

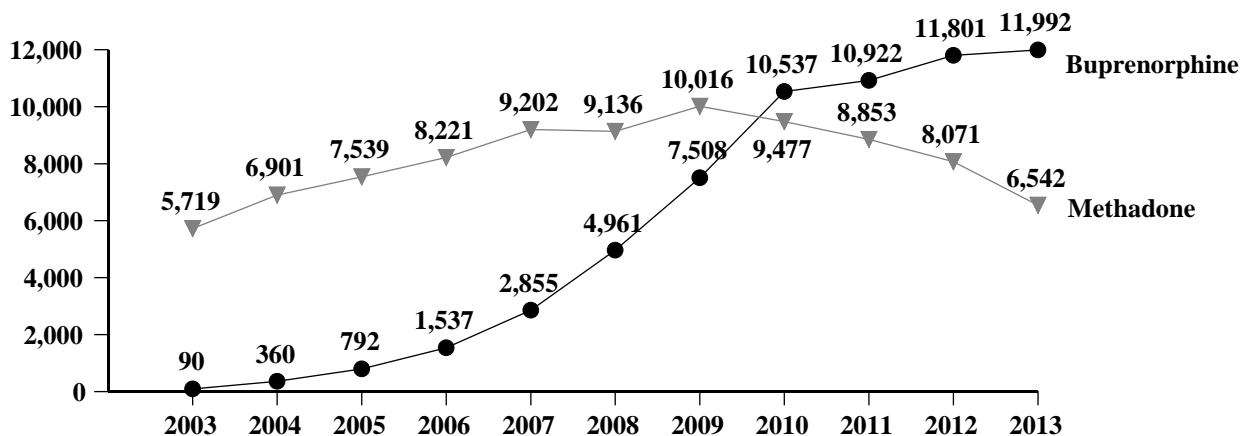
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

## *More Buprenorphine Than Methadone Reports in 2013 NFLIS*

The National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) collects results from law enforcement-encountered drug items submitted to and analyzed by state and local forensic laboratories across the country. From 2003 to 2009, the number of methadone reports in NFLIS increased gradually, reaching a peak of 10,016 in 2009, and then decreased each year, reaching a low of 6,542 in 2013. In contrast, the number of buprenorphine reports increased from 90 in 2003 (one year after buprenorphine was approved to treat opioid dependence) to 10,537 in 2010, but has increased slowly each year since then, reaching a high of 11,992 in 2013. In 2013, the majority of buprenorphine reports were from the Northeast U.S. census region (8.10 per 100,000 population), while the West had the lowest number (1.8 per 100,000). More information about buprenorphine can be found in the *CESAR FAX Buprenorphine Series*, available online at <http://ter.ps/cesarbusp>.

### Estimated Number of Total NFLIS Methadone and Buprenorphine Reports, 2003-2013



NOTES: Estimates are calculated using the National Estimates Based on All Reports (NEAR) methodology, which has strong statistical advantages for producing national and regional estimates. Estimates are based on drug cases and items submitted to participating state and local laboratories during the calendar year and analyzed within three months of the end of the calendar year. Up to three drugs can be reported for each drug item (or exhibit) analyzed by a laboratory. State and local policies related to the enforcement and prosecution of specific drugs may affect drug item submissions to laboratories for analysis. Laboratory policies and procedures for handling drug evidence may also vary. For example, some analyze all items submitted, while others analyze only selected items. Many laboratories do not analyze drug evidence if the criminal case was dismissed from court or if no person could be linked to the item. Thus, NFLIS data might underestimate the availability of drugs in the illicit market that state or local labs do not systematically identify.

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from data provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Office of Diversion Control, Drug and Chemical Evaluation Section, Data Analysis Unit and from NFLIS Annual Reports (available online at <https://www.nflis.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/Reports.aspx>).