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October 5, 2022

### **2021 Crime in the Nation Summary**

On October 5, 2022, the FBI released detailed data on over 11 million criminal offenses reported to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) in 2021 via *NIBRS, 2021*, *NIBRS Estimates, 2021*, *The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates*, and *Crime in United States (CIUS), 2021*.

The FBI's crime statistics for 2021 confirm that violent crime continued to be a major issue in the United States, remaining at or near the 2020 level which saw a 5.6% increase compared to 2019. Murder and non-negligent manslaughter recorded a nationwide increase of 29.4% in 2020. In 2021, the estimated number of murders saw a 4.3% increase, which did not constitute a statistically significant change from 2020 levels. It should be noted that the violent crime figures for 2020 had a significant increase over the respective value(s) reported in 2019. This factor should be taken into account when considering any increase or decrease experienced when comparing 2021 values with those from 2020.

For years, the FBI's UCR Program has provided annual snapshots of crime in the nation. This year users will notice a difference in the data because it was exclusively collected via NIBRS in 2021. Both the *NIBRS, 2021* and *CIUS, 2021* releases are based solely on these NIBRS submissions.

Establishing NIBRS as the national standard for crime data provides the opportunity to know more about, and better understand, various facets of crime in our nation. NIBRS provides an avenue for the UCR Program to estimate the amount of arson committed each year, estimates on drug offenses by drug type, and victimization estimates. NIBRS also provides estimates on victim and arrestee demographics, including age, sex, and race.

In anticipation of UCR's evolution to NIBRS, the FBI collaborated with the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to develop comprehensive methodologies to bring a NIBRS estimation process to fruition and establish 2021 as the first year in which all crime estimates can be based on NIBRS data. Together, the FBI and BJS developed and tested statistical procedures that assess the quality and completeness of NIBRS data, created methods to adjust for non-transitioned agencies, crafted estimation procedures for generating reliable and accurate national indicators as new agencies report NIBRS data, and established a semi-automated system for producing national estimates of key crime indicators on an annual basis.

### **Key Takeaways**

To provide a confident comparison of crime trends across the nation, the UCR Program performed a NIBRS estimation crime trend analysis. The analysis used NIBRS estimation data of violent and property crimes from 2020 and 2021.

Overall, the analysis shows violent and property crime remained consistent between 2020 and 2021. While the aggregate estimated violent crime volume decreased 1.0 percent for the nation from 1,326,600 in 2020 to 1,313,200 in 2021, the estimated number of murders increased from 22,000 in 2020 to 22,900 in 2021. The increase of murders constitutes a 4.3 percent increase. The robbery rate



## Uniform Crime Report 2021 Crime in the Nation

decreased 8.9 percent from 2020 to 2021, which heavily contributed to the decrease in overall violent crime despite increases in murder and rape rates at the national level. It is important to note that these estimated trends are not considered statistically significant by NIBRS estimation methods. The nonsignificant nature of the observed trends is why, despite these described changes, the overall message is that crime remained consistent.

### Highlights of NIBRS, 2021

In 2021, 11,794 law enforcement agencies whose jurisdictions covered more than 215 million United States inhabitants, submitted NIBRS data to the FBI's UCR Program. These agencies reported 11,091,951 offenses, 58.9 percent were crimes against property, 26.5 percent were crimes against persons; and 14.6 percent were crimes against society. (Due to rounding, some percentages breakdowns may not add to 100.0 percent.) The *NIBRS, 2021*, report is based on data from agencies that submitted one or more months of NIBRS data.

*Victims* – Victim types, collected for all reported NIBRS offenses, include individuals, businesses, institutions, or society. For 2021, the data regarding victims who were individuals revealed the following:

- Of the 8,267,845 individuals, 23.9 percent were between 26 and 35 years of age.
- A little more than half (51.1 percent) were female, 48.2 percent were male, and the unknown gender of the victims was 0.8 percent.
- Most victims (65.0 percent) were white, 25.3 percent were black or African American, 2.0 percent were Asian, 1.0 percent were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.2 percent were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The race of unknown victims was 6.5 percent.

*Known Offenders* – In 2021, law enforcement identified and reported information on 8,536,946 known offenders, meaning some aspect of the suspect – such as age, gender, or race – was known.

- Of these offenders, 38.4 percent were between 21 and 35 years of age.
- By gender, most offenders (63.7 percent) were male, 24.6 percent were female, and gender for 11.7 percent was unknown.
- By race, more than half (50.8 percent) of known offenders were white, 31.0 percent were black or African American, and 2.5 percent were of other races. The race was unknown for 15.7 percent of reported known offenders.

*Victim-to-Offender Relationships* – Concerning the relationship of victims to known offenders, there were 2,834,861 victims of crimes against persons (e.g., murder, sex offense, assault offenses) and robbery offenses from the crimes against property category.

- More than half (50.6 percent) of the victims knew their offenders (or at least one offender when more than one was present) but did not have a familial relationship to them.
- Nearly one quarter (23.8 percent) of the victims were related to their offenders (or at least one offender when more than one was present).

*Arrestees* – Law enforcement agencies submitted data to the UCR Program through incident reports and arrest reports for 4,538,284 arrestees.

- Of these arrestees, 32.0 percent were 26 to 35 years of age.
- By gender, 72.7 percent were male, and 27.3 percent were female.



## Uniform Crime Report 2021 Crime in the Nation

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- By race, most arrestees (66.4 percent) were white, 27.4 percent were black or African American, and 4.0 percent were of other races. The race was unknown for 2.2 percent of arrestees.

### ***NIBRS Estimates, 2021***

Estimates are provided in 108 data files that include national, regional, and state data, certain key demographics about victims and persons arrested, and characteristics of crimes such as weapons data. The data files are processed and downloadable on the Crime Data Explorer.

The 2021 NIBRS estimates contain data elements that were not previously available with the Summary Reporting System. Examples include:

- Firearms used in connection with robberies declined 16.1 percent from 2020 to 2021, while firearms used in connection with murder and non-negligent manslaughter increased 5.9 percent.
- The volume of arrestees armed at the time of arrest in connection with aggravated assault offenses increased by 5.8 percent.
- The volume of drug-related offenses increased compared to 2020 in every category except for marijuana/hashish.
- Drug offenses involving stimulants had the largest increase from 2020 to 2021 at 17.8 percent.

### ***Highlights of The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates***

The *Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates* analyzed violent and property crime estimates. The estimated national property crime rate decreased by 4.5%, influenced by drops in burglary/breaking & entering, and larceny/theft. Property crime volume was consistently down across the Northeast, Midwest, and South to varying degrees, with the South showing the largest decrease at 6.8%. Motor Vehicle Theft was the only property crime offense to show an increase for all four major regions of the country.

### ***Crime in the United States, 2021***

Because of the transition to NIBRS, the UCR's traditional annual report is abbreviated, however, it still provides the following summarized data:

- Agency-level data
- Murder, robbery, and aggravated assault by state with types of weapons used
- Arrests by state

The downloadable files of this data release are available on the UCR's Crime Data Explorer site at <https://crime-data-explorer.app.cloud.gov>.