



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs

Presented by
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Acting Director
Bureau of Justice Statistics
November 14, 2013

Statistics for Journalists: Criminal Justice System Statistics from the Bureau of Justice Statistics

www.BJS.gov

Establishment of BJS

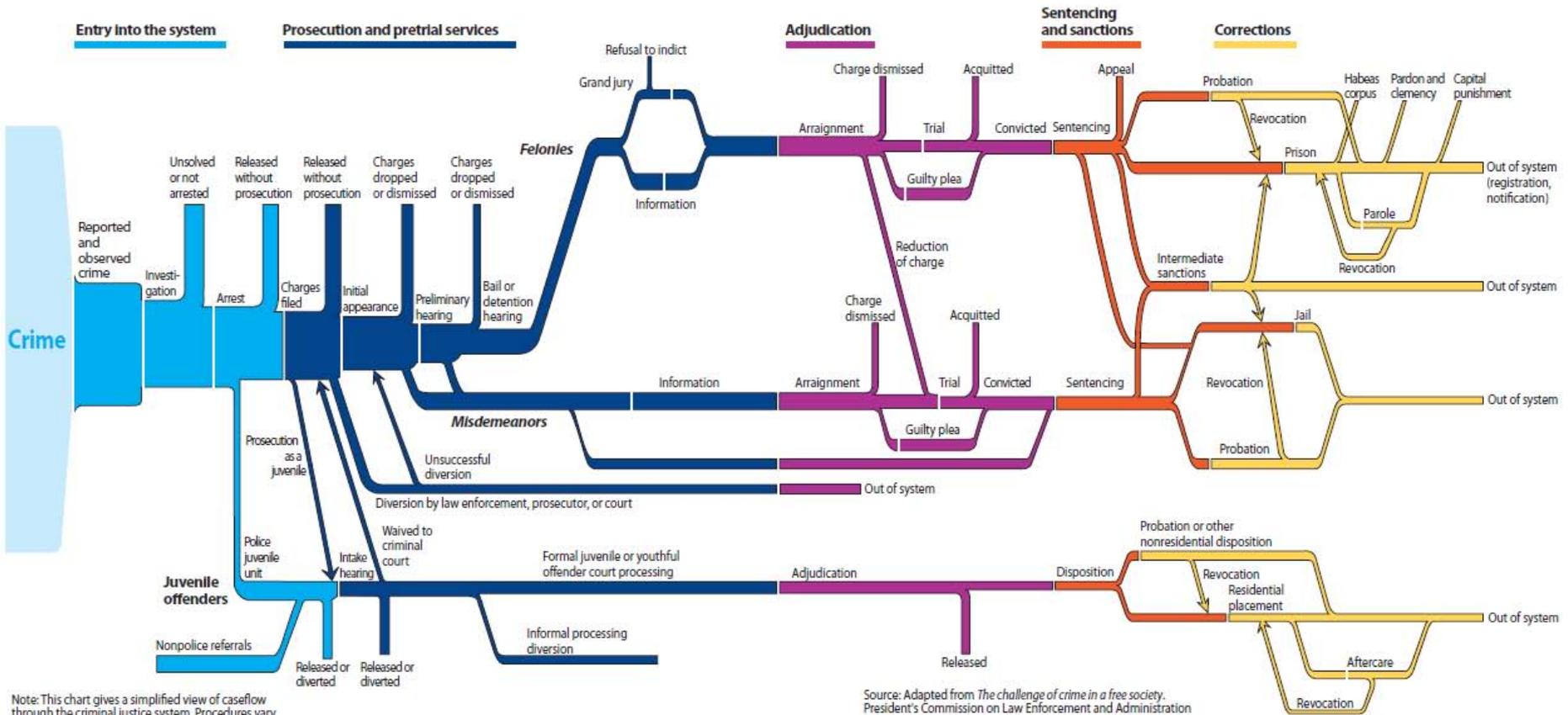
- Justice Systems Improvement Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-157)
 - Statistical functions formerly vested in an office of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.
 - Prior: U.S. Census Bureau collected criminal justice statistics
- Enabling legislation stipulates that (42 USC § 3735):
 - Data collected by [BJS] shall be used only for statistical or research purposes, and shall be gathered in a manner that precludes their use for law enforcement or any purpose relating to a private person or public agency other than statistical or research purposes.
- One of the 13 principal statistical agencies in the decentralized U.S. federal statistical system

BJS authority spans

- Collecting and analyzing statistical data on all aspects of federal, state, and local criminal justice systems and related aspects of the civil justice system;
- Collecting and analyzing statistical data on statutorily-identified topics including crimes against the elderly, juvenile delinquency, criminal offenders and juvenile delinquents.
- Assisting state, local, and tribal governments in gathering and analyzing justice statistics
- Disseminating high-value information and statistics to inform policy makers, researchers, criminal justice practitioners, and the general public
- Maintaining an ongoing program of research and develop to recommend national standards for statistics, ensure their reliability, and fulfill statutory mission.

Sequence of Events in the Criminal Justice System

What is the sequence of events in the criminal justice system?



Note: This chart gives a simplified view of caseload through the criminal justice system. Procedures vary among jurisdictions. The weights of the lines are not intended to show actual size of caseloads.

Source: Adapted from *The challenge of crime in a free society*. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967. This revision, a result of the Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of the President's Commission, was prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1997.

BJS Statistical Programs: Enhancements

- Survey design
 - Research on sample design, mode, collection methods
 - Core/supplement approach to surveys
- Use of administrative records for statistical purposes
 - Gain and maintain access; maintain institutional arrangements (quid pro quo); make data available for statistical purposes; develop methods to ensure quality; link data.
- Enhance criminal history information
- Create and use of online data tools for dissemination
 - See: <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=daa>
- Enhance access to archived data, available in various formats (NACJD, at: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NACJD/>)

BJS Statistical Programs: Victimization (NCVS)

- The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
 - One of the Nation's two crime measures (NCVS and UCR)
 - Interviews about 80,000 household (170,000 persons) aged 12 and older about crimes both reported and not reported to the police;
 - In-person (first interview) and phone (subsequent interviews)
 - Incident-based data about the crime incident (injury, weapon use, self-protective behaviors), reported to the police (or not), offender demographics (violent crimes)
 - Core and supplements (ID theft, Police-Public Contact, School Crime)



Department of Justice

The Nation's two crime measures

The U.S. Department of Justice administers two statistical programs to measure the magnitude, nature, and impact of crime in the Nation: the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Each program produces valuable information about aspects of the Nation's crime

problem. Because the UCR and NCVS programs are conducted for different purposes, use different methods, and focus on somewhat different aspects of crime, the information they produce together provides a more comprehensive panorama of the Nation's crime problem than either could produce alone.

Uniform Crime Reports Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The FBI's UCR program, which began in 1929, collects information on the following crimes reported to law enforcement authorities: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Arrests are reported for 21 additional crime categories.

The UCR data are compiled from monthly law enforcement reports or individual crime incident records transmitted directly to the FBI or to centralized state agencies that then report to the FBI. Each report submitted to the UCR Program is examined thoroughly for reasonableness, accuracy, and deviations that may indicate errors. Large variations in crime levels may indicate modified records procedures, incomplete reporting, or changes in a jurisdiction's boundaries. To identify any unusual fluctuations in an agency's crime counts, monthly reports are compared with previous submissions of the agency and with those for similar agencies.

In 2003, law enforcement agencies active in the UCR Program represented approximately 291 million U.S. inhabitants — 93.0 percent of the total population.

The UCR Program provides crime counts for the Nation as a whole, as well as for regions, states, counties, cities, and towns. This permits studies

among neighboring jurisdictions and among those with similar populations and other common characteristics.

UCR findings for each calendar year are published in a preliminary release in the spring, followed by a detailed annual report, *Crime in the United States*, issued in the following calendar year. In addition to crime counts and trends, this report includes data on crimes cleared, persons arrested (age, sex, and race), law enforcement personnel (including the number of sworn officers killed or assaulted), and the characteristics of homicides (including age, sex, and race of victims and offenders, victim-offender relationships, weapons used, and circumstances surrounding the homicides). Other special reports are also available from the UCR Program.

Following a 5-year redesign effort, the UCR Program is currently being converted to the more comprehensive and detailed National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS will provide detailed information about each criminal incident in 22 broad categories of offenses.

National Crime Victimization Survey Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

The Bureau of Justice Statistics NCVS program, which began in 1973, provides a detailed picture of crime incidents, victims, and trends. After a substantial period of research, in 1993 the survey completed an intensive methodological redesign. The redesign was undertaken to improve the questions used to uncover crime, update the survey methods, and broaden the scope of crimes measured. The redesigned survey collects detailed information on the frequency and nature of the crimes of rape, sexual assault, personal robbery, aggravated and simple assault, household burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. It does not measure homicide or commercial crimes (such as burglaries of stores).

Two times a year, U.S. Census Bureau personnel interview household members in a nationally representative sample of approximately 42,000 households (about 75,000 people). Approximately 150,000 interviews of persons age 12 or older are conducted annually. Households stay in the sample for three years. New households are rotated into the sample on an ongoing basis.

The NCVS collects information on crimes suffered by individuals and households, whether or not those crimes were reported to law enforcement. It estimates the proportion of each crime type reported to law

enforcement, and it summarizes the reasons that victims give for reporting or not reporting.

The survey provides information about victims (age, sex, race, ethnicity, marital status, income, and educational level), offenders (sex, race, estimated age, and victim-offender relationship), and the crimes (time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, nature of injury, and economic consequences). Questions also cover the experiences of victims with the criminal justice system, self-protective measures used by victims, and possible substance abuse by offenders. Supplements are added periodically to the survey to obtain detailed information on topics like school crime.

The first data from the redesigned NCVS were published in a BJS bulletin in June 1995. BJS publication of NCVS data includes *Criminal Victimization in the United States*, an annual report that covers the broad range of detailed information collected by the NCVS. BJS publishes detailed reports on topics such as crime against women, urban crime, and gun use in crime. The NCVS and UCR data files are archived at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan to enable researchers to perform independent analysis.

October 2004, NCJ 122705

<http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=802>

BJS Statistical Programs: Victimization (NCVS)

- Statistical products (NCVS)
 - Annual bulletin: Criminal Victimization; Criminal Victimization of Persons with Disabilities;
 - Online tool (NVAT), at: <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=nvat>
 - Recurring bulletins: Indicators of School Crime & Safety (with NCES); Requests for Police Service; Police Behavior during Street/Traffic Stops.
 - Topical reports: Workplace Violence; Firearm Violence; Hate Crimes; Female Victims, ...
 - Substantive program areas: Trends in victimization; the “dark figure” of unreported crime (reasons for/for not reporting to police); family/domestic/intimate partner violence; school and workplace violence; firearms violence.

BJS Statistical Programs: Victimization (NCVS)

- NCVS redesign and expansion
 - Subnational program: State, local (city/MSA), and generic area estimates; model-based and direct estimates; state boost pilot study;
 - Improved measurement: Instrument redesign; rape/sexual assault in self-report surveys;
 - Studies of screening, mode, response rates, enhanced contextual priming, and other elements of survey administration;
 - Quality improvement: Interviewer training, Data Review Panel, collaboration with Census Bureau to improve data collection;
 - Enhanced scope
 - National Survey of Victim Services Organizations
 - Victimization of Persons with Disabilities in Group Quarters
 - Supplements on victims' use of services

BJS Statistical Programs: Law Enforcement Statistics

- Local Law Enforcement Administrative Statistics (LEMAS)
 - Organization and staffing of police departments
 - Employee demographics
 - Community policing
 - Specialization within departments
 - Collective bargaining
- Censuses of law enforcement agencies
- Campus police, crime labs, training academies
- Periodic bulletins about police organizations

BJS Statistical Programs: Law Enforcement Statistics

- New developments
 - National Crime Statistics-Exchange (NCS-X): National system of incident-based law enforcement statistics
 - Sample-based (agency-level) approach to implementing the National Incident-Based Statistics (NIBRS); collaboration with FBI
 - Quid pro quo: Exchange of technical assistance and analytics for data
 - National Academy of Sciences, Committee on National Statistics: Modern System of Crime Measurement
 - Future efforts to integrate law enforcement statistics with the NCVS subnational program; substantive focus on: crime and victimization, the “dark figure” of unreported crime, police outputs (arrests), development of incident-based crime statistics, local law enforcement agencies in context, police legitimacy.

BJS Statistical Programs: Prosecution & Courts

- Pretrial release and court outcomes
- Felony court dispositions and sentencing (new program, under development)
- State court organization
- Public defenders
- Native American/tribal court systems

BJS Statistical Programs: Corrections

- National Prisoner Statistics
- National Corrections Reporting Program
- Surveys of inmates in prisons and jails
- Establishment surveys of corrections agencies (probation and parole, jails)
- Deaths in Custody Reporting Program
- Annual:
 - Prisoners in the U.S., Probation & Parole in the U.S., Local Jail Inmates, Capital Punishment; Mortality in Prisons & Local Jails, Jails in Indian Country
 - Online tools (CSAT): <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=nps>
 - Topical reports: HIV in prison, medical causes of death, mental health problems, medical problems, children of incarcerated parents

BJS Statistics Programs: Special Projects & Mandates

- Recidivism statistics
 - Linked corrections data with criminal history information (aka RAP sheets)
 - Linked corrections data (NCRP) to measure episodes, time served, and return to incarceration
- Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Statistics
 - In-person surveys of prison & jail inmates on self-report sexual assault
 - In-person surveys of inmates in juvenile facilities
 - Establishment surveys of corrections agencies about allegations and substantiated cases
- Indian Country Statistics
 - New collections and use of existing collections

Bureau of Justice Statistics—Statistical coverage

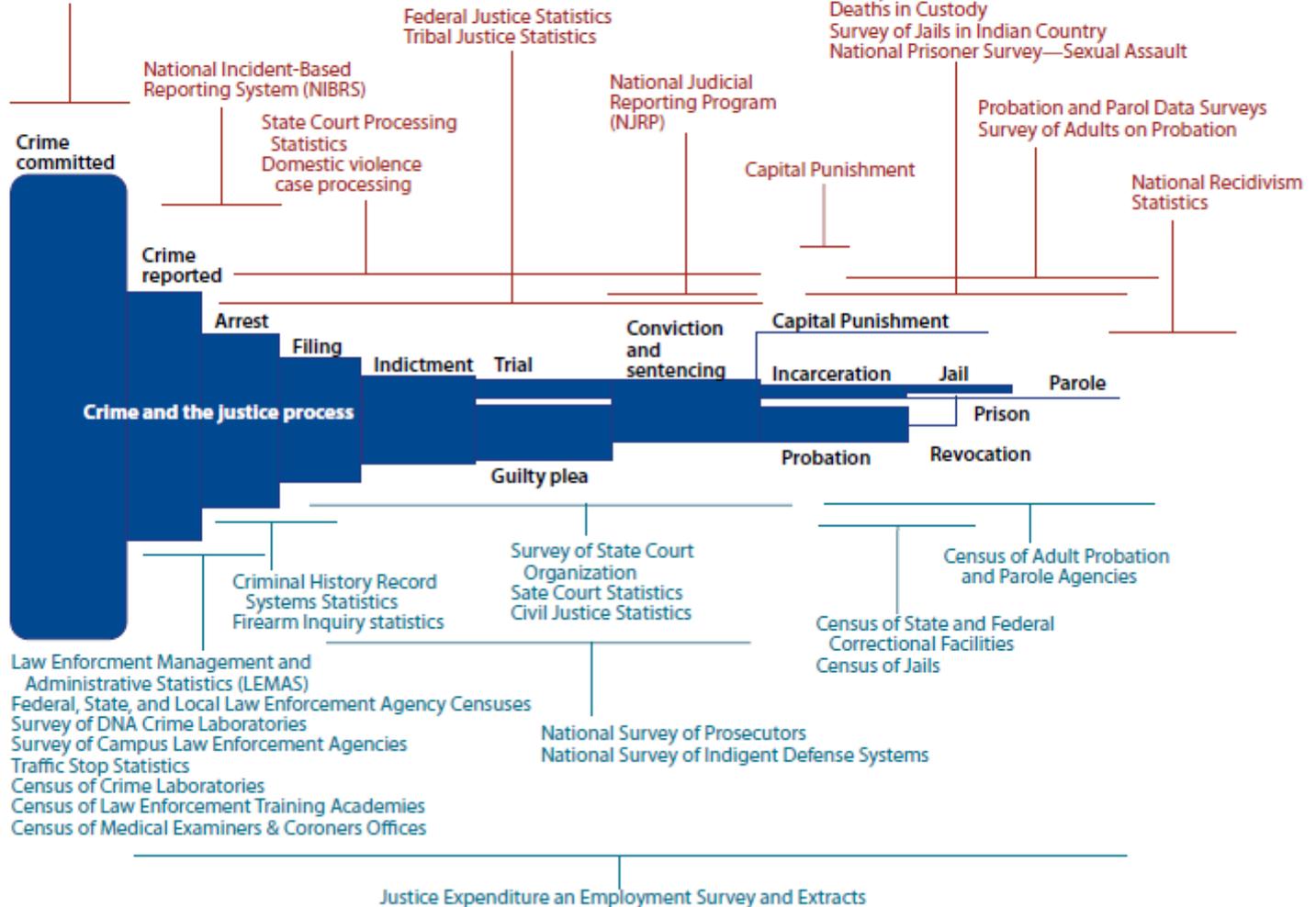
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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs

Victim and offender information

National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
Police public contact, School crime, identity theft, stalking, hate crime, crime against the disabled, workplace violence
Computer Security Survey
National Protection Order Files

National Prisoner Statistics (NPS)
National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP)
Annual Survey of Jails
Surveys of State and Federal Prison Inmates
Survey of Inmates in Local Jails
Deaths in Custody
Survey of Jails in Indian Country
National Prisoner Survey—Sexual Assault



Justice system information

Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS)
Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agency Censuses
Survey of DNA Crime Laboratories
Survey of Campus Law Enforcement Agencies
Traffic Stop Statistics
Census of Crime Laboratories
Census of Law Enforcement Training Academies
Census of Medical Examiners & Coroners Offices

National Survey of Prosecutors
National Survey of Indigent Defense Systems

Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities
Census of Jails

Justice Expenditure and Employment Survey and Extracts

Access to BJS statistics and data

- No early release; data released to the public at the same time
- BJS reports and spreadsheets
- Online data tools; updated routinely with new data
 - NVAT (NCVS data)
 - CSAT (Prisoner and corrections data)
 - Arrest tool (UCR arrests)
 - Uniform Crime Reports (UCR offenses known)
 - FCCPS (Federal Criminal Case Processing)
 - Prisoner recidivism
- National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD): Datasets for analysis

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Corrections

Courts

Crime Type

Criminal Justice Data Improvement Program

Employment and Expenditure

Federal

Indian Country Justice Statistics

Law Enforcement

Victims

New Releases

- Criminal Victimization, 2012
- NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool (Updated)
- Requests for Police Assistance, 2011
- Police Behavior during Traffic and Street Stops, 2011
- Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool (CSAT) - Prisoners
- Measuring the Prevalence of Crime with the National Crime Victimization Survey
- Tribal Crime Data Collection Activities, 2013
- Mortality in Local Jails and State Prisons, 2000-2011 - Statistical Tables
- Prisoners in 2012 - Advance Counts

[▶ MORE NEW RELEASES](#)

Other Releases

BJS Acting Director and Others Present at the Symposium of U.S. Statistical Agencies

BJS leaders will speak at the [Symposium of U.S. Statistical Agencies](#) as part of the celebration of the International Year of Statistics. On November 13 and 14, representatives from many federal statistical agencies will discuss the use and impact of federal data on various aspects of everyday life. In the panel discussion "Statistics for Journalists," BJS Acting Director William Sabol will present ways for journalists to use official statistics in their reporting. In the session "Statistics in the New Media Era," IT Lead Timothy Kearley will describe how the [National Crime Victimization Survey application programming interface \(API\)](#) makes crime data more accessible to the American people. Chief of Corrections Statistics Daniela Golinelli will speak to students and young statisticians in the session "Career Choices in Statistics." The symposium also includes "Statistics for Economists" and "Statistics in Health" sessions. This two-day event, open to all without cost, will be held at the Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center in Washington, DC. To register, send an email to [Wendy Martinez](#) and include "Symposium" in the subject line. You can find more information at the [Symposium of U.S. Statistical Agencies](#) website.

Data Analysis Tools

- Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool (CSAT) - Prisoners
- NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool (Updated)
- Arrest Data Analysis Tool (Updated)
- Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool
- Federal Criminal Case Processing Statistics (FCCPS)

[▶ MORE DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS](#)

BJS Statistical Integrity

- Scientific Integrity Statement
- BJS Data Quality Guidelines
- BJS Statistical Principles and Practices

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Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) - All Data Analysis Tools - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=daa

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Home | All Data Analysis Tools

All Data Analysis Tools

Arrest Data Analysis Tool
This dynamic data analysis tool allows you to generate tables and graphs of arrests. You can view national arrest estimates, customized either by age and sex or by age group and race, for many different offenses. This tool also enables you to view local arrests. The tool utilizes data collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation through its Uniform Crime Reporting Program.
[Arrest Data Analysis Tool Home Page \(Updated\)](#) (Resource Link)

Census Bureau Population Estimates
U.S. Census Bureau population data estimates.
[Codebooks and Datasets](#)

Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool (CSAT) - Prisoners
This dynamic analysis tool allows you to examine national and jurisdictional prisoner data for both federal and state correctional authorities. You can view yearend populations, admissions, and releases by legal jurisdiction, physical custody in private facilities and local jails, imprisonment rate, citizenship status, prison capacity, juvenile or adult age group, and sex. The tool uses National Prisoner Statistics.
[Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool \(CSAT\) - Prisoners](#) (Resource Link)

Crime and Justice Electronic Data Abstract spreadsheets
These are aggregated data from a wide variety of published sources and are intended for analytic use. Files are in .csv format which can be easily read by most spreadsheet and statistical programs, and many word processors.
[Spreadsheet index page](#) (Spreadsheet index page)

Crime trends from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports
Crime trends from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports that provides custom data tables by State including U.S. totals (since 1960), and by reporting local agency (since 1985)
[Uniform Crime Reports \(UCR\) Data Tool](#) (Resource Link)

Easy Access - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) data analysis tools
Easy Access is a family of web-based data analysis tools on juvenile crime and the juvenile justice system provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The applications provide information on national, state, and county population counts, as well as information on homicide victims and offenders, juvenile court case processing, and juvenile offenders in residential placement facilities.
[Easy Access](#) (Resource Link)

Federal Criminal Case Processing Statistics - FCCPS
The Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center (FJSRC) compiles comprehensive information provided by selected federal criminal justice agencies ranging from arrest to reentry. The Federal Criminal Case Processing Statistics (FCCPS) tool permits an on-line analysis of suspects and defendants processed across stages of the Federal criminal justice system from 1994.

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National Archive of Criminal Justice Data - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NACJD/

NACJD
NATIONAL ARCHIVE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA

The Source for Crime and Justice Data

NACJD Data
Related Literature

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Download Data | Analyze Data Online | Deposit Data | Publications | About NACJD | Help

DATA RESOURCE GUIDES

- Capital Punishment in the United States
- Chicago Women's Health Risk Study
- Expenditure and Employment for the Criminal Justice System
- Federal Justice Statistics Program
- Geographical Information Systems
- Homicide
- Homicides in Chicago
- Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics
- National Corrections Reporting Program
- National Crime Victimization Survey
- National Incident-Based Reporting System
- National Juvenile Corrections Data
- Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN)
- Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities
- Terrorism & Preparedness Data Resource Center (TPDRC)
- Uniform Crime Reporting Program
- Violence Against Women

NEWS

- Recent Data Updates and Additions
- Recently Added Citations
- Materials from the Archiving NIJ Data at NACJD Webinar
- Archiving NIJ Data at NACJD Webinar Registration
- Webinar Scheduled on Working with Data from the Pathways to Desistance Study
- NACJD Violence Against Women Research
- NACJD to exhibit at the International Association of Crime Analysts Training Conference
- NACJD releases Survey of Youth in Residential Placement (SYRP)
- New CJRP and JRFC Data Now Available!

More news >>

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Journalists: Questions about BJS statistics

- What is the relevance of this report or this set of statistics?
- Why did you write this report?
- What are the important points that you want readers to take away from this report?
- If you were briefing the Attorney General about this report and had 5-10 minutes, what would you tell him?
- Journalists' responsibility:
 - The last word; have to get the story right;
 - Make sure that the public is fully informed;
 - Move beyond the statements to the evidence for the statements.

To use BJS statistics in articles

- Contact the Office of Justice Programs' Public Affairs Specialist and request contact with the BJS statistician(s) who wrote the reports or are responsible for the statistics
 - Kara McCarthy
 - 202-307-1241
 - Kara.McCarthy@usdoj.gov
- Visit the BJS website at: www.BJS.gov
 - Find latest releases
- Send email to AskBJS@usdoj.gov
- Contact BJS statisticians directly once you know them
 - BJS statisticians will focus on questions of fact, methodology, and correct interpretation of statistics