

SECTION II

Crime Index Offenses Reported

CRIME INDEX TOTAL

DEFINITION

The Crime Index is composed of selected offenses used to gauge fluctuations in the overall volume and rate of crime reported to law enforcement. The offenses included are the violent crimes of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, and the property crimes of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of offenses¹</i>	<i>Rate per 100,000 inhabitants¹</i>
1999	11,634,378	4,266.5
2000	11,605,751	4,124.0
Percent change	-0.2	-3.3

¹Does not include arson. See page 61.

The Crime Index total, a measure of serious crime, decreased 0.2 percent to an estimated 11.6 million offenses in 2000. This marked the lowest measure since 1978 and remained relatively unchanged from 1999 numbers. Collectively, the Nation's cities showed a 0.1-percent decline in serious crime. However, cities with populations of less than 50,000 showed increases in the Crime Index. Cities with populations of 10,000 to 24,999 had an increase of 0.8 percent, and cities with populations under 10,000 were up 0.6 percent. In cities with populations of 25,000 to 49,999, the Crime Index was up 0.4 percent. Cities with populations of 100,000 and over had an overall decrease of 0.4 percent in Crime Index offenses, and cities with populations of 50,000 to 99,999 saw serious offenses fall an average of 0.7 percent. Suburban counties had a 1.8-percent decrease in Crime Index offenses, and rural counties had a 0.5-percent increase.

Five- and 10-year trends indicate the 2000 national total was 14.0 percent lower than in 1996 and 22.0 percent lower than in 1991.

By region, the largest volume of Crime Index offenses was reported in the most populous area, the Southern States, which accounted for 41.0 percent of the total. The Western States made up 23.0 percent of the total; the Midwestern States, 21.9 percent; and the Northeastern States, 14.2 percent. The Western States showed an increase in Crime Index offenses, up 1.0 percent from the 1999 totals. The Northeastern States had a 2.0-percent decrease, the Midwestern States noted a 0.6-percent drop, and the Southern States registered a 0.1-percent decrease. (See Tables 3 and 4.)

In 2000, Crime Index offenses occurred most often in July and August and least often in February. (See Table 2.1.)

Table 2.1

Crime Index Total by Month
Percent distribution, 1996-2000

Month	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
January	8.1	8.2	8.5	8.0	7.8
February	7.6	7.3	7.5	7.2	7.4
March	7.9	8.0	8.2	8.0	8.3
April	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.9	8.0
May	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.7
June	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.6	8.6
July	9.1	9.1	9.0	9.1	9.1
August	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.2	9.1
September	8.4	8.6	8.4	8.5	8.5
October	8.7	8.7	8.5	8.7	8.7
November	7.9	7.9	7.8	8.2	8.0
December	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.4	7.9

Rate

At 4,124.0 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants in the United States, the Crime Index rate for 2000 is the lowest

since 1972. By population grouping, cities outside metropolitan areas had a Crime Index rate of 4,485.0 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants, and metropolitan areas, a rate of 4,428.0 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants. Rural counties had 1,864.0 offenses per 100,000. (See Tables 1 and 2.) Overall, the 2000 Crime Index rate dropped 3.3 percent from the 1999 rate, 18.9 percent from the 1996 rate, and 30.1 percent from the 1991 rate.

Of the Nation's four regions, the South had the highest Crime Index rate with 4,743.4 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants. The West followed with a rate of 4,222.4; the Midwest with 3,945.0; and the Northeast with 3,064.3. All four regions experienced a decline in the rate per 100,000 inhabitants from 1999 to 2000.

By region, the Northeastern region experienced a decrease in the rate of serious crime of 5.2 percent, and the Southern Region recorded a 3.9-percent drop. The Midwestern Region had a 2.4-percent decrease, and the Western Region had a 2.3-percent decline. (See Table 4.)

Nature

The Crime Index is composed of the total of violent and property crimes. Violent crimes comprised 12.3 percent of Crime Index offenses, and property crimes made up 87.7 percent. Larceny-theft, a property crime, was the offense most often reported to law enforcement. Murder, a violent crime, was least often reported. (See Figure 2.3.)

An estimated \$16.4 billion in stolen property was reported for all Crime Index offenses in 2000. Thefts of motor vehicles accounted for the greatest loss, followed by jewelry and precious metals; televisions, radios, stereos, etc.; and currency, notes, etc.

The recovery rate for monetary losses from stolen property as reported to law enforcement agencies around the Nation in 2000 was 34.8 percent. With regard to percentage of monetary recovery, stolen motor vehicles had the highest followed by clothing and furs, and consumable goods. (See Table 24.)

Law Enforcement Response

Law enforcement agencies throughout the United States reported an estimated 2.2 million arrests for Index crimes and cleared 20.5 percent of serious crimes. Clearances can occur by arrest or by exceptional means when some element beyond law enforcement control precludes the placing of formal charges against the offender. The arrest of one person may clear several crimes, or several persons may be arrested in connection with the clearance of one offense.

Five- and 10-year clearance rates show a 21.7-percent clearance rate in 1996, and a 21.2-percent clearance rate in 1991.

In 2000, Crime Index arrests fell 3.7 percent from 1999 arrest numbers. With the exception of motor vehicle theft, which rose 1.2 percent, each offense in the Crime Index reflected a drop in the number of persons arrested from 1999 to 2000. Among violent crimes, arrests for murders were down 7.5 percent, and arrests for forcible rape decreased 3.6 percent. Robbery arrests declined 2.5 percent, and aggravated assault arrests went down 0.9 percent. Among the property crimes, arrests for larceny-theft dropped 5.5 percent, and arrests for burglary were

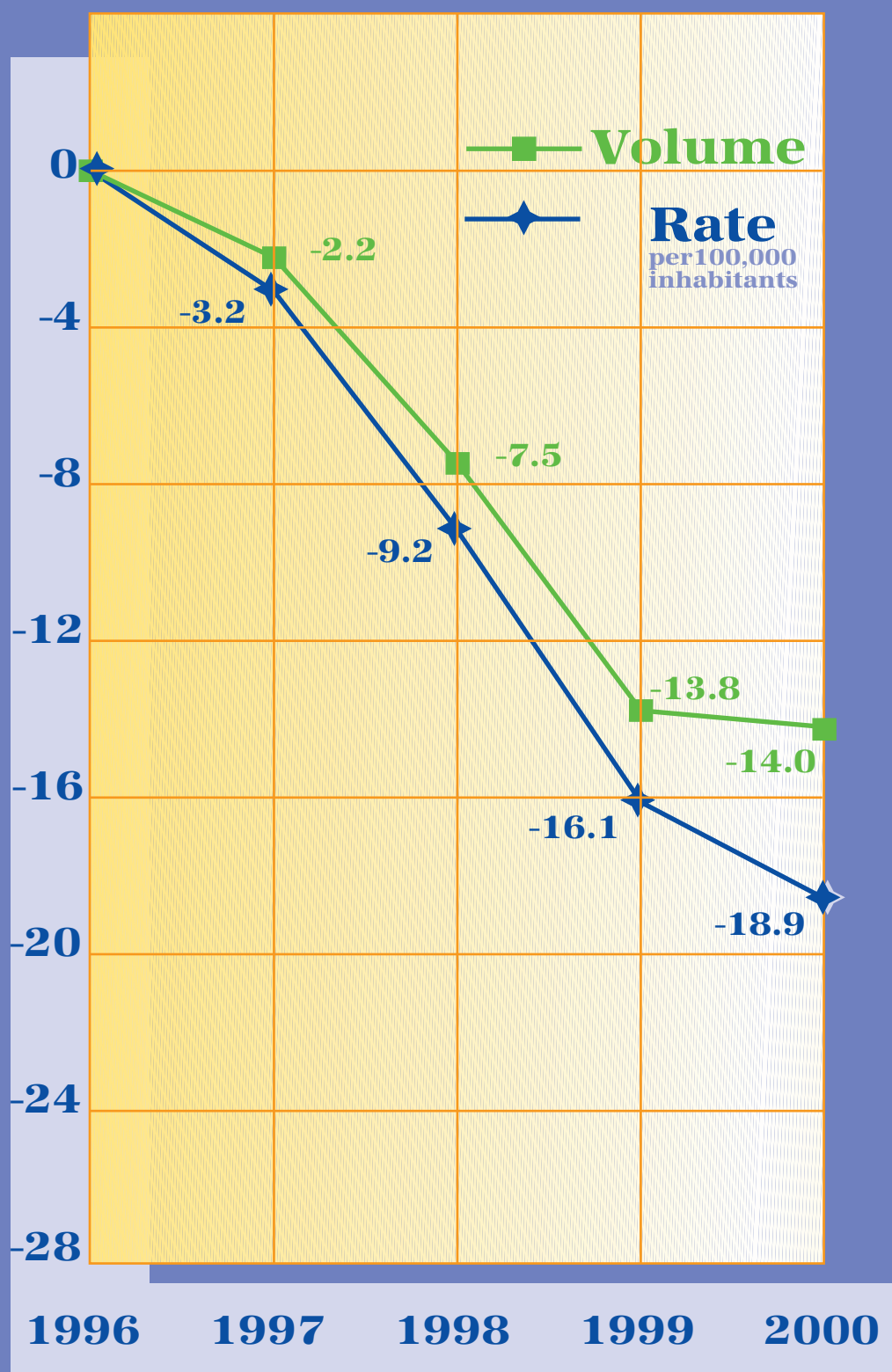
down 3.4 percent. Arrests for arson declined 4.3 percent. (See Table 36.)

Adult arrests dropped 3.1 percent, and juvenile arrests declined 5.1 percent. By gender, male arrests fell 4.1 percent, and female arrests dipped 2.4 percent. (See Tables 36 and 37.)

The highest volume of Crime Index arrests were for larceny-thefts with nearly 1.2 million estimated arrests. (See Table 29.)

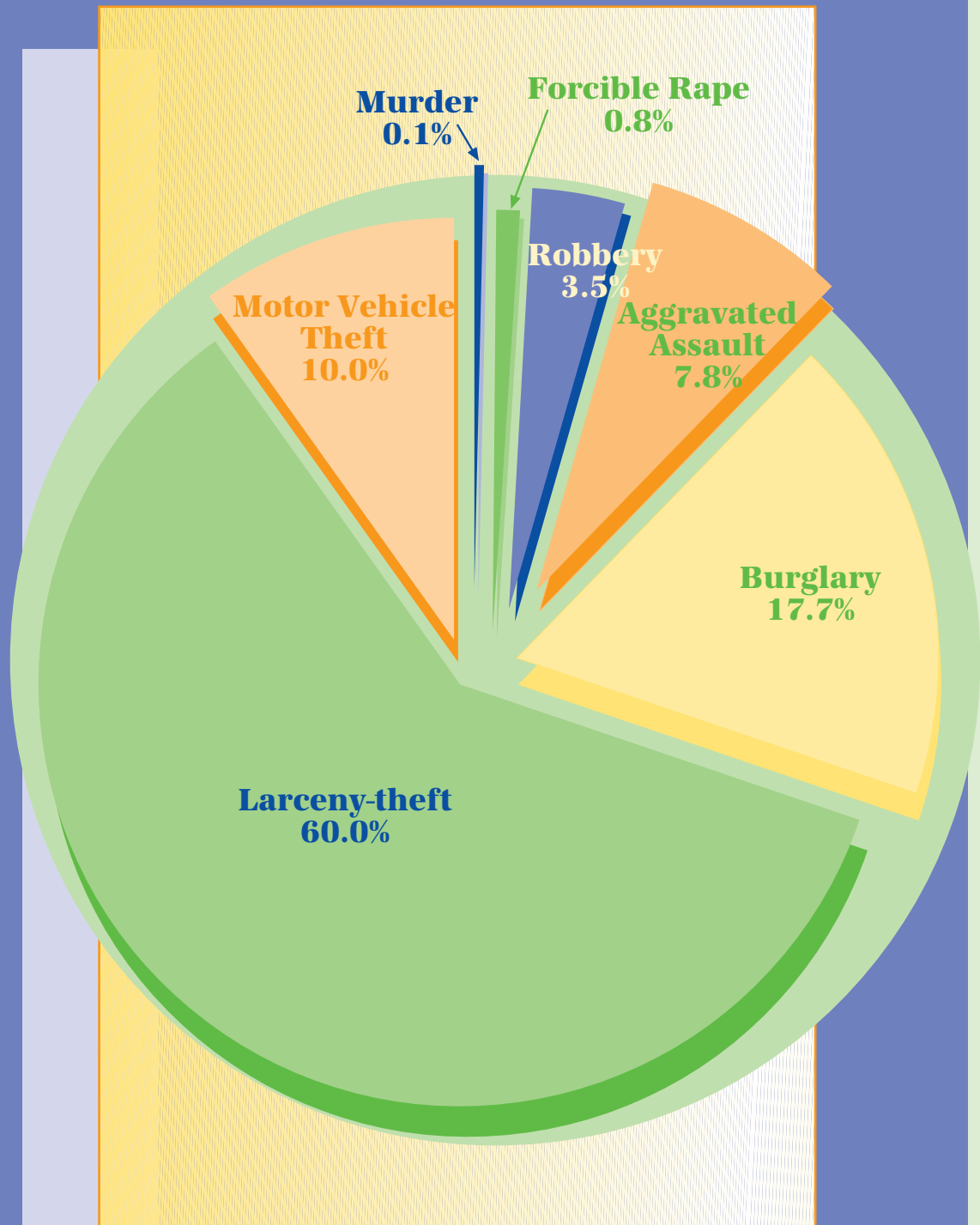
FIGURE 2.2 CRIME INDEX OFFENSES

PERCENT CHANGE
from 1996



CRIME INDEX OFFENSES

FIGURE 2.3



PERCENT DISTRIBUTION¹
2000

REGIONAL CRIME RATES 2000

VIOLENT & PROPERTY CRIMES

FIGURE 2.4

PER 100,000 INHABITANTS

