



Data Declaration

Table 1

Crime in the United States, by Volume and Rate per 100,000 Inhabitants, 1996–2015

Table 1A

Crime in the United States, Percent Change in Volume and Rate per 100,000 Inhabitants for 2 years, 5 years, and 10 years

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.

Important note about rape data

In 2013, the FBI 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 [NIBRS].)

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

General comments

- These tables provide the estimated number of offenses and the rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) of crime in the United States for 1996 through 2015, as well as the 2-, 5-, and 10-year trends for 2015 based on these estimates.
- Violent crime includes the offenses of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape (legacy definition), robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crime includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

- The UCR Program does not have sufficient data to estimate for arson.

Methodology

- The data used in creating these tables were from all law enforcement agencies participating in the UCR Program (including those submitting less than 12 months of data).
- Crime statistics for the nation include estimated offense totals (except arson) for agencies submitting less than 12 months of offense reports for each year.

Offense estimation

These tables contain statistics for the entire United States. Because not all law enforcement agencies provide data for complete reporting periods, the FBI includes estimated crime numbers in these presentations. The FBI computes estimates for participating agencies that do not provide 12 months of complete data. For agencies supplying 3 to 11 months of data, the national UCR Program estimates for the missing data by following a standard estimation procedure using the data provided by the agency. If an agency has supplied less than 3 months of data, the FBI computes estimates by using the known crime figures of similar areas within a state and assigning the same proportion of crime volumes to nonreporting agencies. The estimation process considers the following: population size covered by the agency; type of jurisdiction, e.g., police department versus sheriff's office; and geographic location.

In response to various circumstances, the FBI has estimated offense totals for some states. For example, problems at the state level (e.g., noncompliance with UCR guidelines, technological difficulties) have, at times, resulted in data that cannot be used for publication and estimation was necessary. Also, efforts by an agency to convert to the NIBRS have contributed to the need for unique estimation procedures.

A summary of state-specific and offense-specific estimation procedures is available in the "Estimation of state-level data" section of the Methodology.

Rape Estimation

This table contains estimates based on both the legacy and revised definitions of rape. Agencies submit data based on only one of these definitions. Within each population group size, the proportion of female rape victims was calculated from all NIBRS reports of rape, sodomy, and sexual assault with an object. For agencies that reported using the revised definition, the actual number of reported rapes was decreased by the calculated proportion to arrive at an estimate for the number of rapes using the legacy definition. Conversely, for agencies that reported using the legacy definition, the actual number of reported rapes was increased by the inverse of the proportion to arrive at an estimate for the number of rapes using the revised definition.

Population estimation

For the 2015 population estimates used in this table, the FBI computed individual rates of growth from one year to the next for every city/town and county using 2010 decennial population counts and 2011 through 2014 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. Each agency's rates of growth were averaged; that average was then applied and added to its 2014 Census population estimate to derive the agency's 2015 population estimate.