2021 STATISTICS

$6.9 Billion
Victim losses in 2021

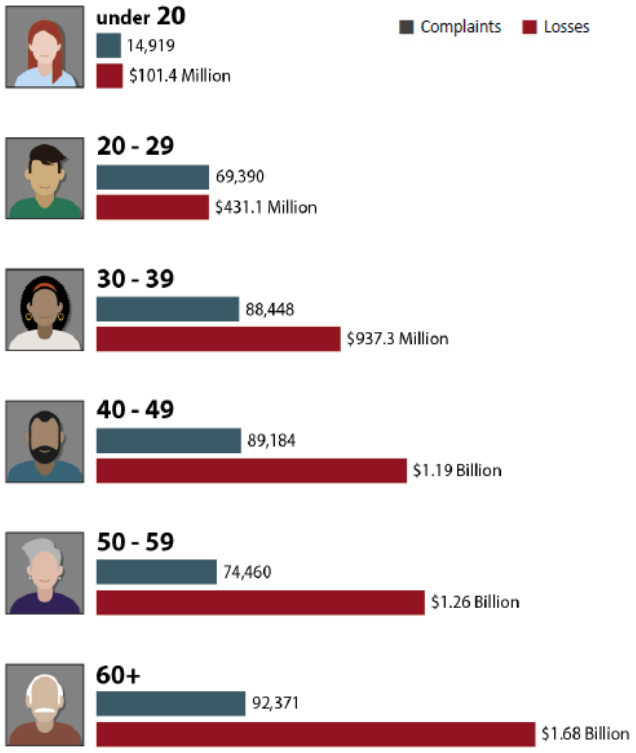
2,300+
Average complaints received daily

2021
2019
2018
2017
2016

552,000+
Average complaints received per year (last 5 years)

Over 6.5 Million
Complaints reported since inception

2021 Victims by Age Group



REPORT IT!

If you, or someone you know, is a potential victim of internet fraud, file a complaint with the IC3.

www.ic3.gov

Filing tips:

- Retain original records: emails, letters, checks, receipts, shipping documents, etc.
- Document the information used by the scammer: account numbers, addresses, emails, websites, etc.
- Financial transaction information.
- Information used by the criminals such as bank accounts, addresses, e-mails, websites, and phone numbers.
- Print or save a copy of the complaint for your records.

Contact financial institutions to safeguard accounts, and credit bureaus to monitor your identity for suspicious activity.

Public Service Announcements And Industry Alerts

The IC3 reviews and analyzes data submitted through its website, and produces intelligence products to highlight emerging threats and new trends. PSAs, Industry Alerts, and other publications outlining specific scams are posted to the IC3 website.

INTERNET CRIME COMPLAINT CENTER

www.ic3.gov

A LOOK INTO THE IC3

Mission of the IC3

The mission of the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) is to provide the public with a reliable and convenient reporting mechanism to submit information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation concerning suspected Internet facilitated criminal activity and to develop effective alliances with industry partners. Information is processed for investigative and intelligence purposes for law enforcement and public awareness.

IC3 Complaints

The complaints submitted to the IC3 cover an array of Internet crime including theft of intellectual property rights, computer intrusion, economic espionage, online extortion, and international money laundering. Numerous fraud schemes such as identity theft, phishing, spam, reshipping, auction fraud, payment fraud, counterfeit goods, romance scams, and non-delivery of goods are reported to the IC3. The IC3 refers actionable complaints as deemed appropriate to law enforcement and regulatory agencies for possible investigation. The IC3 will not contact you regarding your complaint.

Elder Fraud

The Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act was signed into law in October 2017 to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases. As a response to the increasing prevalence of fraud against the elderly, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the FBI partnered to create the Elder Justice Initiative. Elder Fraud is defined as a financial fraud scheme which targets or disproportionately affects people over the age of 60. In 2021, over 92,000 victims over the age of 60 reported losses of $1.7 billion to the IC3. This represents a 74 percent increase in losses over losses reported in 2020 as "Over 60".

Internet Crime and the IC3

As technology evolves, so do the many methods used to exploit technology for criminal purposes. Nearly all crime that once was committed in person, by mail, or over the telephone can be committed over the Internet. The criminal element is empowered by the perceived anonymity of the Internet and the ease of access to potential victims. Criminals use social engineering to prey on their victims' sympathy, generosity, or vulnerability. The IC3 was designed to help address all types of Internet crime through its complaint system.

TRENDS

Business Email Compromise

In 2021, the IC3 received 19,954 Business Email Compromise (BEC) complaints with adjusted losses at nearly $2.4 billion. BEC targets both businesses and individuals performing transfers of funds, and is most frequently carried out when a subject compromises legitimate business email accounts through social engineering or computer intrusion techniques to conduct unauthorized transfers.

Confidence Fraud / Romance Scams

Confidence Fraud/Romance scams encompass those designed to pull on a victim's "heartstrings." In 2021, the IC3 received reports from 24,299 victims who experienced more than $956 million in losses to Confidence Fraud/Romance scams. Grandparent scams fall under this category. In 2021, over 450 Over 60 victims reported Grandparent scams, with approximate losses of $6.5 million.

Investment

Investment fraud involves the illegal sale or purported sale of financial instruments. Examples of investment fraud include advance fee fraud, Ponzi schemes, pyramid schemes, fraudulent crypto scams, and market manipulation fraud. More than 20,000 victims reported Investment scams in 2021, with losses over $1.5 billion.

Increasingly, victims of Romance scams report being pressured into crypto investments. In 2021, the IC3 received more than 4,325 complaints, with losses over $429 million, from this scam. Termed "pig butchering", the scam is so named because victims' investment accounts are fattened up before draining, much a like a pig before slaughter.

Ransomware

Ransomware is a type of malicious software, or malware, that encrypts data on a computer, making it unusable. A cyber criminal holds the data hostage, or threatens to destroy the data or release it to the public, until the ransom is paid. If the ransom is not paid, the victim's data remains encrypted. In 2021, the IC3 received 3,729 complaints identified as ransomware with adjusted losses of more than $49.2 million.

Tech Support Fraud

Tech Support Fraud involves a criminal claiming to provide customer, security, or technical support or service to defraud unwitting individuals. In 2021, the IC3 received 23,903 complaints related to Tech Support Fraud from victims in 70 countries. The losses amounted to more than $347 million, which represents a 137 percent increase in losses from 2020.

Cryptocurrency

Once limited to hackers, ransomware groups, and other denizens of the "dark web," cryptocurrency is becoming the preferred payment method for all types of scams – SIM swaps, tech support fraud, employment schemes, romance scams, even some auction fraud.

The use of cryptocurrency is extremely pervasive in investment scams, where losses can reach into the hundreds of thousands of dollars per victim. The IC3 received over 34,000 complaints in 2021 reporting some type of crypto use. Losses from these complaints exceeded $1.6 billion.