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PRELIMINARY NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEY  
DATA, PRESS RELEASE

NCJRS

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# Department of Justice

ADVANCE FOR RELEASE AT 5 P.M. EDT  
SUNDAY APRIL 19, 1992

BJS  
202-307-0784

## PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD CRIMES ROSE LESS THAN 2 PERCENT LAST YEAR

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) said today that the estimated number of personal and household crimes in the U.S. rose 1.9 percent last year, increasing from 34.4 million in 1990 to 35.1 million in 1991.

BJS, a Department of Justice component in the Office of Justice Programs, said the preliminary crime rate estimates are from its National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which is an on-going data collection program that uses U.S. Bureau of the Census interviewers.

During 1991 approximately 95,000 people in about 48,000 nationally representative U.S. households were asked about crimes they might have experienced during the preceding six months.

The data include both crimes reported to police and those that go unreported. Because the BJS survey includes unreported crime, there may be differences in these data from what the Federal Bureau of Investigation publishes in its Uniform Crime

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Reports, which are based on police reports. About 37 percent of all crimes and 49 percent of all violent crimes were reported to law enforcement agencies last year. An estimated 22 million personal and household crimes were not reported to the police during 1991. The percentage of unreported crime last year was almost identical to the percentage in 1990.

"Last year's estimated increase brings the total number of victimizations during 1991 to a level that is still well below the peak number of almost 41.5 million recorded in 1981," noted BJS Director Steven D. Dillingham. "In 1981 the survey estimated there were about 6.6 million violent crimes--that is, about 35.3 violent crimes for every 1,000 people 12 years old or older, compared to an estimated 6.4 million such crimes, or 31.3 per 1,000 people last year."

BJS commented that statistically significant increases in the preliminary estimates of rape and simple assault occurred last year, but the rates per capita were only marginally higher than in 1990.

The preliminary estimates of the rape rate rose to 1.0 per 1,000 in 1991. This estimate, which was higher than the rate for the preceding year, is similar to rates BJS reported in previous years. For example, in 1978, 1979 and 1981 the per capita rape

rates were at or near the 1991 estimate.

Last year's ratio of simple assaults per 1,000 U.S. inhabitants 12 years old and older was only marginally higher than the 1990 rate. The estimated 52.6 burglaries per 1,000 U.S. households last year was at or near the lowest rate since the survey began in 1973. Between 1981 and 1991 burglary rates declined 40 percent. During the same period robbery rates declined 24 percent--from 7.4 robberies per 1,000 people to 5.6 per 1,000 in 1991.

Tables of the National Crime Victimization Survey's 1991 estimates are attached to this news release. A final report will be published later this year.

Additional information about BJS publications may be obtained from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Box 6000, Rockville, Maryland 20850. The telephone number is 1-800-732-3277.

# # #

**Table 1. National Crime Survey:  
Victimization levels and rates, preliminary 1991**

Type of crime	Number of victimizations			Victimization rates		
	1990	Prelim- inary 1991	Percent change	1990	Prelim- inary 1991	Percent change
All crimes	34,403,580	35,054,040	1.9 % <sup>3</sup>	--	--	--
<b>Personal crimes</b>	<b>18,984,100</b>	<b>19,414,500</b>	<b>2.3 %</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>94.6</b>	<b>1.3 %</b>
Crimes of violence	6,008,790	6,427,480	7.0 <sup>2</sup>	29.6	31.3	5.9 <sup>3</sup>
Completed	2,421,530	2,612,150	7.9 <sup>3</sup>	11.9	12.7	6.8
Attempted	3,587,260	3,816,610	6.4 <sup>3</sup>	17.6	18.6	5.4
Rape <sup>1</sup>	130,260	207,610	59.4 <sup>2</sup>	0.6	1.0	57.8 <sup>3</sup>
Robbery	1,149,690	1,146,400	-0.3	5.7	5.6	-1.3
Completed	800,500	839,310	4.8	3.9	4.1	3.8
Attempted	349,190	310,630	-11.0	1.7	1.5	-11.9
Assault	4,728,790	5,083,200	7.5 <sup>2</sup>	23.3	24.8	6.5 <sup>3</sup>
Aggravated	1,600,660	1,652,810	3.3	7.9	8.1	2.3
Completed with injury	627,000	616,430	-1.7	3.1	3.0	-2.6
Attempted with weapon	973,660	1,035,220	6.3	4.8	5.0	5.3
Simple	3,128,130	3,430,500	9.7 <sup>2</sup>	15.4	16.7	8.6 <sup>3</sup>
Completed with injury	931,170	1,061,780	14.0 <sup>2</sup>	4.6	5.2	12.9
Attempted without weapon	2,196,960	2,371,170	7.9 <sup>3</sup>	10.8	11.6	6.9
Crimes of theft	12,975,310	12,991,880	0.1	63.8	63.3	-0.9
Completed	12,154,550	12,183,540	0.2	59.8	59.4	-0.7
Attempted	820,760	808,570	-1.5	4.0	3.9	-2.4
Personal larceny with contact	637,010	552,030	-13.3 <sup>3</sup>	3.1	2.7	-14.2
Personal larceny without contact	12,338,290	12,436,390	0.8	60.7	60.6	-0.2
Completed	11,559,000	11,683,110	1.1	56.9	56.9	0.1
Attempted	779,290	754,180	-3.2	3.8	3.7	-4.2
<b>Household crimes</b>	<b>15,419,480</b>	<b>15,640,490</b>	<b>1.4 %</b>	<b>161.0</b>	<b>161.5</b>	<b>0.3 %</b>
Completed	13,072,490	13,301,280	1.8	136.5	137.3	0.6
Attempted	2,346,990	2,340,040	-0.3	24.5	24.2	-1.4
Burglary	5,147,740	5,092,570	-1.1	53.8	52.6	-2.2
Completed	4,076,210	4,073,570	-0.1	42.6	42.1	-1.2
Attempted forcible entry	1,071,530	1,021,720	-4.6	11.2	10.5	-5.7
Household larceny	8,304,180	8,601,820	3.6	86.7	88.8	2.4
Completed	7,769,280	8,078,670	4.0 <sup>3</sup>	81.1	83.4	2.8
Attempted	534,900	523,060	-2.2	5.6	5.4	-3.3
Motor vehicle theft	1,967,540	1,947,850	-1.0	20.5	20.1	-2.1
Completed	1,226,990	1,151,350	-6.2	12.8	11.9	-7.2
Attempted	740,550	799,870	8.0	7.7	8.3	6.8

NOTE: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Victimization rates are calculated on the basis of the number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 and over (personal crimes) or per 1,000 households (household crimes). If the trends that occurred during the first part of 1991 were to be reversed during the latter half, especially during the final 3 months, then it is likely that none of the changes

in the preliminary estimates would be statistically significant in the final data.  
<sup>1</sup>Includes completed and attempted rape.  
<sup>2</sup>The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.  
<sup>3</sup>The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

**Table 2. National Crime Survey:  
Number and proportion of crimes reported to police, preliminary 1991**

Type of crime	Number of crimes reported to police			Proportion reported to police		
	1990	Preliminary 1991	Percent change	1990	Preliminary 1991	Percent change
All crimes	12,961,860	12,880,340	-0.6 %	37.7	36.7	-2.5 %
Personal crimes	6,592,930	6,710,350	1.8 %	34.7	34.6	-0.5 %
Crimes of violence	2,886,950	3,167,350	9.7 <sup>2</sup>	48.0	49.3	2.6
Completed	1,466,400	1,531,120	4.4	60.6	58.6	-3.2
Attempted	1,420,550	1,632,860	14.9 <sup>2</sup>	39.6	42.8	8.0
Rape <sup>1</sup>	70,200	112,370	60.1 <sup>2</sup>	53.9	54.1	0.4
Robbery	575,790	672,640	16.8 <sup>3</sup>	50.1	58.7	17.2 <sup>2</sup>
Completed	456,780	523,460	14.6	57.1	62.4	9.3
Attempted	119,010	150,480	26.4	34.1	48.4	42.1 <sup>2</sup>
Assault	2,240,910	2,388,290	6.6	47.4	47.0	-0.9
Aggravated	939,720	1,018,490	8.4	58.7	61.6	5.0
Completed with injury	445,840	409,400	-8.2	71.1	66.4	-6.6
Attempted with weapon	493,880	606,820	22.9 <sup>2</sup>	50.7	58.6	15.6 <sup>3</sup>
Simple	1,301,190	1,371,050	5.4	41.6	40.0	-3.9
Completed with injury	524,360	541,150	3.2	56.3	51.0	-9.5
Attempted without weapon	776,830	829,380	6.8	35.4	35.0	-1.1
Crimes of theft	3,705,980	3,557,270	-4.0	28.6	27.4	-4.1
Completed	3,516,600	3,360,900	-4.4	28.9	27.6	-4.7
Attempted	189,380	196,620	3.8	23.1	24.3	5.4
Personal larceny with contact	237,180	243,890	2.8	37.2	44.2	18.7
Personal larceny without contact	3,468,790	3,316,380	-4.4	28.1	26.7	-5.1
Completed	3,291,920	3,150,800	-4.3	28.5	27.0	-5.3
Attempted	176,870	165,730	-6.3	22.7	22.0	-3.2
Household crimes	6,368,930	6,174,860	-3.0 %	41.3	39.5	-4.4 % <sup>3</sup>
Completed	5,544,090	5,355,850	-3.4	42.4	40.3	-5.1 <sup>3</sup>
Attempted	824,840	818,990	-0.7	35.1	35.0	-0.4
Burglary	2,648,420	2,533,350	-4.3	51.4	49.7	-3.3
Completed	2,306,720	2,176,570	-5.6	56.6	53.4	-5.6
Attempted forcible entry	341,700	356,580	4.4	31.9	34.9	9.4
Household larceny	2,242,170	2,289,610	2.1	27.0	26.6	-1.4
Completed	2,074,010	2,110,300	1.7	26.7	26.1	-2.1
Attempted	168,160	179,840	6.9	31.4	34.4	9.4
Motor vehicle theft	1,478,310	1,353,100	-8.5	75.1	69.5	-7.5 <sup>2</sup>
Completed	1,163,340	1,069,010	-8.1	94.8	92.8	-2.1
Attempted	314,970	284,210	-9.8	42.5	35.5	-16.5

NOTE: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Also see note on Table 1.

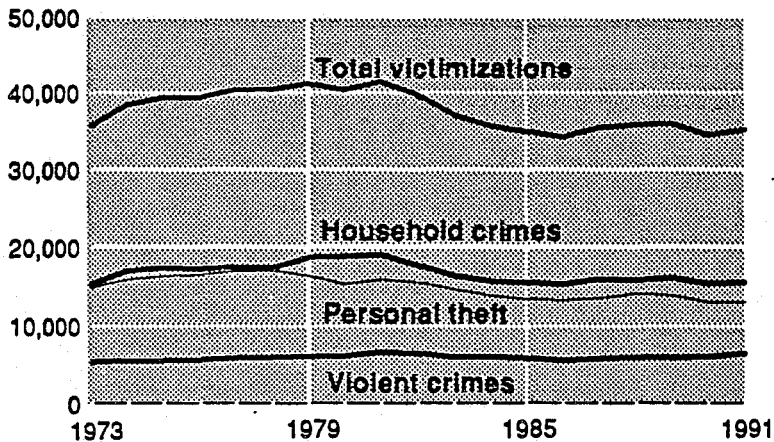
<sup>1</sup>Includes completed and attempted rape.

<sup>2</sup>The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>3</sup>The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

Figure 1

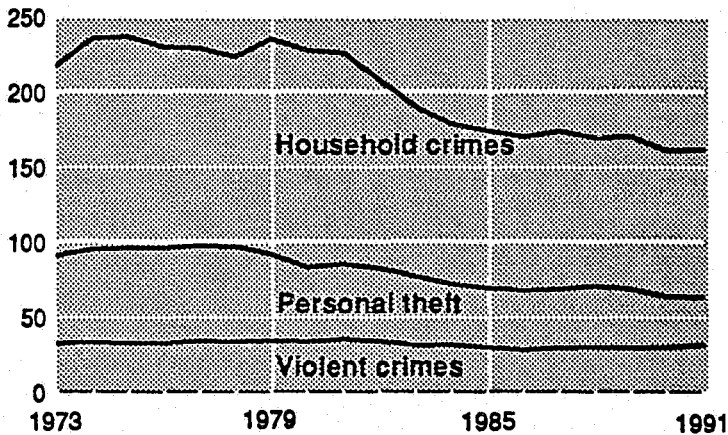
Number of victimizations



Note: Figures for 1991 are preliminary.

Figure 2

Number per 1,000 persons or households



Note: Figures for 1991 are preliminary.

**Victimization levels, 1973-91 (data for figure 1)**

Year	Total	Number of victimizations (in 1,000s)		
		Violent crimes	Personal theft	Household crimes
1973	35,661	5,350	14,970	15,340
1974	38,411	5,510	15,889	17,012
1975	39,266	5,573	16,294	17,400
1976	39,318	5,599	16,519	17,199
1977	40,314	5,902	16,933	17,480
1978	40,412	5,941	17,050	17,421
1979	41,249	6,159	16,382	18,708
1980	40,252	6,130	15,300	18,821
1981	41,454	6,582	15,863	19,009
1982	39,756	6,459	15,553	17,744
1983	37,001	5,903	14,657	16,440
1984	35,544	6,021	13,789	15,733
1985	34,864	5,823	13,474	15,568
1986	34,118	5,515	13,235	15,368
1987	35,336	5,796	13,575	15,966
1988	35,796	5,910	14,056	15,830
1989	35,818	5,861	13,829	16,128
1990	34,404	6,009	12,975	15,419
1991 *	35,054	6,427	12,992	15,640

\*Figures for 1991 are preliminary.

**Victimization rates, 1973-91 (data for figure 2)**

Year	Number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 and older or per 1,000 households		
	Violent crimes	Personal theft	Household crimes
1973	32.6	91.1	217.8
1974	33.0	95.1	235.7
1975	32.8	96.0	236.5
1976	32.6	96.1	229.5
1977	33.9	97.3	228.8
1978	33.7	96.8	223.4
1979	34.5	91.9	235.3
1980	33.3	83.0	227.4
1981	35.3	85.1	226.0
1982	34.3	82.5	208.2
1983	31.0	76.9	189.8
1984	31.4	71.8	178.7
1985	30.0	69.4	174.4
1986	28.1	67.5	170.0
1987	29.3	68.7	173.9
1988	29.6	70.5	169.6
1989	29.1	68.7	169.9
1990	29.6	63.8	161.0
1991 *	31.3	63.3	161.5

\*Figures for 1991 are preliminary.



## Victimization rates, 1973-91

	Number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 and older					Number of victimizations per 1,000 households		
	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Simple assault	Theft	Burglary	Larceny	Motor vehicle theft
1973	1.0	6.7	10.1	14.8	91.1	91.7	107.0	19.1
1974	1.0	7.2	10.4	14.4	95.1	93.1	123.8	18.8
1975	.9	6.8	9.6	15.6	96.0	91.7	125.4	19.5
1976	.8	6.5	9.9	15.4	96.1	88.9	124.1	16.5
1977	.9	6.2	10.0	16.8	97.3	88.5	123.3	17.0
1978	1.0	5.9	9.7	17.2	96.8	86.0	119.9	17.5
1979	1.1	6.3	9.9	17.3	91.9	84.1	133.7	17.5
1980	.9	6.6	9.3	16.5	83.0	84.3	126.5	16.7
1981	1.0	7.4	9.6	17.3	85.1	87.9	121.0	17.1
1982	.8	7.1	9.3	17.1	82.5	78.2	113.9	16.2
1983	.8	6.0	8.0	16.2	76.9	70.0	105.2	14.6
1984	.9	5.7	9.0	15.7	71.8	64.1	99.4	15.2
1985	.7	5.1	8.3	15.9	69.4	62.7	97.5	14.2
1986	.7	5.1	7.9	14.4	67.5	61.5	93.5	15.0
1987	.8	5.3	8.0	15.2	68.7	62.1	95.7	16.0
1988	.6	5.3	8.7	15.0	70.5	61.9	90.2	17.5
1989	.7	5.4	8.3	14.7	68.7	56.4	94.4	19.2
1990	.6	5.7	7.9	15.4	63.8	53.8	86.7	20.5
1991*	1.0	5.6	8.1	16.7	63.3	52.6	88.8	20.1

\*Preliminary data