



Federal Justice Statistics, 2017-2018

SUMMARY | NCJ 254598

APRIL 2021

Federal arrests increased by 53,763 from fiscal year (FY) 2017 to FY 2018, reaching their highest level in 25 years at 195,771 arrests. This marked a 38% increase from the number of arrests in FY 2017 and was the first rise in federal arrests since they dropped 25% from a former high of 188,164 arrests in 2013 to 142,008 arrests in 2017.

Persons under federal correctional control

Of the 372,354 persons under federal correctional control at fiscal year-end 2018, 60% were in secure confinement and 40% were under community supervision. This was similar to fiscal year-end 2017, when 372,531 persons were under federal correctional control (59% in secure confinement and 41% supervised in the community).

Most common arrest offenses

An immigration offense was the most serious arrest offense in 56% of federal arrests in FY 2018 (108,667 arrests). Arrests for supervision violations (13% of all arrests) and drug offenses (11%) were the next-most common.

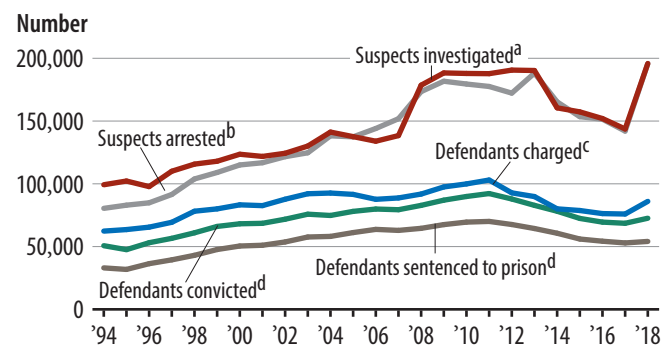
Drug Enforcement Administration arrests

The DEA reported 27,348 drug arrests in FY 2018, which was similar to the 27,223 arrests in FY 2017. From FY 2008 to FY 2018, DEA arrests for other opioids increased the most at about 10% per year, followed by arrests for heroin (8%) and methamphetamine (6%). During that period, arrests declined each year on average by 10% for crack cocaine, 6% for marijuana, and 5% for powder cocaine.

Referrals for prosecution

Agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) referred 59% of the 195,842 suspects in matters sent to U.S. attorneys in FY 2018, up from 48% in FY 2017. Law enforcement agencies within the Department of Justice referred 26% of suspects, and about 3% of suspects were referred by federal or state task forces.

Suspects and defendants processed in the federal justice system, FY 1994-2018



^aSuspects in matters investigated by U.S. attorneys. Suspects investigated in more than one matter are counted separately.

^bSuspects arrested by federal law enforcement. Suspects arrested more than once are counted separately. Excludes District of Columbia Superior Court arrests.

^cDefendants charged with a felony or a Class A misdemeanor in U.S. district court. Defendants charged in more than one case are counted separately.

^dDefendants in cases terminated with a felony or a Class A misdemeanor in U.S. district court. Defendants in more than one terminated case are counted separately.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the U.S. Marshals Service, Prisoner Tracking and Justice Detainee Information System; Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National Legal Information Office Network System database; and Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Criminal Master File, fiscal years 1994-2018.

Citizenship of defendants and prisoners

Thirty-one percent of defendants charged in U.S. district court in FY 2018 were from Mexico, 8% were from Central America, and 2% were from the Caribbean. Non-U.S. citizens made up 43% of defendants charged in U.S. district court in FY 2018 and 19% of federally sentenced prisoners in Federal Bureau of Prisons custody at fiscal year-end 2018.

The full report (*Federal Justice Statistics, 2017-2018*, NCJ 254598), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.