



Arrests

Definition

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program counts one arrest for each separate instance in which a person is arrested, cited, or summoned for an offense. The UCR Program collects arrest data on 28 offenses, as described in Offense Definitions.

(Please note that, as of 2010, the UCR Program no longer collects data on runaways.)

Because a person may be arrested multiple times during a year, the UCR arrest figures do not reflect the number of individuals who have been arrested; rather, the arrest data show the number of times that persons are arrested, as reported by law enforcement agencies to the UCR Program.

Important note about rape data

In 2013, the UCR Program initiated the collection of rape data under a revised definition and removed the term “forcible” from the offense name. The UCR Program now defines rape as follows:

Rape (revised definition): Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. (This includes the offenses of rape, sodomy, and sexual assault with an object as converted from data submitted via the National Incident-Based Reporting System.)

Rape (legacy definition): The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.

For tables within this publication that present data for 2015 only or provide a 2-year trend, the rape figures are an aggregate total of the data submitted based on both the legacy and revised UCR definitions. For 5- and 10-year trend tables, the rape figures for the previous year (2011 or 2006) are based on the legacy definition and the 2015 rape figures are an aggregate total based on both the legacy and revised definitions. For this reason, a percent change is not provided.

Data collection-juveniles

The UCR Program considers a juvenile to be an individual under 18 years of age regardless of state definition. The program does not collect data regarding police contact with a juvenile who has not committed an offense, nor does it collect data on situations in which police take a juvenile into custody for his or her protection, e.g., neglect cases.

Overview

- Nationwide, law enforcement made an estimated 10,797,088 arrests in 2015. Of these arrests, 505,681 were for violent crimes, and 1,463,213 were for property crimes. (Note: the UCR Program does not collect data on citations for traffic violations.) (See Table 29.)
- The highest number of arrests were for drug abuse violations (estimated at 1,488,707 arrests), larceny-theft (estimated at 1,160,390), and driving under the influence (estimated at 1,089,171). (See Table 29.)
- The estimated arrest rate for the United States in 2015 was 3,363.0 arrests per 100,000 inhabitants. The arrest rate for violent crime (including murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) was 157.2 per 100,000 inhabitants, and the arrest rate for property crime (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson) was 458.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. (See Table 30.)
- Two-year arrest trends show violent crime arrests increased 1.5 percent in 2015 when compared with 2014 arrests, and property crime arrests decreased 5.6 percent when compared with 2014 arrests. (See Table 36.)
- Arrests of juveniles for all offenses decreased 8.4 percent in 2015 when compared with the 2014 number; arrests of adults decreased 3.0 percent. (See Table 36.)
- More than 73 percent (73.1) of the persons arrested in the nation during 2015 were males. They accounted for 79.7 percent of persons arrested for violent crime and 61.7 percent of persons arrested for property crime. (See Table 42.)
- In 2015, 69.7 percent of all persons arrested were white, 26.6 percent were black, and the remaining 3.6 percent were of other races. (See Table 43.)

Expanded arrest data

Expanded data about arrests include information about the age, gender, race, and ethnicity of the arrestees. These data are available in the following tables:

Age: Tables 32, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, 46, 47, 50, 52, 53, 56, 58, 59, 62, 64, and 65

Gender: Tables 33, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 63, and 66

Race and Ethnicity: Tables 43, 49, 55, 61, and 67

What you won't find on this page

- Clearance data for violent crimes and property crimes.
- The number of persons who were convicted, prosecuted, and/or imprisoned. The UCR Program does not collect this information.