IMPROVING ACCESS TO U.S. CRIME DATA

Crime Data Explorer

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UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING PROGRAM
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Federal Participation in NIBRS

Federal Agency Status (133 Total) – As of May 5, 2019

- Committed: 55
- Submitting/Testing: 17
- Will Not Submit: 10
- Awaiting Agency to Identify POC: 30
- Working Towards Compliance: 25
- Waiting on Portal: 25
The Crime Data Explorer (CDE) is the “Digital Front Door” for the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.
THE VARIETY OF USERS

Research suggests that the typical CDE users is familiar with the UCR program and/or working with open data. Similar to the “novice”, they value context, but prefer working with the data in its primary form and favor downloads and the API (Application Programming Interface) over the CDE interface.

Target audience, area of greatest “broadcast potential”: 

- General public
- Legislative staff
- Student
- Advocacy groups
- Media
- Open data
- CJIS & other law enforcement
- Statistician

“SHOW ME CRIME NEAR ME”

- TIMELINESS
- LOCALITY
- COMPARISONS
- GUIDANCE
- CONSISTENCY

“JUST GIVE ME THE DATA”

- TIMELINESS
- VOLUME
- INTEGRITY
- CAVEATS
- FLEXIBILITY
United States

Crime data for the nation is derived from summary (SSR) and incident (NIBRS) reports voluntarily submitted to the FBI. In 2017, the FBI estimated crime statistics for the nation based on data received from 16,738 of 18,642 law enforcement agencies in the country that year.

Resources
About the data

Incident-based (NIBRS) details reported in the United States

How these numbers are calculated

In 2017, there were 325,876 violent crime incidents, and 400,162 offenses reported by the United States by 7,102 law enforcement agencies that submitted incident-based (NIBRS) data.

All Violent Crime Offender vs. Victim demographics

Sex  Race  Ethnicity  Age

In 2017, the largest percentage of violent crime offenders in the United States were male and the largest percentage of violent crime victims were female.

Offender Sex  Victim Sex

All Violent Crime Victim demographics

The Location type demographic below shows the incident-based (NIBRS) reported location of violent crime victims in the United States during the year 2017 and the Victim’s relationship to the offender demographic shows the violent crime victim’s relationship to the offender.
Downloads & Documentation

The Crime Data Explorer (CDE) provides select bulk data sets for download. Incident-based data by state, summary data with estimates, and data on specific topics like assaults on law enforcement officers, hate crime, or human trafficking are available for download in CSV files below. Data is also available via the Crime Data API, a read-only web service that returns JSON or CSV data and provides experienced users access to large amounts of UCR data to use and share. Because this data is dynamic, be aware of the time stamp that reflects the refresh date of content.

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program provided updated data for 2017 on September 24, 2018.

Incident-based data by state

Download NIBRS data by state and year

Additional datasets

Summary (SRS) Data with Estimates

This dataset contains estimated data at the state and national level and was derived from the Summary Reporting System (SRS). These data reflect the estimates the FBI has traditionally included in its annual publications. Download this dataset to see the FBI's estimated crime totals for the nation and all 50 states from 1995 - 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data type</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Last modified</th>
<th>File type</th>
<th>File size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated crime</td>
<td>2006-2017</td>
<td>September 20, 2018</td>
<td>CSV</td>
<td>112.7 KB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What's in the download

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information about Estimated crime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Preview

Assaults on Law Enforcement Officers

Police Employee Data

Hate Crime
FBI Crime Data API

The FBI Crime Data API is a read-only web service that returns JSON or CSV data. It is broadly organized around the data reporting systems the FBI UCR program uses and their related entities. Agencies submit data using one of two reporting formats – the Summary Reporting System (SRS), or the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). SRS data is the legacy format that provides aggregated counts of the reported crime offenses known to law enforcement by location.

NIBRS is a newer format that provides an incident-based view of crime. It includes information about each offense, such as the time of day an incident occurred, the demographics of the offenders/victims, the known relationships between the offenders and victims, and many other details around how and where crime occurs. Neither format includes personally identifiable information (PII) about the offenders or victims. While many agencies submit SRS data, the FBI plans to transition all crime reporting to the NIBRS format by 2021.

Other UCR data collection systems made available by this API include:

- Summarized Agency Data
- NIBRS Counts
- Police Employment Data
- State and Agency Participation Data

Get an API key [here](#).

The API was designed to provide as much information as possible in a usable format. However, the FBI recommends taking into account that the data is for comparative purposes only. The FBI strongly advises against any sort of ranking or comparison among states or other entities. The exception being that it is applicable to the respective state, and that state to a national perspective.

The Crime Data Explorer Base API URL is [https://api.usa.gov/crime/api/](https://api.usa.gov/crime/api/)

For more information on how to use the API, [view our guide](#).
MAPPING POPULATION COVERED

Many of the users we spoke with explained that they take steps to assess the reliability of a dataset before they use it. Determining reliability can be a subjective process, but typically involves an examination of the source/publisher of the data and its reputation, a high-level review of the volume and integrity of the data, and a look at the quality of its supporting documentation. Data from the CDE rates highly in each of these areas, but since participation in the UCR program is voluntary, the volume of available data can be uneven. Within this context, we found that users were especially interested in the participation rate for the area they were viewing data for, with high participation suggesting that the data was more likely to be trusted.

This concept explores how percent of the population covered (a measure of participation that takes into account population density) may be mapped over a geographical areas to build trust in the data, or to warn users when participation is low. Similarly, the concept provides a county-based view of participation within a state, to provide an at-a-glance view of the maturity of the UCR program in that area. The UCR staff we spoke with suggested this might be a helpful feature for promoting broader visibility and accountability within the program.
CONCEPT DESIGNS: DATA STORIES

DEVELOPING STORIES AROUND THE DATA

This is a concept we explored early on in the design process for the CDE. It was perceived as an opportunity for CJIS to demonstrate the unique capabilities of UCR data in a way that appeals to a wide range of users (novices to advanced), but was de-prioritized in favor of enabling MVP functionality first. Unlike the core CDE experience, which focuses on providing access to the data, a data story would highlight “snapshots” of the data through narratives, visualizations, and other techniques. They could be used to promote awareness around topical issues and or to facilitate deeper exploration of selected aspects of the data. In this sense, data stories could be considered an extension of our “download-first” strategy for expanding the presence of NIBRS in the CDE, or the “frontend” to a specialized dataset.

As CJIS decides which stories to highlight, it should take steps to not over editorialize by minimizing the accompanying narrative and by providing full access to the underlying data so that users can interpret its meaning for themselves. Similarly, CJIS should be transparent about which aspects of the data it decides to highlight and regularly engage with the user community to understand what additional perspectives are of interest to the public.

Data stories would reuse many of the key components (i.e., trend charts, histograms) from the core CDE experience. This would simplify implementation and allow CJIS to more easily add and update content around new slices of the data.
Crime Data Explorer
Improving Access to Crime Data

View interactive data across the nation from any device
Search, sort and view trends by state and by types of crime
Compare crime statistics over different time periods

Available now: fbi.gov/cde
Backup Slides

Additional Information