



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 1, 2024

FBI Adjusting Old Crime Data to Make Current Numbers Look Better?

Some say the FBI has been retroactively “adjusting” its statistics on gun-violence going back to 2005, perhaps to make current numbers look better. After the Bureau released its updated 2022-2023 data, analysts noticed that some of the earlier data had been revised upward.

Dean Weingarten [explained the situation on ammoland.com](#). After reviewing the gun-violence data, he asked rhetorically, “What happened with the numbers in 2005? How do they hold steady for 13 years [from 2005], then suddenly expand by over a thousand murders for the year?”



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Explanations for the FBI’s actions abound: Many police departments don’t report fully, so the agency must “estimate” the numbers of violent crimes committed in their area. Police department defunding has exacerbated the problem by allowing many crimes to go unreported. And many departments don’t count 911 calls, but only filed reports. For that to happen, the victims themselves must personally file a report with the department. For crimes less than murder or violence that results in hospitalization of the victim, the numbers become essentially worthless.

Political Issue

During Trump’s debate with Kamala Harris, he was “fact-checked” after he stated that crime increased under the Biden/Harris regime. The fact-checkers were wrong, because they used faulty numbers put out by the FBI. The Bureau has not corrected the numbers.

Initially the FBI reported that violent crime, relative to the population, had dropped by 2.1 percent in 2022 compared to a year earlier. Politicians and gun-control advocates chortled that the numbers dropped because of gun control under Biden. The Bureau quietly revised its statistics to show that gun violence that year actually *increased* by 4.5 percent, a grievous error of more than six percent. The revision was only caught by chance.

On October 16 RealClearInvestigations published John Lott’s revelation about the stealth revision, and this opened the eyes of an already-skeptical public as to the veracity and credibility of the FBI. He wrote:

When the FBI originally released the “final” crime data for 2022 in September 2023, it reported that the nation’s violent crime rate fell by 2.1%. This quickly became, and remains, a Democratic Party talking point to counter Donald Trump’s claims of soaring crime.

But the FBI has quietly revised those numbers, releasing new data that shows violent crime increased in 2022 by 4.5%. The new data includes thousands more murders, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults.



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The upward (or downward, if one considers the numbers from the victims' point of view) revisions "are extensive," said Lott:

The actual changes in crimes are extensive. The updated data for 2022 reports that there were 80,029 more violent crimes than in 2021. There were an additional 1,699 murders, 7,780 rapes, 33,459 robberies, and 37,091 aggravated assaults.

Then Lott asked, rhetorically, "Should the FBI's 2023 numbers be believed?"

Of course not.

The Real Numbers

But what are the real numbers? Isn't there someone, anyone, out there tracking the real numbers of victims suffering under the Biden/Harris regime of defunding police, releasing criminals, and seemingly ignoring illegal immigrants who commit atrocities?

Yes, there is. It's the National Crime Victimization Survey, or NCVS, a program of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). From the BJS:

The BJS National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is the nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization.

Each year, data are obtained from a nationally representative sample of about 240,000 persons in about 150,000 households. Persons are interviewed on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the United States.

The NCVS collects information on nonfatal personal crimes (i.e., rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and personal larceny) and household property crimes (i.e., burglary/trespassing, motor vehicle theft, and other types of theft) both reported and not reported to the police.

For each victimization incident, the NCVS collects information about the offender (e.g., age, race and Hispanic origin, sex, and victim-offender relationship), characteristics of the crime (e.g., time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, nature of the injury, and economic consequences), whether the crime was reported to police, reasons the crime was or was not reported, and victim experiences with the criminal justice system.

What Lott Found

According to researcher and author John Lott,

While the FBI claims that serious violent crime has fallen by 5.8% since Biden took office, the NCVS numbers show that total violent crime has risen by 55.4%. Rapes are up by 42%, robbery by 63%, and aggravated assault by 55% during Biden's term.

Since the NCVS started, the largest previous increase over three years was 27% in 2006, so the increase under Biden was slightly more than twice as large.

The increases shown by the NCVS during the Biden-Harris administration are by far the largest percentage increases over any three years, slightly more than doubling the previous record.



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Americans Are Concerned

A Gallup poll showed that 92 percent of Republicans and 58 percent percent of Democrats thought crime was increasing. Rasmussen found that 61 percent of those polled thought crime was increasing, compared to just 13 percent who thought it wasn't. Another Gallup poll from March of this year found that "crime and violence" was second only to inflation and rising prices among Americans' concerns. But, as Lott noted, "the media and politicians used the inaccurate FBI data to try to convince people that they were wrong."

It's not just John Lott who blew the whistle on the FBI's treachery. Professor David Mustard, who researches extensively on crime at the University of Georgia, called the FBI's opacity "stunning":

This FBI report is stunning because it now doesn't state that violent crime in 2022 was much higher than it had previously reported, nor does it explain why the new rate is so much higher, and it issued no press release about this large revision.

This lack of transparency harms the FBI's credibility.

It also proves presidential candidate Donald Trump was correct regarding the spike in violent crime during the Harris-Biden regime.

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