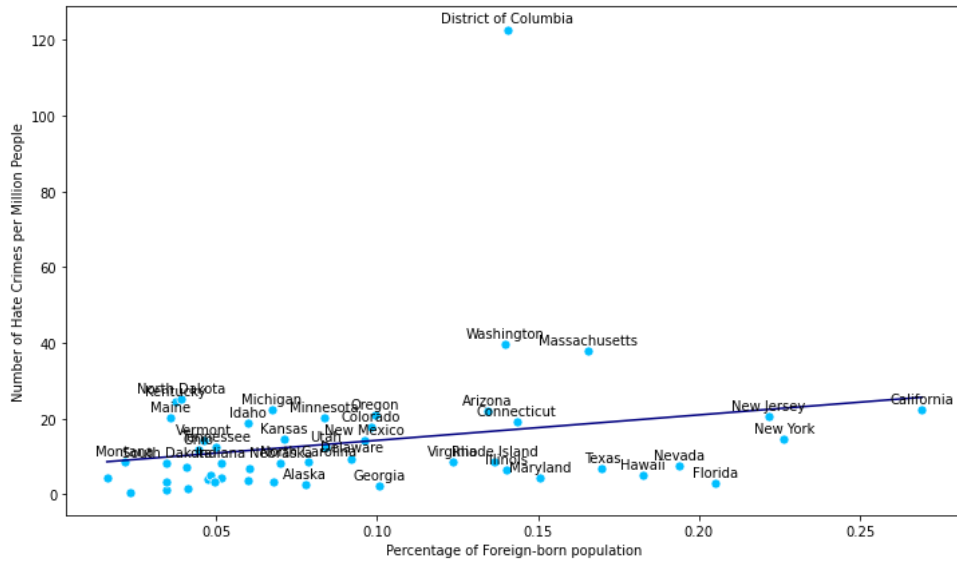


Note: District of Columbia is excluded. See Appendix Figure 2

Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates) and Uniform Crime Report

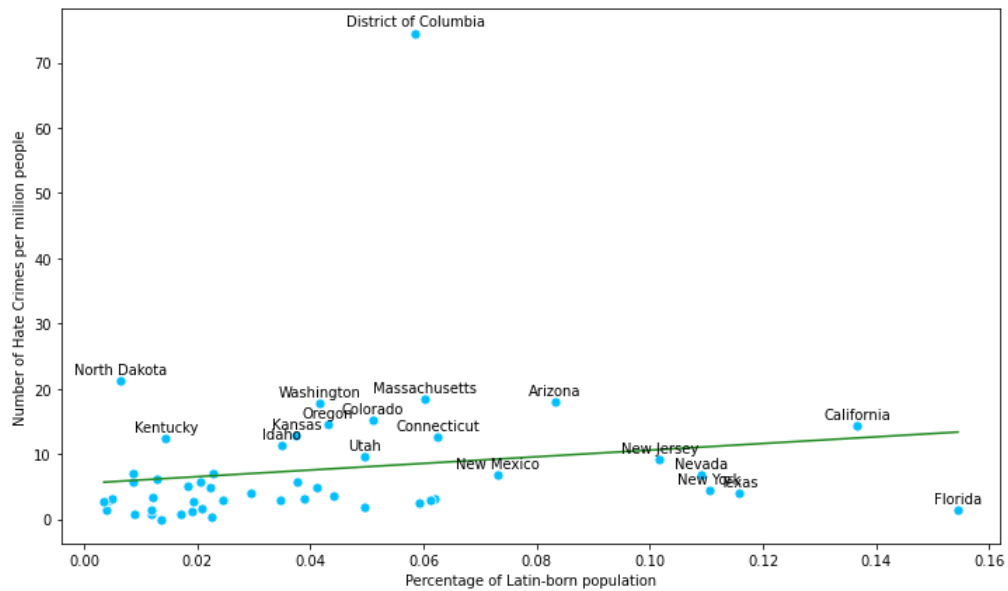
Appendix

Figure 1. Percentage of Foreign Population and Anti-Immigrant Hate Crimes* in 2013-2018
(Including District of Columbia)



Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates) and Uniform Crime Report

Figure 2. Percentage of Hispanic Population and Anti-Hispanic Hate Crimes in 2013-2018
(Including District of Columbia)



Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates) and Uniform Crime Report