Three-fourths of all adult offenders under correctional supervision in the United States are supervised in the community, through probation and parole (see figure below). Probation and parole provide conditional liberty—they permit the offender to live in the community as long as his or her behavior meets certain conditions.

Probation, by far the most prevalent form of correction, traditionally has been used as an alternative to a prison or jail term. According to National Probation Reports data, the current probation population is divided evenly between felons (alternatively in prison) and misdemeanants (alternatively in jail). The courts continue to use probation as a less severe, and less expensive, alternative sanction, but increasingly they are mixing probation with incarceration, through split sentencing and sentence modification.

The number of persons on probation and parole continues to grow. During 1981, the probation population rose by more than 100,000 persons, from 1,118,097 to 1,222,024 (a 9% increase); the parole population rose by only about 3,300, from 220,428 to 223,774 (less than a 2% increase). Probation population growth was widespread; all but two States—Nebraska and South Carolina—reported increases during 1981. Parole population growth was less consistent.

With this report the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) introduces bulletin readers to statistics from the Uniform Parole Reports (UPR) and National Probation Reports (NPR) programs.

UPR, which began collecting parole data in 1965, has two data systems—a summary system and an offender-based system. NPR began collecting summary probation data in 1979 and will soon be piloting an offender-based probation data system. Data in this bulletin are from the two summary systems. These data are collected annually for BJS by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency's San Francisco office via the UPR Parole Data Survey and the NPR Probation Data Survey and appear in Parole in the United States and Probation in the United States. The generous cooperation of the State probation and parole agencies in participating in these surveys is gratefully acknowledged.

Benjamin H. Renshaiw
Acting Director
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<th>State</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Entries</th>
<th>Exit 12/31/81</th>
<th>Population</th>
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- **Federal**
  - Population: 30,535
  - Entries: 1,920
  - Exit 12/31/81: 1,270

- **State Total**
  - Population: 102,212
  - Entries: 2,842
  - Exit 12/31/81: 1,734

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</table>

- **South**
  - Population: 31,019
  - Entries: 1,920
  - Exit 12/31/81: 1,270

- **West**
  - Population: 15,984
  - Entries: 1,920
  - Exit 12/31/81: 1,270

- **Country**
  - Population: 4,762
  - Entries: 2,726
  - Exit 12/31/81: 1,734
(78% discretionary parole, 26% mandatory parole, and 4% other) are similar to those in 1980 (72%, 23%, and 3%) and in 1979 (72%, 25%, and 3%). During 1981, 71% of all mandatory parole entries were in California, and another 21% in Illinois, California, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Texas, Virginia, and the Federal system together accounted for well over 99% of all mandatory entries to parole.

Further reading

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin are prepared by the staff of the bureau. Carol E. Kalish, chief of policy analysis, edits the bulletins. Marilyn Hammond, head of the bureau publications unit, administers their publication, assisted by Julie A. Ferguson. The principal author of this bulletin is Jane Maxwell of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

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