

## Sex offense arrests

### Sex offenses were the fastest growing federal arrest offense from 2010 to 2014

Federal law enforcement arrested 3,447 sex offense suspects in 2014, a 4% increase from 2010. (See *Methodology* for classification of sex offenses.) This period was marked by closer surveillance of registered sex offenders and more restrictions of sex offenders on supervision in the community. The FBI (39%) made the most sex offense arrests in 2014, followed by the USMS (29%) and ICE (20%). The number of suspects arrested for a sex offense doubled from 1994 to 1998, doubled again from 1998 to 2004, and doubled again from 2004 to 2013 (figure 4). From 2010 to 2014, sex offenses made up 2% (16,842) of the total number of federal arrests (882,713) (not shown).

### In 2014, arrests for federal sex offenses made up 4% of federal, state, and local sex offense arrests

In 2014, there were an estimated 21,007 arrests for rape and 55,456 arrests for sex offenses (excluding prostitution) reported by state and local law enforcement.<sup>3</sup> A total of 79,910 arrests for sex offenses was comprised of 76,463 state and local law enforcement arrests and 3,447 federal arrests. Federal arrests accounted for 4% of national sex offense arrests.

Seven districts had 80 or more federal sex offense arrests in 2014 (map 3). Florida Middle (131), Texas Western (120), and Arizona (100) had 100 or more sex offense arrests. The busiest court cities for federal sex offense arrests in 2014 were San Diego, California (62); Phoenix, Arizona (62); Portland, Oregon (57); and Springfield, Illinois (54).

<sup>3</sup>FBI, *Crime in the United States, 2014*, table 29.

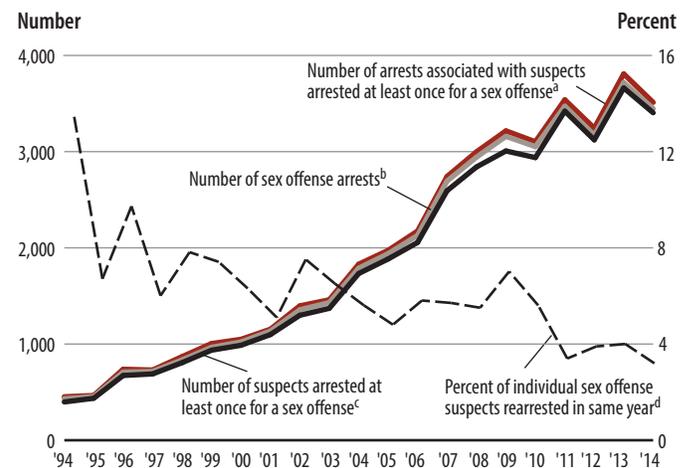
## Enforcement initiatives targeting sex offenders

Recent initiatives that have targeted sex offenders include the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Project Safe Childhood, which was initiated in 2006 to address the expanding use of technology in the sexual exploitation of children.

The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (P.L. 109-248) was passed in 2006 and authorized the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) to investigate registered sex offenders and assist state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement with apprehending sex offenders. The USMS established the National Sex Offender Targeting Center to improve the tracking and apprehension of fugitive sex offenders. In 2008, the Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act of 2008 (PROTECT Our Children Act) required the DOJ to create a national strategy to combat child exploitation across levels of government and the private sector (P.L. 110-401).

**FIGURE 4**

### Federal sex offense arrests and individual sex offense suspects arrested, 1994–2014



<sup>a</sup>The unit of count is any arrest involving a suspect with at least one sex offense arrest as most serious charge.

<sup>b</sup>The unit of count is a federal sex offense arrest as most serious charge. Suspects with more than one sex offense arrest are counted separately.

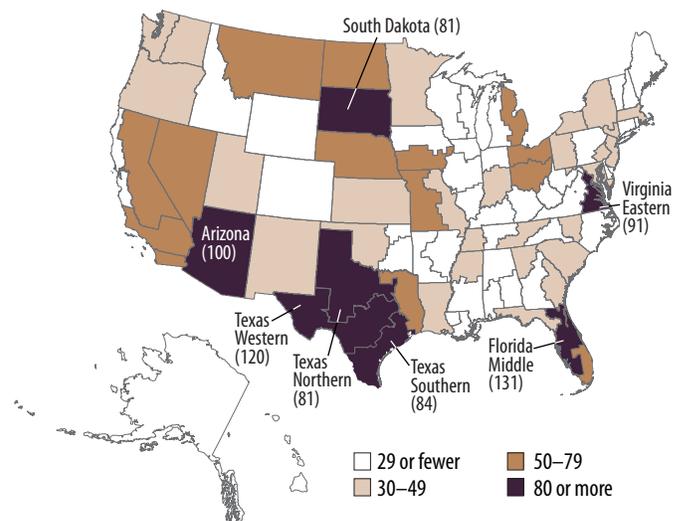
<sup>c</sup>The unit of count is a sex offense suspect. Suspects with at least one sex offense arrest as most serious charge are counted once.

<sup>d</sup>Percent of sex offense suspects arrested in the same year is the number of total arrests divided by the number of suspects with at least one sex offense as most serious charge.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the U.S. Marshals Service, Justice Detainee Information System, fiscal years 1994–2014.

**MAP 3**

### Federal sex offense arrests, by federal judicial district, 2014



Note: There were a total of 3,447 arrests for a sex offense from October 1, 2013, to September 30, 2014. Sex offense suspects arrested more than once in a fiscal year are counted separately. Sex offenses include sex abuse, possession, distribution, and production of child pornography, and illegal sex transportation.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the U.S. Marshals Service, Prisoner Tracking and Justice Detainee Information Systems, fiscal year 2014.

## Sex offender sentences

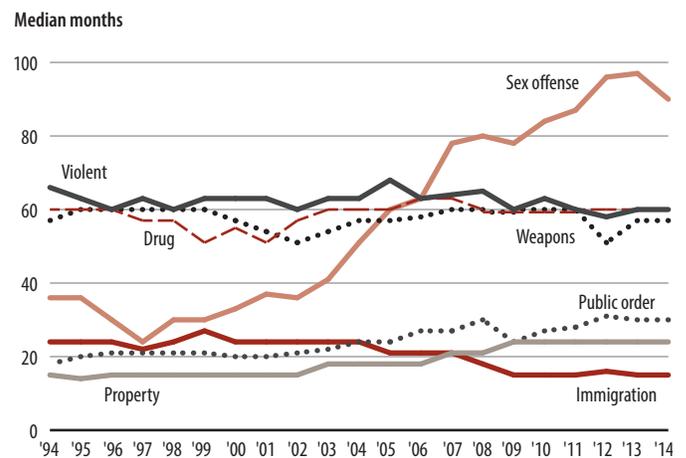
### *Median prison sentences for defendants convicted of sex offenses had the greatest increase from 1994 to 2014*

The median prison sentence imposed on defendants convicted for a felony sex offense increased an annual average of 5%, from 36 months in 1994 to 90 months in 2014 (figure 21). In comparison, the median prison term imposed for weapons (57 months) and drug offenses (60 months) remained stable during this period. The median prison term imposed for immigration offenses decreased from 24 months in 1994 to 15 months in 2014.

### *Defendants convicted of sex offenses were most likely to receive a prison sentence*

In 2014, sex offense convictions (96%) were the most likely to receive a prison sentence, followed by violent (93%), weapons (92%), and drug (89%) offense convictions. Seventy-nine percent of convicted immigration offenders were sentenced to prison in 2014, down from 82% in 2010. Defendants convicted of other property offenses (52%) and regulatory public order offenses (57%) were least likely to receive a prison sentence. Defendants convicted in one of the five southwest border districts (84%) were more likely to receive a prison sentence as defendants in all other districts (75%).

**FIGURE 21**  
Median prison sentence imposed, by most serious felony offense at sentencing, 1994–2014



Note: The unit of count is a defendant in a felony case terminated with a conviction and sentence in U.S. district court. Defendants convicted and sentenced in more than one case are counted separately. Most serious offense determined by court personnel as the offense with the greatest statutory maximum sentence. The median is the midpoint of prison term.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, criminal master file, fiscal years 1994–2014.