

From fiscal year (FY) 2015 to FY 2016, federal arrests decreased by 1%, from 153,478 arrests to 151,460. The number of defendants sentenced to federal prison decreased by 3%, down from 56,018 in FY 2015 to 54,274 in FY 2016.

Federal arrests

More than half (58%) of all federal arrests in FY 2016 took place in the five judicial districts along the U.S.-Mexico border, which was up from 45% in FY 2006. Nearly 8 in 10 (77% or 115,881) federal arrests in 2016 were for immigration, drug, or supervision violations. Forty-five percent of federal arrests in FY 2016 involved an immigration offense as the most serious arrest offense, followed by drug offenses and supervision violations (16% each).

From 2015 to 2016, federal arrests increased for weapons violations (up 8%) and supervision violations (up 6%), including violations of bail, failure to appear, and post-custody community supervision. However, arrests declined for property (down 11%), immigration (down 4%), and drug (down less than 1%) offenses.

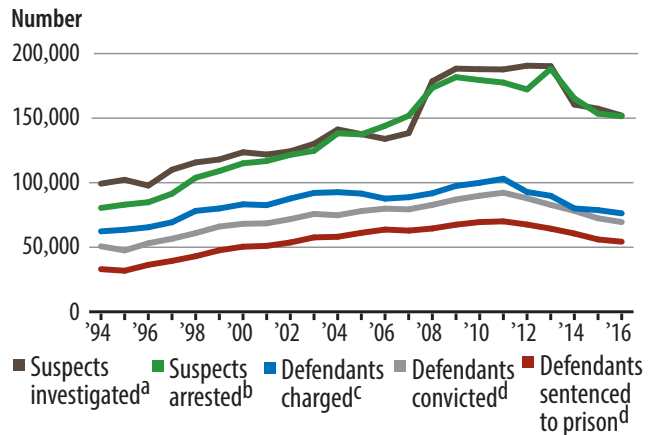
Drug arrests

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reported 29,486 drug arrests in 2016, down from 31,593 in 2015. From FY 2006 to 2016, arrests for heroin or other opioids increased 154%. The annual average number of arrests by the DEA for other opioids (up 13% each year) increased the most of any drug category, followed by arrests for heroin (up 10%) and methamphetamine (up 4%).

Defendant characteristics

In FY 2016, 41% of defendants charged in all U.S. district courts were not U.S. citizens: 30% were Mexican citizens, 5% were from Central America, and 6% were citizens of other foreign nations. Five percent of defendants charged in U.S. district courts in FY 2016 were legal aliens and 36% were illegal aliens. More than 9 in 10 defendants charged with immigration (98%),

Suspects and defendants processed in the federal justice system, FY 1994–2016



^aSuspects in matters investigated by U.S. attorneys.

^bSuspects arrested by federal law enforcement. Excludes D.C. Superior Court arrests.

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

^dDefendants in cases terminated with a felony or Class A misdemeanor offense in U.S. district court.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the U.S. Marshals Service, 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 1994–2016.

weapons (94%), drug (92%), property (92%), and violent (91%) offenses were convicted. Of the 69,487 defendants convicted in U.S. district court in 2016, 78% were sentenced to prison.

Federal correctional control

Of the nearly 380,000 persons under federal correctional control at fiscal year-end 2016, 59% were in secure confinement and 41% were under community supervision. This was down from fiscal year-end 2015, when 392,212 persons were under federal correctional control (60% in secure confinement and 40% on supervision in the community).

The full report (*Federal Justice Statistics, 2015-2016*, NCJ 251770), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at www.bjs.gov.

