

Prisons & Drug Offenders

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1.

State prisons held a total of 1,296,700 inmates on all charges at yearend 2005. In absolute numbers an estimated 687,700 inmates in State prison at yearend 2005 (the latest year for which offense data is available) were held for violent offenses: 166,700 for murder, 177,900 for robbery, 129,200 for assault, and 164,600 for rape and other sexual assaults. In addition, 248,900 inmates were held for property offenses, 253,300 for drug offenses, and 98,700 for public-order offenses.

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, and West, Heather C., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2008), NCJ224280, p. 21, Appendix Table 10.

<http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>

2.

Federal prisons were estimated to hold 179,204 sentenced inmates in 2007. Of these, 15,647 were incarcerated for violent offenses, including 2,915 for homicide, 8,966 for robbery, and 3,939 for other violent crimes. In addition, 10,345 inmates were serving time for property crimes, including 504 for burglary, 7,834 for fraud, and 2,006 for other property offenses. A total of 95,446 were incarcerated for drug offenses. Also, 56,237 were incarcerated for public-order offenses, including 19,528 for immigration offenses and 24,435 for weapons offenses.

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, and West, Heather C., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2008), NCJ224280, p. 22, Appendix Table 12.

<http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>

3.

According to the American Corrections Association, the average daily cost per state prison inmate per day in the US is \$67.55. State prisons held 253,300 inmates for drug offenses in 2005. That means states spent approximately \$17,110,415 per

day to imprison drug offenders, or \$6,245,301,475 per year.

Source:

American Correctional Association, 2006 Directory of Adult and Juvenile Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Probation and Parole Authorities, 67th Edition (Alexandria, VA: ACA, 2006), p. 16; Sabol, William J., PhD, and West, Heather C., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2008), NCJ224280, p. 21, Appendix Table 10.

4.

Of the 253,300 state prison inmates serving time for drug offenses at yearend 2005, 113,500 (44.8%) were black, 51,100 (20.2%) were Hispanic, and 72,300 (28.5%) were white.

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, and West, Heather C., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2008), NCJ224280, p. 21, Appendix Table 10.

<http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>

5.

"Offense distributions differed between sentenced male and female State prisoners. More than half of males (53%) were sentenced for violent offenses, compared to 34% of females. Among State prisoners, sentenced females were more likely than sentenced males to be sentenced for property (31% vs. 20%) and drug offenses (29% vs. 19%).

"There were also differences in offense distributions at yearend 2004 by race and Hispanic origin. A majority of black (53%) and Hispanic (54%) prisoners were sentenced for violent offenses, compared to about half (50%) of white prisoners. Blacks and Hispanics were more likely than whites to be sentenced for drug offenses (23% of blacks, 21% of Hispanics, and 15% of whites). Whites were more likely (26%) than blacks (18%) or Hispanics (18%) to be sentenced for property offenses."

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, Couture, Heather, and Harrison, Paige M., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2006 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2007), NCJ219416, p. 8.

6.

"Among male state prisoners, violent (47%) and property (48%) offenders were less likely to report having children than public-order (60%) and drug (59%) offenders (table 6). For women held in state prison, violent (57%) offenders were less likely than drug (63%), property (65%), and public-order (65%) offenders to be a mother.

"The prevalence of being a parent differed by gender and offense for inmates held in state and federal prisons. For state inmates, female (65%) property offenders were more likely to be a parent than male (48%) property offenders. In federal prison, male (69%) drug offenders were more likely than female (55%) drug offenders to report having children.

"Among men held in federal prison, drug offenders (69%) were more likely than property (54%) and violent (50%) offenders to report having children (appendix table 5). Public-order offenders (62%) were also more likely than violent offenders to report having children. For women in federal prison, the likelihood of being a mother did not differ by offense."

Source:

Glaze, Lauren E. and Maruschak, Laura M., "Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children" (Washington, DC: USDOJ, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Jan. 2009), NCJ222984, p. 4.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pptmc.pdf>

7.

"Mothers in state prison (58%) were more likely than fathers (49%) to report having a family member who had also been incarcerated (table 11). Parents in state prison most commonly reported a brother (34%), followed by a father (19%). Among mothers in state prison, 13% reported a sister and 8% reported a spouse. Six percent of fathers reported having a sister who had also been incarcerated; 2%, a spouse.

"While growing up, 40% of parents in state prison reported living in a household that received public assistance, 14% reported living in a foster home, agency, or institution at some time during their youth, and 43% reported living with both parents most of the time (appendix table 11). Mothers (17%) held in state prison were more likely than fathers (14%) to report living in a foster home, agency, or institution at some time during their youth. Parents in federal prison reported lower percentages of growing up in a household that received public assistance (31%) or living in a foster home, agency, or institution (7%). These characteristics varied little by gender for parents held in federal prison.

"More than a third (34%) of parents in state prison reported that during their youth, their parents or guardians had abused alcohol or drugs. Mothers in state prison (43%) were more likely than fathers (33%) to have had this experience. Fewer parents (27%) in federal prison reported having a parent or a guardian who had abused alcohol or drugs."

Source:

Glaze, Lauren E. and Maruschak, Laura M., "Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children" (Washington, DC: USDOJ, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Jan. 2009), NCJ222984, p. 7.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pptmc.pdf>

8.

"The number of offenders under age 18 admitted to prison for drug offenses increased twelvefold from 70 to 840! between 1985 to 1997. By 1997 drug offenders made up 11% of admissions among persons under 18 compared to 2% in 1985."

Source:

Strom, Kevin J., US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Profile of State Prisoners Under Age 18, 1985-1997 Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, February 2000!, p. 4.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pspa1897.pdf>

9.

"The number of offenders under age 18 admitted to prison for drug offenses increased twelvefold from 70 to 840! between 1985 to 1997. By 1997 drug offenders made up 11% of admissions among persons under 18 compared to 2% in 1985."

Source:

Strom, Kevin J., US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Profile of State Prisoners Under Age 18, 1985-1997 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, February 2000), p. 4.

10.

"During 1985, an estimated 20 white males and 30 black males under age 18 were admitted to State prison for drug offenses. In 1997 black males under age 18 outnumbered white males of the same age by more than 5 to 1 (640 to 120 admissions for drug offenses)."

Source:

Strom, Kevin J., US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Profile of State Prisoners Under Age 18, 1985-1997 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, February 2000), p. 5.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pspa1897.pdf>

11.

"Fifty-eight percent of offenders admitted under 18 in 1997 were black and 25% were white, representing a gradual change from 1990, when blacks comprised 61% of admissions and whites 21% (table 6). The racial characteristics of persons admitted under 18 had shifted more dramatically between 1985 and 1990. During this period the percentage of black admissions increased from 53% to 62%, and the percentage of whites fell from 32% to 21%. Hispanic admissions, as a proportion of all persons under age 18 entering State prison, have remained stable from 1985 to 1997."

Source:

Strom, Kevin J., US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Profile of State Prisoners Under Age 18, 1985-1997 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, February 2000), p. 6.

12.

"States spent \$29.8 billion in 1998 for adult corrections including incarceration, probation and parole. Eighty-one percent of this amount \$24.1 billion! was spent on substance-involved offenders. Of the \$24.1 billion, \$21.4 billion went to run and build prisons to house substance-involved offenders, \$1.1 billion for parole and \$695 million for probation for substance-involved offenders. An additional \$899 million was spent on state aid to localities for substance-involved offenders Figure 3.A!"

Source:

National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, Shoveling Up: The Impact of Substance Abuse on State Budgets New York, NY: CASA, Jan. 2001!, p. 15.

13.

"Because of drug laws that have historically criminalized the possession of very small amounts of narcotics, drug users in Russia face a high probability of spending time in prison or pretrial detention at some time in their lives. Injection drug use is widespread in prisons. But basic HIV prevention measures, including condoms and materials for sterilization of syringes, are largely lacking in Russian correctional facilities, making prisons across the country high-risk environments for AIDS. The vast numbers of prisoners released every year thus represent a public health challenge for the general population. Both in and outside of prison, the virtual absence of humane services to treat drug addiction and the illegality in Russia of methadone and other drugs used elsewhere to treat heroin addiction further compromise HIV prevention among drug users."

Source:

Human Rights Watch, "Lessons Not Learned: Human Rights Abuses and HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation," April 2004, Vol. 16, No. 5, pp. 2-3.

14.

"Being in prison or other state detention is an important risk factor for HIV in Russia. A very high percentage of drug users in the FSU find themselves in state custody at some time in their lives. Injection drug use is reportedly widespread in Russian prisons, and HIV prevention services such as provision of sterile syringes, disinfectant materials for syringes and condoms are virtually absent. Official statistics indicate that from 1996 to 2003, HIV prevalence in Russian prisons rose more than thirty-fold from less than one per 1,000 inmates to 42.1 per 1,000 inmates. According to a 2002 report, about 34,000 HIV-positive persons—over 15 percent of the persons officially counted as HIV-positive in the country—were in state custody, of which the large majority found out about their HIV status in prison. The Kresty pretrial detention facility in Saint Petersburg was reported in 2002 to have about 1,000 HIV-positive persons among its 7,800 inmates. Some 300,000 prisoners are released each year from penal institutions in Russia, representing an important public health challenge."

Source:

Human Rights Watch, "Lessons Not Learned: Human Rights Abuses and HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation," April 2004, Vol. 16, No. 5, pp. 11-12.

15.

The Department of Justice reported that by Sept. 30, 2006, federal prisons held a total of 176,268 inmates, of whom 93,751 (53%) were drug offenders. By comparison in 2000 federal prisons held 131,739 total inmates of whom 74,276 (56%) were drug offenders, and in 1995 federal prisons held a total of 88,658 inmates of whom 52,782 (60%) were drug offenders.

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, Couture, Heather, and Harrison, Paige M., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2006 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2007), NCJ219416, p. 26, Appendix Table 13; and Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, November 2006), p. 10, Table 14.

16.

In 2007, drug law violators comprised 19.5% of all adults serving time in State prisons - 253,300 out of 1,296,700 State prison inmates.

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, and West, Heather C., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2008), NCJ224280, p. 21, Appendix Table 10.

<http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>

17.

According to the US Justice Department, 27.9% of drug offenders in state prisons are serving time for possession; 69.4% are serving time for trafficking offenses; and 2.7% are in for "other."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., and Karberg, Jennifer C., "Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004," (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2006) (NCJ213530), p. 4.

18.

According to the Justice Department, 5.3% of drug offenders in federal prisons are serving time for possession; 91.4% are serving time for trafficking offenses; and 3.3% are in for "other."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., and Karberg, Jennifer C., "Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004," (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2006) (NCJ213530), p. 4.

19.

Over 80% of the increase in the federal prison population from 1985 to 1995 was due to drug convictions.

Source:

US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 1996 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, 1997).

20.

"Between 1984 and 1999, the number of defendants charged with a drug offense in U.S. district courts increased about 3% annually, on average, from 11,854 to 29,306."

Source:

Scalia, John, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Federal Drug Offenders, 1999 with Trends 1984-99 (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, August 2001), p. 7.

21.

"As a result of increased prosecutions and longer time served in prison, the number of drug offenders in Federal prisons increased more than 12% annually, on average, from 14,976 during 1986 to 68,360 during 1999."

Source:

Scalia, John, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Federal Drug Offenders, 1999 with Trends 1984-99 (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, August 2001), p. 7.

22.

"In 1995, 23% of state prisoners were incarcerated for drug offenses in contrast to 9% of drug offenders in state prisons in 1986. In fact, the proportion of drug offenders in the state prison population nearly tripled by 1990, when it reached 21%, and has remained at close to that level since then. The proportion of federal prisoners held for drug violations doubled during the past 10 years. In 1985, 34% of federal prisoners were incarcerated for drug violations. By 1995, the proportion had risen to 60%."

Source:

Craig Haney, Ph.D., and Philip Zimbardo, Ph.D., "The Past and Future of U.S. Prison Policy: Twenty-five Years After the Stanford Prison Experiment," *American Psychologist*, Vol. 53, No. 7 (July 1998), p. 715.

23.

According to ONDCP, federal spending to incarcerate drug offenders totals nearly \$3 Billion a year -- \$2.525 Billion by the Bureau of Prisons, and \$429.4 Million by Federal Prisoner Detention.

Source:

Office of National Drug Control Policy, "National Drug Control Strategy: FY 2003 Budget Summary" (Washington, DC: Office of the President, February 2002), Table 3, pp. 7-9.

24.

According to the American Corrections Association, the average daily cost per state prison inmate per day in the US is \$67.55. State prisons held 249,400 inmates for drug offenses in 2006. That means it cost states approximately \$16,846,970 per day to imprison drug offenders, or \$6,149,144,050 per year.

Source:

American Correctional Association, 2006 Directory of Adult and Juvenile Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Probation and Parole Authorities, 67th Edition (Alexandria, VA: ACA, 2006), p. 16; Sabol, William J., PhD, Couture, Heather, and Harrison, Paige M., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2006 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 2007), NCJ219416, p. 24, Appendix Table 9.

25.

"17% of State and 18% of Federal prisoners committed their crime to obtain money for drugs."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., and Karberg, Jennifer C., "Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004," (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2006) (NCJ213530), p. 1.

26.

"Violent offenders in State prison (50%) were less likely than drug (72%) and property (64%) offenders to have used drugs in the month prior to their offense."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., and Karberg, Jennifer C., "Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004," (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2006) (NCJ213530), p. 1.

27.

"Violent offenders (47%) were the only offender group in State prisons with less than half meeting the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence or abuse. Property and drug offenders (63% of each) were the most likely to be drug dependent or abusing. "Drug offenders (52%) were the only group of Federal inmates with at least half meeting the drug dependence or abuse criteria. Property offenders (27%) reported the lowest percentage of drug dependence or abuse."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., and Karberg, Jennifer C., "Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004," (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2006) (NCJ213530), p. 7.

28.

According to a federal survey of jail inmates, of the total 440,670 jail inmates in the US in 2002, 112,447 were drug offenders:

48,823 for possession, 56,574 for trafficking.

Source:

Karberg, Jennifer C. and Doris J. James, US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Substance Dependence, Abuse, and Treatment of Jail Inmates, 2002" (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, July 2005), Table 7, p. 6.

29.

According to a federal survey of jail inmates, in 2002, of the 96,359 violent offenders in jail, 37.6% used alcohol at the time of their offense, 21.8% used drugs, and 47.2% used alcohol or drugs; of the 112,895 property offenders in jail that year, 28.5% used alcohol at the time of their offense, 32.5% used drugs, and 46.8% used alcohol or drugs; of the 112,447 drug offenders in jail that year, 22.4% used alcohol at the time of their offense, 43.2% used drugs, and 51.7% used drugs or alcohol at the time of their offense.

Source:

Karberg, Jennifer C. and Doris J. James, US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Substance Dependence, Abuse, and Treatment of Jail Inmates, 2002" (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, July 2005), Table 7, p. 6.

30.

According to the US Justice Department, in federal prisons, "While the number of offenders in each major offense category increased [from 1995 to 2003], the number incarcerated for a drug offense accounted for the largest percentage of the total growth (49%), followed by public-order offenders (38%)."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, Allen J., PhD, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 10.

31.

According to the US Justice Department, between 1990 and 2000 "Overall, the percentage of violent Federal inmates declined

from 17% to 10%. While the number of offenders in each major offense category increased, the number incarcerated for a drug offense accounted for the largest percentage of the total growth (59%), followed by public-order offenders (32%)."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, Allen J., PhD, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2001 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, July 2002), p. 14.

32.

"Department of corrections data show that about a fourth of those initially imprisoned for nonviolent crimes are sentenced for a second time for committing a violent offense. Whatever else it reflects, this pattern highlights the possibility that prison serves to transmit violent habits and values rather than to reduce them."

Source:

Craig Haney, Ph.D., and Philip Zimbardo, Ph.D., "The Past and Future of U.S. Prison Policy: Twenty-five Years After the Stanford Prison Experiment," *American Psychologist*, Vol. 53, No. 7 (July 1998), p. 721.

33.

"We must have law enforcement authorities address the issue because if we do not, prevention, education, and treatment messages will not work very well. But having said that, I also believe that we have created an American gulag."

Source:

Gen. Barry R. McCaffrey (USA, Ret.), Director, ONDCP, Keynote Address, Opening Plenary Session, National Conference on Drug Abuse Prevention Research, National Institute on Drug Abuse, September 19, 1996, Washington, DC, on the web at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/MeetSum/CODA/Keynote2.html> last accessed May 25, 2007.

34.

According to the Department of Justice, studies of recidivism reveal that "the amount of time inmates serve in prison does not increase or decrease the likelihood of recidivism, whether recidivism is measured as parole revocation, re-arrest, reconviction,

or return to prison."

Source:

An Analysis of Non-Violent Drug Offenders with Minimal Criminal Histories, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice (1994, February), p. 41.

35.

The table below shows the average sentence mean and median! imposed on Federal prisoners for various offenses in 2000.

Average Federal Sentence

Offense	Mean	Median
All Offenses	56.8 months	33.0 months
All Felonies	58.0 months	36.0 months
Violent Felonies	86.6 months	63.0 months
Drug Felonies	75.6 months	

55.0 months

Property Felony - Fraud

22.5 months

14.0 months

Property Felony - Other

33.4 months

18.0 months

Public Order Felony - Regulatory

28.0 months

15.0 months

Public Order Felony - Other

46.5 months

30.0 months

Misdemeanors

10.3 months

6.0 months

Source:

US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Federal Criminal Case Processing, 2000, With Trends 1982-2000
Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, November 2001!, p. 12, Table 6.

Related Chapters:

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