



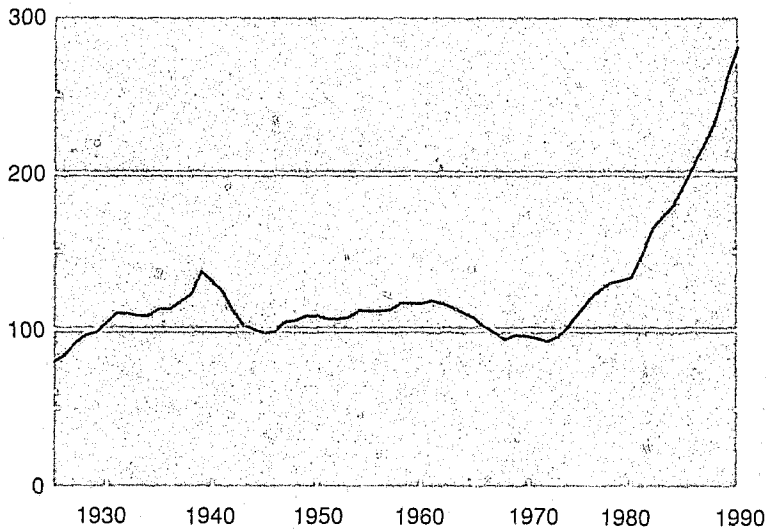
## Bureau of Justice Statistics

# Prisons and Prisoners in the United States

Number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents, 1925-90

1990: 282 prisoners per 100,000 population

Prisoners per  
100,000 residents



137002



137002

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
Bureau of Justice Statistics



# Prisons and Prisoners in the United States

By Lawrence A. Greenfeld  
*Associate Director*

April 1992, NCJ-137002

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**U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
Bureau of Justice Statistics**

Steven D. Dillingham, Ph.D.  
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The Assistant Attorney General is responsible for matters of administration and management with respect to the OJP agencies: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Bureau of Justice Assistance, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office for Victims of Crime. The Assistant Attorney General further establishes policies and priorities consistent with the statutory purposes of the OJP agencies and the priorities of the Department of Justice.

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**About the cover**

- At the end of 1990, State and Federal prison authorities held in custody 282 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents. This was the highest number of prisoners per capita since annual counts began in 1925.

- Between December 31, 1980, and December 31, 1990, the per capita imprisonment rate increased by 110%.

By decade, the per capita rates of imprisonment —

Increased 26% 1930-40  
decreased 17% 1940-50  
increased 7% 1950-60  
decreased 18% 1960-70  
Increased 40% 1970-80  
increased 110% 1980-90.

- The largest annual gain in the imprisonment rate occurred during 1990 when the number of prisoners increased by 21 per 100,000 residents.

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## Foreword

In this report the Bureau of Justice Statistics presents an overview of national corrections statistics and a summary profile of State and Federal prisons. It addresses many important questions related to prisons and confined offenders, such as —

How many prisons are there in the United States and what are their characteristics?

What is the capacity of prison facilities and what is the demand for prison space?

How much capacity has been added in recent years?

Who is in prison and for what offenses are they serving time?

Have staffing and program opportunities for inmates changed as prison populations have grown?

By means of this report and others released throughout the year on all the components of corrections and criminal justice, the Bureau promotes the use of national data by policymakers and those charged with the responsibility to oversee the care, custody, or control of offenders. The magnitude of this population — numbering well over 4 million adults — and the concern for the public safety consequences of how they are managed and supervised are crucial issues for correctional professionals and the society at large.

We are proud to contribute to this important discussion of corrections as we move into the 1990's. We express our deep gratitude and appreciation to all those who work in correctional institutions and those who supervise offenders in our communities.

Steven D. Dillingham, Ph.D.  
Director

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**Seventh Decennial Census initiated  
142 years of U.S. statistics  
on prisoners and prisons**

In 1850, in cooperation with the States as a part of the Seventh Decennial Census, the Federal Government initiated the count of prisoners held in each of the 32 States and in the territories of Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah. The 1850 census described the race, age, sex, and place of birth of the prisoners. This report, from 142 years ago, also provided per capita imprisonment rates by race. In addition, the census report described the characteristics of persons held in local jails in seven States.

*1850-80*

Between 1850 and 1870, U.S. marshals administered the census of prisoners as part of a special schedule of social statistics. The 1880 census enumerated persons held by all jurisdictions in the Nation and yielded a series of incarceration rates for the States.

*1904*

In a special census of 1904, data on prisoners received from State courts were added to the growing list of descriptive information available for each State. The 1904 report broke down admissions by major and minor offense categories and included detail on sentences received by offense for each jurisdiction.

*1910*

In 1910 the introduction of the indeterminate sentence was noted in prisoner statistics — 37% of State prisoners entering that year had received an

indeterminate sentence. In 1910 every State in the Nation supplied statistical data on offense distribution and sentence length; of the 136,472 adult and juvenile prisoners enumerated that year, sentence length data were missing for only 286 cases.

*1923*

The 1923 Census of Prisoners revealed that 55% of those admitted to prisons that year had received an indeterminate sentence. The report observed that the increased use of the indeterminate sentence had led to wide ranges and disparities in sentencing. The 1923 report also described the prior confinement histories of the 147,000 new commitments during the year — nearly half had previously been incarcerated. Detailed data tables provided new information on time served by sex and by offense for each jurisdiction.

A supplement to the 1923 Census analyzed the relationship between the prisoner's residence and the place where the crime occurred, time spent as a resident of the State and county, educational status, age, marital status, who the prisoner had been living with and the age when the prisoner had left home, earnings, employment history, prior adult and juvenile criminal history, and their World War I service records. The prisoner data collection effort of 1923, a partnership between the States and the Federal Government, stands as a significant landmark in the history of correctional statistics.

*1926*

In 1926 the Bureau of the Census began the annual collection of prisoner statistics. The goal of the data collection effort was

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to "show the application of penal policies for various classes of offenders and in different parts of the country." That first report in 1926 provided the basic structure which guides statistical programs in corrections today. The delineation of common counting rules, definitions of reportable criminal justice statuses, uniform offense labels, and consensual schedules for reporting were all mapped out well before jurisdictions began participating in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program of the FBI.

#### *1926 to the present*

Between 1926 and 1949 the Bureau of the Census continued to gather and compile the annual prisoner data. Between 1950 and 1971, responsibility for the reporting program was shifted to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In 1971 the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, the precursor to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), assumed the overall responsibility for National Prisoner Statistics or NPS.

Over the last 65 years of prisoner counts, several definitional changes were imposed to standardize the per capita rates calculated for different jurisdictions. For example, in 1940 the counts of sentenced prisoners were limited to felons instead of including all inmates. The standard was difficult to put into operation because many States differed in the types of offenses and the duration of prison terms classifying felonies. In 1971 "prisoners with sentences greater than 1 year" replaced the term *felon*. The definition of prisoners to be counted was changed in 1977 to a jurisdiction base that includes State-sentenced prisoners held in jails when crowded prisons cannot admit them.

#### **BJS currently sponsors over 20 statistical series that describe corrections**

Over the years, various statistical series have been added to expand the information available on prisoners and to obtain information on other segments of corrections. In 1930 annual data collection on executions was begun and in 1933 the first complete census of local jails was undertaken. In 1965 annual parole data were first collected under the Uniform Parole Reporting Program and in 1976 the first complete census of probation agencies was undertaken by the Federal government. Counts of juvenile offenders in custody were initiated in 1971 as the *Children in Custody* biennial series.

BJS sponsors more than 20 separate statistical programs on correctional populations in the United States. Each program requires a different set of collection protocols, data processing specifications, and reporting schedules, plus separate listings of respondents and agencies.

Together these series collect information from nearly 1,300 Federal and State correctional facilities, 3,300 local jails, and about 4,000 probation and parole agencies and offices. The populations covered number more than 4 million persons under the care, custody, or control of corrections agencies.



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## Probation

BJS collects annual counts and movements from all Federal, State, and local adult probation agencies in the United States. Descriptive information obtained includes race, sex, and ethnicity and the counts of those on probation for felonies, misdemeanors, and driving while intoxicated. Data on the type of discharge are also obtained.

Findings for 1990 include —

- 2,670,234 adults were on probation nationwide on December 31, 1990
- 1,637,557 adults entered probation supervision during the year, and 1,489,488 were discharged from probation supervision during the year
- 1,443 adults were on probation at year-end for every 100,000 adults in the resident population
- 68% of the probation population were white, 30% were black, and 1% represented persons of other races
- 82% of the probation population were males and 18% were females
- 48% of the probation population had been convicted of a felony, 31% a misdemeanor, and 21% had been convicted of driving while intoxicated
- 39% of probationers had a sentence to confinement suspended, 13% were placed on probation in lieu of the imposition of a sentence, and 45% were sentenced directly to probation

- among those discharged from probation, 69% exited by successful completion of their term, 7% were discharged as absconders, 2% were discharged to an outstanding detainer or warrant, 3% were incarcerated after conviction for a new offense, 11% were incarcerated on their current offense after violations of their conditional release, and 7% were discharged for death or other reasons

- according to probation agencies, 55,722 probationers were in programs designed to provide intensive supervision services, and electronic monitoring supplemented the supervision for 7,868 probationers

From 1980 through 1989, cumulative growth in the number under probation supervision was nearly 126%. During 1990, the probation population nationwide increased at the rate of about 2,860 new cases each week.

In March 1992 BJS initiated a major effort to gather more detailed information on the probation population in the United States. A complete census of all probation agencies is being conducted to gather agency-specific information, including —

- caseload size
- pre-sentence reporting
- average number of probationers
  - investigated each day
  - supervised each day
- population size and composition
- revocation procedures
- frequency of revocation
- programs and participation levels
- residential services
- drug testing
- employees' occupational specialization
- agency budgets.

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## **Jails and locally operated correctional facilities**

BJS uses three data collection programs to obtain annual estimates of populations held in local confinement facilities and to provide detailed descriptions of the facilities and their populations.

A national sample of jails permits annual population estimates. The sample captures data from all jails with an average daily population of at least 100 inmates, accounting for three-fourths of all jail inmates, and from a stratified random sample of smaller jails. The survey collects information on inmates (age, sex, race, ethnicity, and conviction status); population movements; rated capacity and occupancy; the number of inmates held for other authorities; court orders; and cause and number of deaths.

### *1990 Sample Survey of Jails*

The survey of local jails, conducted for June 29, 1990, found that —

- 405,320 persons were held in locally operated jails and correctional facilities on June 30, 1990
- the jail population was 91% male, 51% white, and 47% black
- Hispanics of all races accounted for 14% of the jail population
- during the year preceding the Survey, there were more than 20 million admission and release movements
- jails nationwide were operating at 104% of their rated capacities.

Data on jails and jail inmates are also obtained through periodic censuses of facilities and sample surveys of jail inmates. Censuses of local jails nationwide were conducted in 1970, 1972, 1978, 1983, and 1988.

### *1988 Census of Local Jails*

The most recent census of the 3,316 local jails, conducted in 1988, revealed —

- California (64,216 inmates), Texas (29,439 inmates), Florida (28,236 inmates), and New York (25,928 inmates) held the largest number of persons in local jails
- per 100,000 residents, Georgia (276 jail inmates) and the District of Columbia (274) had the largest inmate-to-population ratio
- 12% of jails nationwide were under Federal or State court orders for specific conditions of confinement, and 78% of these were ordered to limit the size of the populations they housed
- more than 99,000 persons were employed by local jails nationwide
- two-thirds of all jails in the Nation held an average daily population of fewer than 50 inmates — large jails, housing 1,000 or more inmates, accounting for 1.5% of all jails but 28% of all inmates

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- locally operated jails maintained nearly 17.4 million square feet of housing space or about 51 square feet of floor space per person — New Jersey jails providing the least space per person, on average, and those in North Dakota providing the most

- locally operated jails contained nearly 156,000 housing units (cells and dormitories) with an average of 2.2 persons per unit

- 45% of all jail inmates were in housing units with at least 6 people in them.

Between 1978 and 1989 jail populations nationwide increased from 158,394 to 395,553, about a 150% increase. In 1978, jails were found to be operating at about 65% of their rated capacity. By 1989, jails were found to be occupied at 108% of their capacity.

#### *1989 Survey of Local Jail Inmates*

In 1973, 1978, 1983, and 1989, BJS sponsored nationally representative sample surveys of the population in local jails. The surveys entailed face-to-face interviews with both convicted and unconvicted persons.

The 1989 questionnaire gathered information from nearly 6,000 persons held in 407 local jails. Interviewers asked inmates about their criminal histories, prior use of drugs and alcohol, offenses and sentences, who their victims were, their participation in treatment programs, and their demographic and family history characteristics. More than 900 individual items were coded for each case.

Data from the 1989 survey indicate that —

- drug violations were directly responsible for about 40% of the increase in jail populations between 1983 and 1989, a period when the number of inmates increased by 77%

- in 1983 an estimated 9% of the inmates in local jails had been charged with or convicted of drug offenses; in 1989, 23% were drug violators

- the percentages of black and Hispanic inmates in local jails increased from 1983 to 1989 while the percentage of white, non-Hispanic inmates decreased

- in 1989 42% of jail inmates were black, 39% were white and non-Hispanic, and 17% were Hispanic.

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## Prisons

BJS data on prisons and prisoners relies on a wide variety of collection programs that provide annual counts and movements as well as descriptions of the prison facilities and populations. Prisoner counts are conducted three times a year: for June 30, for the yearend (advance), and for the yearend (final). The midyear count captures information on the sex of inmates held in State and Federal prisons. To provide for comparable information from all States — including the seven jurisdictions of Alaska, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, and Vermont that combine prisons and jails — the program categorizes inmates by those with sentences greater than 1 year, those with sentences of a year or less, and those who are unsentenced.

### *Midyear 1991 National Prisoner Statistics*

Prisoner data for June 30, 1991, revealed that —

- the Nation's State and Federal prison population reached a record 804,524 prisoners, an increase of 3.9% during the first half of the year
- growth during the first half of the year translated into a weekly demand for approximately 1,160 new bedspaces, compared to 1,642 a week during the first half of 1990 and 1,839 during the first half of 1989
- the growth during the first 6 months was most rapid in the West (up 5.1%) and least rapid in the South and the Midwest (each up 3.5%)

- the number of female prisoners increased by 4.5% during the first half of the year, compared to growth of 3.9% in the number of male prisoners

- per capita rates of imprisonment were 588 per 100,000 males and 33 per 100,000 females.

In addition to the number of prisoners, the advance yearend counts provide detail on trends in prison populations, the extent of prisoners' being backed up in jail because of prison crowding, and the relationships between the number of inmates and prison capacities that authorities report — design, operational, and rated capacities. The advance yearend counts provide crime-based incarceration rates as well as population-based rates.

### *1990 (advance count) National Prisoner Statistics*

The advance yearend count for 1990 showed that —

- between 1980 and 1990 the number of persons under the jurisdiction of State and Federal prison authorities rose 134% to reach a record 771,243 inmates at yearend 1990
- at the end of 1990 just over 2% of the population sentenced to State prisons were backed up in local jails because of prison crowding
- prisons nationwide were operating between 18% and 29% in excess of their capacities, depending on whether the maximum or the minimum capacity measure is applied.

The final yearend count provides additional details on the following: prisoner movements during the year; the race, sex, and ethnicity of prison populations; and the methods of entry and release. Counts of the prisoners in custody are also provided to facilitate comparisons beginning in 1925.

*National Corrections Reporting Program*

Another BJS statistical series, the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP), collects individual-level data annually on prisoner movements: prison admissions, prison releases, parole admissions, and parole releases. These data permit analyses of issues of topical concern such as offense distributions and sentences received by those entering prisons, time served by offense for those discharged from prisons, the relationship between time served and the sentence received, and duration of parole supervision and time to revocation.

Data collected for 1988 revealed that —

- 30% of those committed from courts to State prisons had been convicted of violent offenses
- 37%, of property offenses
- 25%, of drug offenses
- 7%, of public-order offenses (such as weapons and commercial vice)
- 1%, other crimes.
- the average (mean) sentence for all court-committed admissions was 74 months —
- 113 months for violent offenders
- 61 months for property offenders
- 58 months for drug offenders
- 50 months for public-order offenders.

- 3.9% of all prison admissions had received sentences of at least 30 years (including sentences to life or death), 7.7% had sentences of at least 20 years, and 12.1% had sentences of at least 15 years

- among prisoners released from State prisons, the average (mean) time served was 22 months excluding jail credits — released violent offenders had served an average of 36 months; property offenders, 17 months; and drug and public-order offenders, 14 months

- released offenders had served an average of 34% of the maximum sentences they had received

- among those discharged from parole supervision, 35% were by successful completion of term — the remainder were discharged as absconders, returned to prison, or had died

- those discharged successfully from parole supervision had served an average of 20 months in prison and an average of 23 months under supervision, with an average sentence of 58 months

- by offense, the average (mean) sentence and time served in prison and on parole for those successfully discharged from parole was —

Offense	Average sentence length	Average time served	
		Prison	Parole
Violent	94 mos.	29 mos.	23 mos.
Property	60	15	18
Drugs	59	15	19
Public-order	44	13	15

- for those discharged from parole unsuccessfully by absconding or returning to prison as a result of a revocation, the average time under supervision was 20 months after having served an average of 28 months in prison, based upon an average sentence of 79 months.

#### *Facility censuses*

BJS data on correctional facilities generally are gathered on 5- to 6-year cycles. Facility censuses were conducted in 1973, 1979, 1984, and 1990. These censuses obtain information on institutional and community-based facilities.

#### **Items covered in facility censuses**

facility operators  
 provisions for physical security  
 inmate custody levels  
 primary functions  
 facility age  
 planned additions to capacity  
 rated capacity  
 court orders and consent decrees  
 inmate population composition  
 space  
 use and occupancy for each housing unit  
 inmate programs and participation  
 staffing and staff composition  
 health facilities  
 institutional incidents  
 drug testing policies for inmates and staff

#### *1990 Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities*

The 1990 census produced the following findings:

- between June 1984 and June 1990 States built 263 prisons to raise the total number of facilities from 694 to 957
- together with the additions to existing facilities, States added nearly 13 million square feet of housing space between 1984 and 1990, an increase of 58%
- the 80 Federal prisons in operation in June 1990 contained nearly 2.7 million square feet of housing space
- among the 1,037 State and Federal prisons in 1990 —
  - 889 were for males only, 71 were for females only, and 77 housed inmates of both sexes
  - 234 were maximum security, 403 were medium security, and 400 were minimum security
  - 279 prisons had been built within 10 years of the census, and 341 were at least 50 years old at the time of the census.

#### *Surveys of State prison inmates*

BJS has also surveyed the inmate population in 1974, 1979, 1986, and the summer of 1991. The surveys entail face-to-face interviews with large, representative samples of the population in State prisons. The 1991 survey was complemented by the addition of a companion self-representing sample survey of Federal prisoners. Together, the State and Federal inmate surveys resulted in interviews with more than 22,000 prisoners.

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The surveys obtain a wide variety of demographic, criminal history, and drug- and alcohol-use information on prisoners. Special supplements to the 1991 surveys gathered information from inmates on their victims, the types of community supervision conditions most often violated, possession and use of firearms, prior involvement in criminal gangs, and prior testing by criminal justice authorities for drug use and HIV.

The 1991 State Prison Inmate Survey revealed that —

- about 80% of State prisoners have had prior sentences to prison, jails, youth confinement facilities, or probation
- about 60% of State prisoners were serving a sentence for a violent crime or had a prior history of convictions for violent crimes
- nearly a third had a history of at least two prior sentences to confinement as an adult
- 93% of State prisoners either were recidivists or had current or prior convictions for violence.

## **Parole**

Apart from the individual-level data on parole admissions and releases discussed under the National Corrections Reporting Program, BJS data series on parole are similar to the data collected from probation agencies. BJS obtains annual aggregate movement counts and yearend counts by jurisdiction as well as descriptive information on race, sex, and ethnicity of parole populations.

Data for 1990 reveal that —

- 531,407 adults were under the supervision of parole agencies nationwide on December 31, 1990
- 358,820 adults entered parole supervision during the year and 284,216 were discharged from parole supervision during the year
- 287 adults were on parole at yearend for every 100,000 adults in the U.S. resident population
- 52% of the parole population was white, 47% black, and 1% were of other races
- 92% of the parole population was male and 8% was female
- 5.7% of the parole population was considered to be on an inactive status with minimal supervision required, and just over 3% of the parole population was reported to be in a special intensive supervision status.

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### *Method of release from prison*

Over the past 13 years, the process by which offenders have been discharged from prison and placed on conditional supervision in the community has undergone radical change. In 1977, nearly 72% of the 115,000 persons discharged from State prisons nationwide were released as a result of parole board decisions. Less than 6% of the releases that year were by supervised mandatory release (sentence minus earned good-time credits) and 1% were the result of special release procedures such as supervised furlough or emergency or court-ordered release because of crowding.

By contrast, among the more than 394,000 discharges from State prisons in 1989, 41% were by a discretionary parole board decision, 30% were by supervised mandatory release, and nearly 11% were because of special procedures primarily used for coping with prison crowding. In 1977 about 4% of all prison releases were to probation agencies (shock incarceration or shock probation terms), and in 1990 about 5% of all prison releases were to a period of supervision in the community by a probation agency. The remainder, about 17% of those released in 1977 and 14% in 1990, were unconditional prison releases, primarily by expiration of term.

BJS data on parole thus document the declining role of the parole board in the United States as the determinant of prison release.

As with probation statistics, in the spring of 1992, BJS undertook a major initiative to obtain greater detail on the parole population and the agencies which administer their supervision in the community. (See the list on page *vii* outlining the items covered; parole agencies also respond to questions about pre-release planning.)

After completion of the agency census, a nationally representative sample of parolees will be selected for personal interviews covering their criminal histories, drug and alcohol histories, various elements of their current offense, their victims, and their use of weapons. Together, the agency census and the survey of parolees should significantly supplement knowledge of parole populations and parole activities.



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## Special series

### *Capital punishment*

The annual information that BJS collects on prisoners under sentence of death includes data on persons admitted to prison, persons executed, and persons whose death sentence is removed. The office of each State attorney general is also surveyed to obtain information on legislative changes or developments in case law that affect the imposition of the death penalty in the respective State.

Data for 1990 indicated the following:

- eleven States carried out 23 executions during 1990, bringing the total to 143 executions between January 1, 1977, and December 31, 1990
- those executed in 1990 had spent an average of 7 years and 11 months awaiting execution; the average time spent by the total of 143 persons executed was 6 years and 10 months
- during 1990, 244 persons were sentenced to death by courts, 101 had their death sentences vacated or commuted, and 7 died for reasons other than execution
- on December 31, 1990, 2,356 persons were under a sentence of death in 34 States
- about 7 in 10 prisoners under sentence of death had a prior felony conviction history, about 1 in 11 had a prior conviction for homicide, and 2 in 5 condemned prisoners had a criminal justice status (such as being on probation or parole, being an escaped prisoner, or being under arrest or subject to a warrant) at the time of the capital offense
- among those under sentence of death —
  - 58% were white
  - 40% were black
  - 2% were of other races
  - 99% were male
  - the median age was 34
- at the end of 1989, the number of States authorizing one or more methods of execution was —
  - 20 States, lethal injection
  - 14, electrocution
  - 6, lethal gas
  - 3, hanging
  - 2, firing squad
  - 9, multiple methods
- the 143 persons executed between 1977 and 1990 represent 3.7% of the 3,834 persons who were under a death sentence over the period.

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## *Recidivism*

In 1987 BJS initiated efforts to create a National Recidivism Reporting System (NRRS), designed to link criminal history information from the FBI and participating States to build databases on selected offenders. The pilot test for NRRS was a 6-year followup of a representative sample of almost 4,000 persons (representing 11,347 prison releases), age 17 to 22 at the time of their release, who were discharged from prisons in 22 States in 1978. In 1988 BJS designed and built a second NRRS database containing more than 300,000 criminal history records on a representative sample of 16,355 persons (representing about 109,000 prison releases) discharged from prisons in 11 States in 1983 and followed for 3 years.

This latter study revealed that —

- within 3 years of their release, 63% of the prison releasees had been rearrested for new charges of felonies or serious misdemeanors, 47% had been reconvicted, and 41% had been returned to prison or jail
- the estimated 68,000 prison releasees from the 11 States who were rearrested within 3 years accumulated 326,000 new arrest charges (an average of 4.8 charges per arrestee), including almost 50,000 arrests for violent crimes — 2,300 arrests for homicides, 17,000 robbery arrests, 23,000 arrests for assault, nearly 4,000 arrests for rape and sexual assault
- the 109,000 prisoners were estimated to have acquired 1.7 million arrest charges over their criminal careers

- about 1 in 8 rearrests occurred in States other than the State in which the prisoners had been imprisoned at the time of their release in 1983

- recidivism rates were inversely related to age at release and directly related to the number of prior arrests — for example, an estimated 94% of prisoners age 18 to 24 with 11 or more prior arrests were rearrested after their release in 1983

- nearly 1 in 3 released violent offenders and 1 in 5 released property offenders were rearrested within 3 years for a violent crime.

BJS efforts to measure recidivism have continued with the development of a new database on a representative sample of 35,000 persons arrested for the first time in 1978 and 1984 in 8 States and tracked by their criminal history records through 1991. These data will provide estimates of the incidence, prevalence, and seriousness of offending and will permit the analysis of trends in recidivism, criminal career patterns, and the effects of alternative criminal justice sanctions.

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### **About the table on page 1, after *Sources***

- During the first 6 months of 1991, the Nation's State and Federal prison populations grew by 30,149 inmates, an increase of just under 4%.
- On June 30, 1991, prison populations were a record 804,524 inmates or about 303 prisoners with a sentence of more than 1 year per 100,000 residents.
- The growth during the first half of 1991 equaled about 1,160 additional inmates per week, lower than the 1,642 weekly increase during the same period of 1990 and the 1,839 weekly gain during the first 6 months of 1989.

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- Probation and parole, 1990*, Bulletin, NCJ-133285, November 1991

### Recidivism

- Examining recidivism*, Special Report, NCJ-96501, February 1985  
*Recidivism of young parolees*, Special Report, NCJ-104916, May 1987  
*Recidivism of prisoners released in 1983*, Special Report, NCJ-116261, April 1989  
*Recidivism of felons on probation, 1986-89*, Special Report, NCJ-134177, February 1992

### Capital punishment

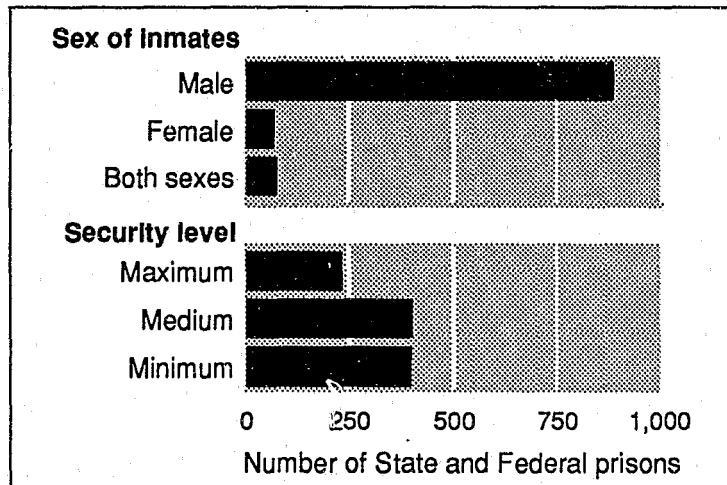
- Capital punishment 1990*, Bulletin, NCJ-131648, September 1991

**Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities,  
by region and jurisdiction, 1990 and midyear 1991**

Region and jurisdiction	Total prison population			Percent change from		Number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 in population on 6/30/91
	Midyear 1991	Yearend 1990	Midyear 1990	6/30/90 to 6/30/91	12/31/90 to 6/30/91	
U.S. total	804,524	774,375	755,256	6.5	3.9	303
Federal	69,504	67,432	63,902	8.8	3.1	21
State	735,020	706,943	691,354	6.3	4.0	282
Northeast	128,588	123,392	21,869	5.5	4.2	243
Connecticut	11,231	10,500	10,190	10.2	7.0	261
Maine	1,614	1,523	1,558	3.6	6.0	126
Massachusetts	8,817	8,273	8,116	8.6	6.6	146
New Hampshire	1,498	1,342	1,286	16.5	11.6	130
New Jersey	22,346	21,128	20,806	7.4	5.8	287
New York	56,530	54,895	54,648	3.4	3.0	313
Pennsylvania	22,710	22,290	21,876	3.8	1.9	187
Rhode Island	2,734	2,392	2,355	16.1	14.3	173
Vermont	1,108	1,049	1,034	7.2	5.6	121
Midwest	150,870	145,791	144,507	4.4	3.5	248
Illinois	28,941	27,516	27,295	6.0	5.2	246
Indiana	12,806	12,736	12,764	.3	.6	224
Iowa	4,077	3,967	3,842	6.1	2.8	142
Kansas	5,607	5,775	5,669	(1.1)	(2.9)	220
Michigan	35,324	34,267	33,234	6.3	3.1	378
Minnesota	3,136	3,176	3,201	(2.0)	(1.3)	70
Missouri	15,252	14,943	15,091	1.1	2.1	293
Nebraska	2,436	2,403	2,509	(2.9)	1.4	144
North Dakota	497	483	491	1.2	2.9	69
Ohio	33,715	31,822	32,148	4.9	6.0	306
South Dakota	1,370	1,341	1,319	3.9	2.2	191
Wisconsin	7,709	7,362	6,944	11.0	4.7	156
South	294,040	284,029	276,200	6.5	3.5	326
Alabama	16,302	15,665	14,742	10.6	4.1	384
Arkansas	7,341	6,766	6,660	10.2	8.5	300
Delaware	3,458	3,471	3,541	(2.3)	(.4)	325
Dist. of Columbia	10,095	9,947	10,569	(4.5)	1.5	1,160
Florida	46,233	44,387	42,733	8.2	4.2	346
Georgia	23,300	22,345	21,608	7.8	4.3	336
Kentucky	9,425	9,023	8,824	6.8	4.5	253
Louisiana	19,095	18,599	18,353	4.0	2.7	434
Maryland	18,308	17,848	17,123	6.9	2.6	358
Mississippi	8,715	8,375	8,161	6.8	4.1	324
North Carolina	18,708	18,411	18,102	3.4	1.6	268
Oklahoma	12,831	12,285	11,889	7.9	4.4	400
South Carolina	18,346	17,319	16,767	9.4	5.9	474
Tennessee	11,280	10,388	10,286	9.7	8.6	224
Texas	50,611	50,042	48,078	5.3	1.1	292
Virginia	18,416	17,593	17,223	6.9	4.7	291
West Virginia	1,576	1,565	1,535	2.7	.7	87
West	161,522	153,731	148,778	8.6	5.1	288
Alaska	2,670	2,622	2,610	2.3	1.8	346
Arizona	14,900	14,261	13,940	6.9	4.5	389
California	101,995	97,309	93,810	8.7	4.8	322
Colorado	7,720	7,018	6,878	12.2	10.0	230
Hawaii	2,616	2,533	2,523	3.7	3.3	152
Idaho	2,138	1,961	1,984	7.8	9.0	206
Montana	1,487	1,425	1,408	5.6	4.4	184
Nevada	5,888	5,322	5,408	8.9	10.6	481
New Mexico	3,156	3,187	2,881	9.6	(1.0)	195
Oregon	6,624	6,492	6,393	3.6	2.0	226
Utah	2,466	2,496	2,447	.8	(1.2)	141
Washington	8,751	7,995	7,403	18.2	9.5	176
Wyoming	1,111	1,110	1,093	1.7	.1	239

See summary on page xvi and explanatory notes on page 24.

**1,037 State and Federal prisons house 698,570 prisoners in 1990:  
86% for men only; 23% designated maximum security**



- On June 29, 1990, the States and the District of Columbia operated 957 prisons, and the Federal Government operated 80. These 1,037 facilities held 698,570.

- North Carolina (86 prisons), California (67), and New York (57) had the most prisons, while North Dakota, South Dakota, and Utah had the fewest (2 each).

<b>Average size of a U.S. prison —</b>	
674 inmates	
Average daily populations —	
prisons for men,	700
prisons for women,	390
prisons for both sexes,	628
holding less than 500 inmates, 202	
500-999 inmates, 769	
1,000-2499 inmates, 1,477	
2,500 inmates or more, 4,287	
maximum security, 1,084	
medium security, 873	
minimum security, 233	

- Southern States operated 426 prisons, compared to 196 in the Midwest, 164 in the West, and 151 in the Northeast.

- Among 1,037 prisons, 889 (86%) were for men only, 71 (7%) were for women only, and 77 (7%) housed both sexes:

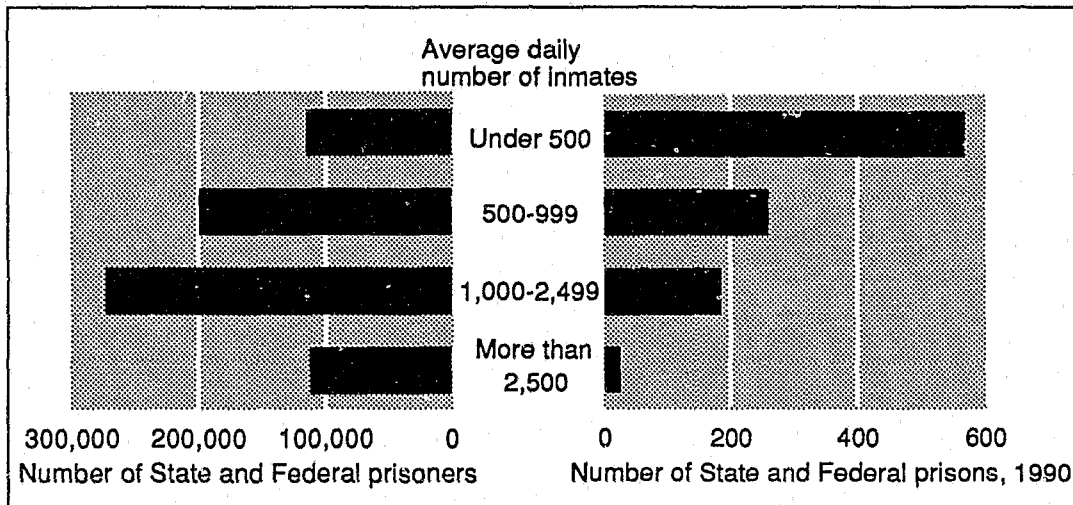
Male-only	622,545	89% of inmates
Female-only	27,682	4%
Both sexes	48,343	7%

- Among prisons, 234 (23%) were graded as maximum security, 403 (39%) as medium security, and 400 (39%) as minimum security:

Maximum	253,664	36% of inmates
Medium	351,900	50%
Minimum	93,006	13%

- States operated 250 community-based facilities housing 17,079 offenders, an average of 68 per facility.

**A majority of prisons hold fewer than 500 inmates; a majority of prisoners are in prisons holding more than 1,000 inmates**



- Among the 1,037 State and Federal prisons, 567 (55%) held an average daily population of less than 500 prisoners; 259 (25%) held between 500 and 999 inmates; 185 (18%), from 1,000 to 2,499; and 26 prisons (less than 3% of all prisons), at least 2,500 inmates.

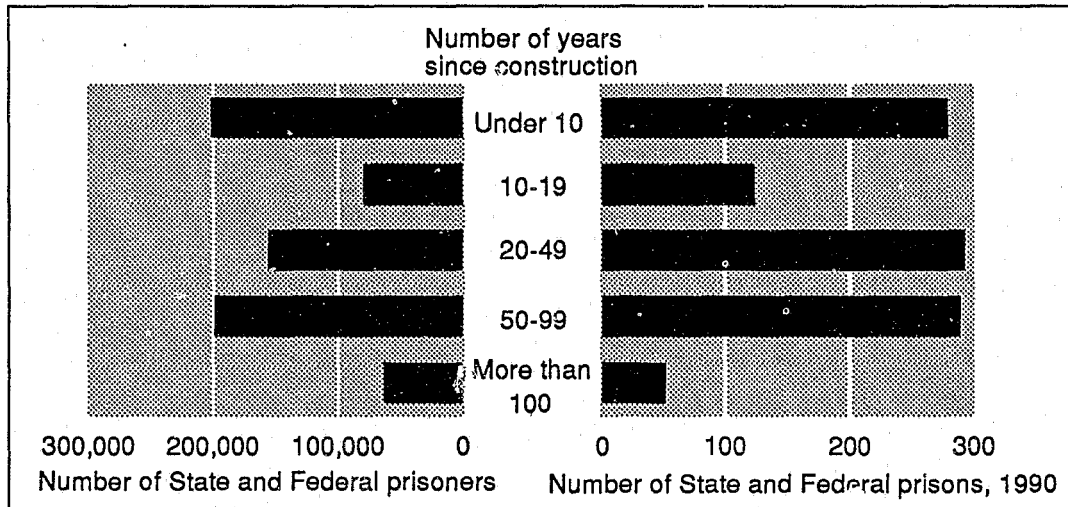
- In 1990, among the States, North Carolina had the most prisons of the smallest size: 79 of its 86 prisons held an average daily population of less than 500 inmates. The 6 prisons in Vermont and 13 in Alaska each held an average daily population of less than 500 inmates.

- Seventeen of the 26 prisons with a daily average of at least 2,500 prisoners were in California. New York had the largest number of prisons holding at least 1,000 prisoners (23). Thirteen States reported having no prisons holding 1,000 or more prisoners. The largest prison was the California Medical Facility at Vacaville.

- Among the prisons with an average population below 500 inmates, 362 (64%) were graded as minimum security. By contrast, none of the facilities holding an average of at least 2,500 prisoners was graded as minimum security.

- Among the 698,570 offenders held in State and Federal prisons on June 29, 1990 —
  - 114,261 (16%) were in facilities with an average daily population of less than 500 inmates
  - 199,189 (29%) in facilities of 500 to 999 inmates
  - 273,308 (39%) in facilities of 1,000 to 2,499 prisoners
  - 111,452 (16%) in facilities with an average daily population of at least 2,500.

**Newer prisons more likely than older facilities to hold a smaller number of inmates; most inmates held in prisons over 20 years old**



- For the 1,037 State and Federal prisons in 1990, based on the year of original construction—
  - 279 (27%) were less than 10 years old
  - 124 (12%) from 10 to 19 years old
  - 293 (28%) from 20 to 49 years old
  - 289 (28%) from 50 to 99 years old
  - 52 (5%) were at least 100 years old.

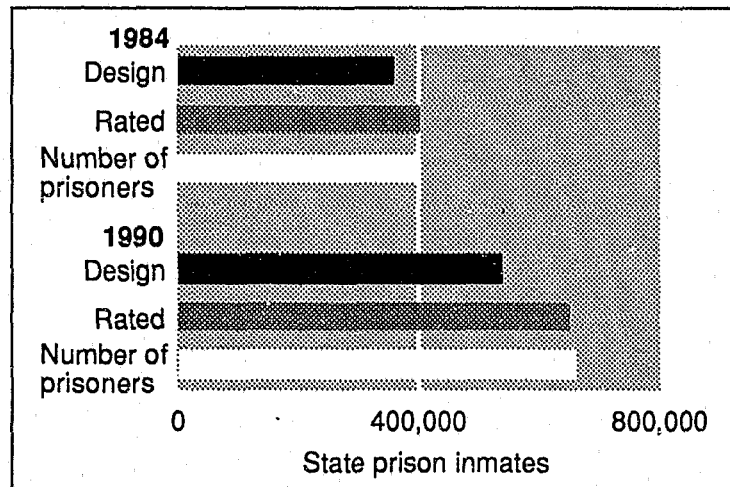
- Prisons originally constructed before 1890 accounted for —
  - 2% of minimum security prisons,
  - 3% of all medium security prisons, and
  - 13% of all maximum security prisons.

- Prisons built after 1979 accounted for
  - 31% of all maximum security prisons,
  - 33% of all medium security prisons, and
  - 19% of all minimum security prisons.
 Nearly 43% of minimum security prisons were between 20 and 49 years old in 1990.

- Of the 698,570 inmates in State and Federal prisons in 1990 —
  - 201,444 (29%) were housed in facilities less than 10 years old
  - 78,621 (11%) were in facilities from 10 to 19 years old
  - 156,074 (22%) were in facilities from 20 to 49 years old
  - 199,523 (29%) were in facilities from 50 to 99 years old
  - 62,908 (9%) were in facilities originally built at least 100 years earlier.

- The oldest prisons had the largest populations per facility. Those originally constructed at least 100 years ago confined a daily average of 1,210 prisoners, while those constructed after 1979 held an average 722 prisoners.

**Total design capacity of State prisons increased 52% from 1984 to 1990; the number of prisoners up 67%**



- Between 1984 and 1990, the design capacity of State prisons increased by 52%, from 355,201 to 541,568. Over the same period, rated capacity grew from 403,126 to 650,600, an increase of 61%. During these years, the number of prisoners in State prisons rose 67%, from 395,309 to 658,828.

- In 1984 State prisons were operating at 11% above their design capacity and at 2% below their rated capacity. In 1990, they were 22% above design capacity and 1% above rated capacity.

- In 1990 Federal prisons reported a design capacity to accommodate 38,794 prisoners, about 18,000 less than the 56,821 prisoners actually held in Federal institutions. Federal prisons accounted for 8% of prisoners in the Nation but less than 7% of the design capacity of prisons.

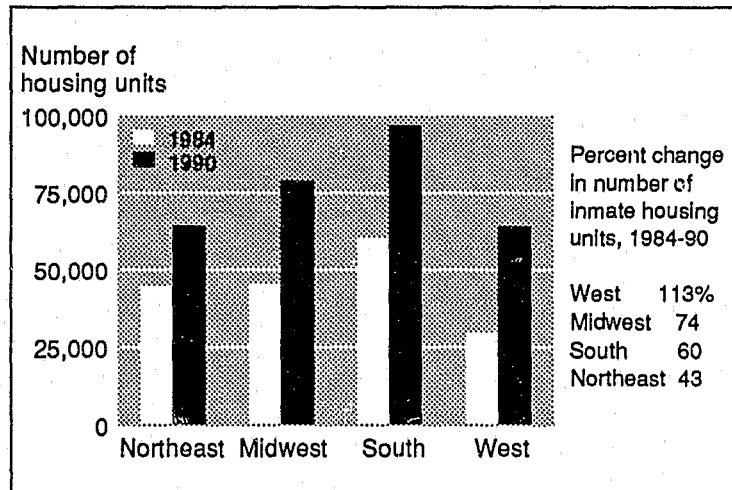
- The imbalance between design capacity and population in State and Federal prisons in 1990 was related to facility size. Facilities holding —
  - fewer than 500 inmates were operating at 104% of capacity
  - 500 to 999 inmates, at 128% of capacity
  - 1,000 to 2,499 prisoners, at 122%
  - 2,500 or more prisoners, at 149% of design capacity.

- State prisons in the West were operating at 139% of design capacity in 1990, compared to Northeastern prisons at 127%, Midwestern prisons at 123%, and Southern prisons at 111%.

**Definitions:** *Design capacity* is the number of inmates designated for the facility by architects or planners. *Rated capacity* is the number of beds ascribed to a facility by a rating official.



**Housing space up 71% from 1984 to 1990; State prisons continue to house an average of 2 inmates per housing unit**



- In 1984 the 694 State prisons contained a total of 180,468 occupied cells and dormitories. By 1990 the 957 State prisons contained a total of 304,030 occupied housing units, an addition of 263 prisons and 123,562 cells and dormitories.

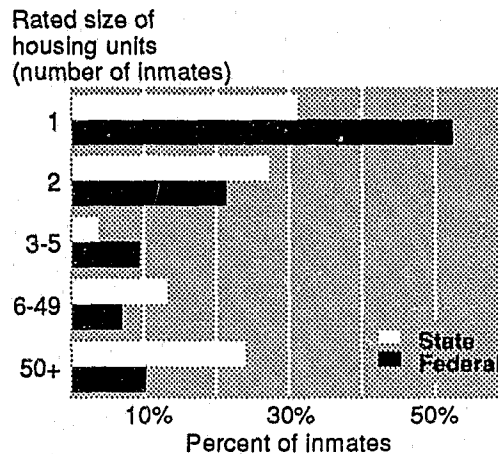
- In 1984 the average prison contained 260 housing units; in 1990 the average prison contained 318 cells and dormitories.

- In 1990 the 80 Federal prisons contained a total of 28,540 housing units — an average of 357 cells and dormitories per institution.

- State prisons had an average of 2.12 inmates per housing unit in 1984 and 2.16 in 1990. Federal prisons in 1990 housed an average of 2.03 prisoners per housing unit. Prisons in Southern States in 1990 had the largest number of inmates per unit, 2.61, while Midwestern State prisons had the smallest, 1.79.

Region	State prisons in 1984		State prisons in 1990		Percent change for:	
	Number of inmates	Square feet of housing	Number of inmates	Square feet of housing	Number of inmates	Square feet of housing
Total	381,955	21,900,000	641,749	37,400,000	68%	71%
Northeast	66,302	3,800,000	114,822	6,400,000	73	68
Midwest	77,665	5,400,000	138,125	8,800,000	78	63
South	167,313	9,200,000	245,228	14,700,000	47	60
West	70,675	3,500,000	143,574	7,500,000	103	114

**Over half of Federal prisoners in 1-prisoner cells; almost a fourth of State prisoners in large dormitories**



- In 1990, 52% of Federal prisoners and 31% of State prisoners were housed in units rated to hold one inmate. About 24% of State prisoners and 10% of Federal prisoners were in dormitories rated to hold 50 or more inmates.

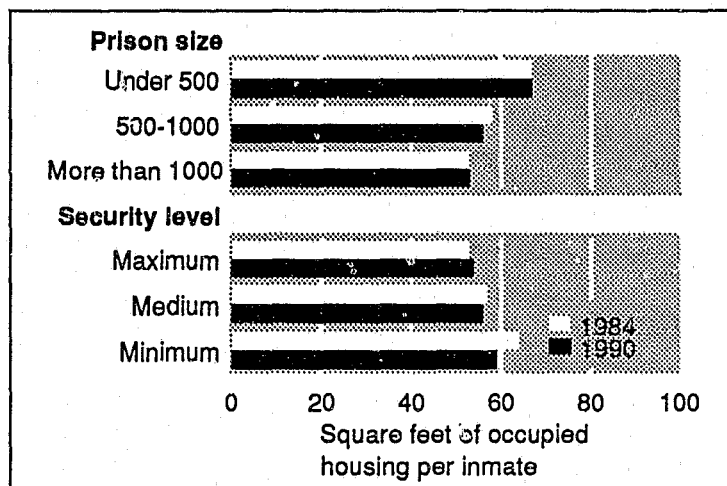
- Housing arrangements for State prisoners in 1990 and 1984 were almost the same:  
 Single cells — 31% (1990) and 34% (1984)  
 Dormitories holding 50 or more — 24% of all inmates (both years).

- In 1984 the 694 State prisons contained an estimated 23,700,765 square feet of occupied housing space, an average of 34,151 square feet of housing per prison.

- In 1990 the 957 State prisons contained an estimated 37,413,966 square feet of occupied housing space, an average of 39,095 square feet of housing space per prison.

- Federal prisons in 1990 contained 2,681,872 square feet of housing space, an average of 33,523 square feet per prison.

**Average housing space per State prison inmate down less than 2% between 1984 and 1990**



- In 1984 each State prison inmate had an average of 57 square feet of floor space. In 1990, the average housing space per inmate was 56 square feet. Federal prisons in 1990 had an average of 44 square feet of housing space per inmate.

- State prisons classified as minimum security provided the greatest amount of space per inmate — about 5 square feet per inmate more than maximum security prisons and 3 square feet more than the medium security institutions.

- Among Federal facilities, those prisons classified as maximum or minimum provided more housing space per inmate than facilities graded as medium.

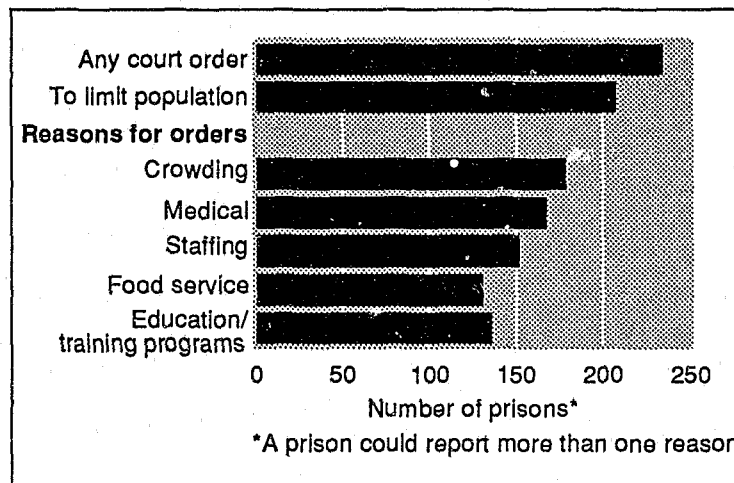
- The average square footage per inmate in 1990 was —

	State	Federal
Maximum	54 sq. ft	47 sq. ft
Medium	56	42
Minimum	59	49

- The smallest amount of space per inmate was found in housing units rated to hold two persons in State prisons in 1990. These units provided about 21 square feet less floor space per inmate than units rated to hold 1 person and about 26 square feet less than dormitory housing for at least 50. The average space per inmate for the housing units of different rated capacities was —

Rating	State	Federal
1-person	61 sq. ft.	44 sq. ft.
2-person	40	42
3-5 persons	63	53
6-49 persons	58	50
50+ persons	66	41

**24% of 957 State prisons under court orders in 1990 — unchanged from the percentage (24%) in 1984**



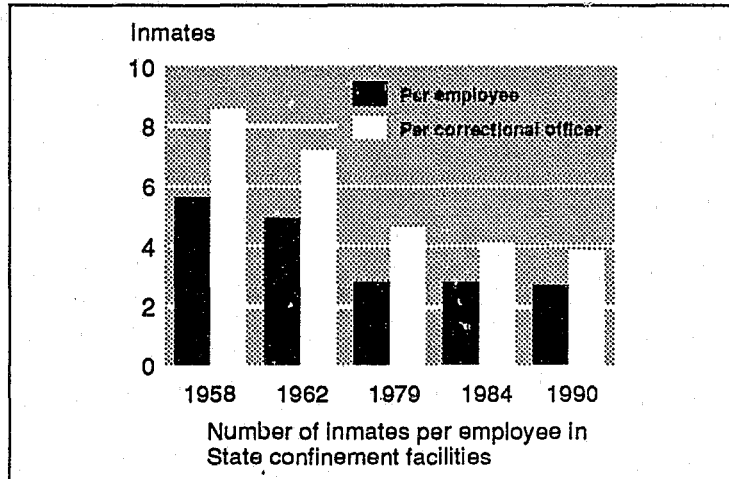
- On June 29, 1990, 234 of the Nation's 957 State prisons (24%) were operating under a court order or consent decree relating to the conditions of confinement or specific practices within the facility. On June 30, 1984, 166 of the 694 State prisons (24%) were operating under a court order or consent decree.

- In 1990, 179 State prisons were under a court order or consent decree for crowding (19% of State prisons), and 123 State prisons (18% of State prisons) were cited for crowding in 1984.

- Besides crowding, the most common reasons for a State prison being under a court order in 1990 were — medical services (168 prisons) staffing (152 prisons) education/training programs (136) food services (131).

- A total of 208 State prisons (22%) reported that they had been ordered to limit the size of the inmate population held in their facility. Included in this total were 33 State prisons that reported no findings on specific conditions by a court.

**1 State prison officer per 8.6 inmates in 1958 reaches 1 per 3.9 in 1990: nearly 160,000 State correctional officers employed in 1990**



- In 1958 State prisons employed 1 correctional officer per 8.6 inmates (or, overall, 1 employee per 5.6 inmates). BJS censuses of State prisons in 1979 and 1990 reveal the ratios changing — 2.8 inmates per employee in 1979 to 2.7 in 1990 4.6 inmates per correctional officer in 1979 to 3.9 in 1990.

- Federal prisons in 1990 employed 1 staff member for every 3.3 inmates — a somewhat higher ratio of inmates to staff than found in State institutions. The number of inmates for each Federal correctional officer was about twice as high as in State prisons — 7.8 inmates per correctional officer in Federal prisons versus 3.9 in State prisons.

**Sex, race, and Hispanic origin of State prison payroll employees, 1984 and 1990**

	Number		Percent change
	1984	1990	
Male	109,987	173,976	+58 %
Female	27,222	57,339	+111
White*	105,168	172,046	+64 %
Black*	24,766	44,076	+78
Other*	2,106	3,644	+73
Hispanic	5,169	11,549	+123

\*Non-Hispanic only

Between 1984 and 1990 —

- the number of female State prison employees increased at twice the rate of male employees
- the number of Hispanic employees increased at twice the rate of white, non-Hispanic employees
- the number of black, non-Hispanic employees increased 78%, compared to a 64%-increase in the number of white, non-Hispanic employees.

**Employees of State prisons, by occupation, 1984-90**

	Number of State prison employees				
	All specified	Administrative	Educational or professional	Custody or security	Other
1984	141,844	5,061	23,320	92,680	20,783
1990	240,307	5,970	38,539	159,160	36,638
Percent increase, 1984-90	70%	18%	65%	72%	76%

- Federal prisons employed 18,451 persons in 1990, with correctional officers accounting for 38%.

- Of 240,307 State prison employees —  
 66% were correctional officers  
 16% educational, professional, or technical staff  
 3% administrative  
 15% primarily clerical, maintenance, or food-service workers.

- Between 1984 and 1990 the number of correctional officers and the number of educational and professional staff grew at four times the rate of increase in the number of administrative staff.

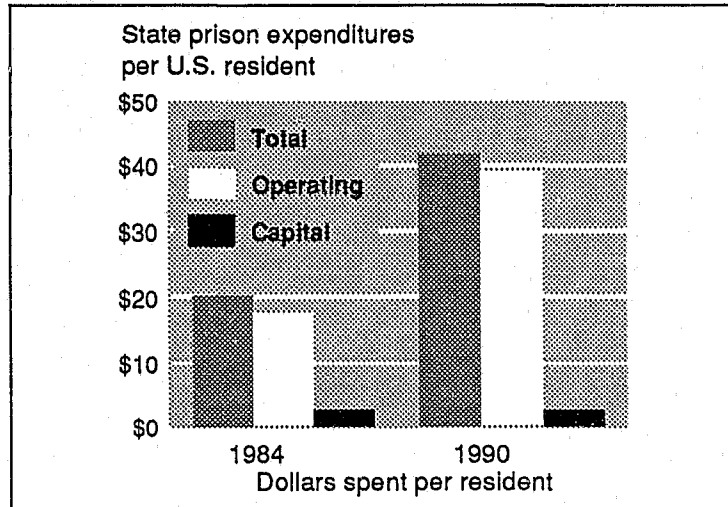
- Staffing ratios (the number of inmates per staff member) in State prisons by type of occupation in 1984 and 1990 were as follows:

	1984	1990
Total	2.8	2.7
Administrative	76.7	107.2
Custody/security	4.1	3.9
Clerical	38.3	35.6
Professional and educational	20.8	20.6
Maintenance and food service	36.4	34.7

- Staffing ratios in Federal prisons in 1990 were —

Total	3.3
Administrative	58.5
Custody/security	7.8
Clerical	40.6
Professional and educational	9.4
Maintenance and food service	19.9

**In fiscal 1990 the Nation spent \$41.91 per U.S. resident for State prisons and \$3.46 per resident for Federal prisons**



- In 1990 State and local governments spent \$3,923.88 per person for all functions.

Seven cents of every dollar spent were for all justice activities — \$278.71 for each person.

Spending for all State and local corrections activities amounted to \$99.05 per person — about 2.5% of all State and local expenditures.

State prisons, which cost an average of \$41.91 per person, accounted for 1% of all State and local spending.

- On average, for every U.S. resident, \$3.46 was paid for Federal prisons and prisoners, less than a 10th of 1% of the \$5,601.39 expended by the Federal Government per capita.

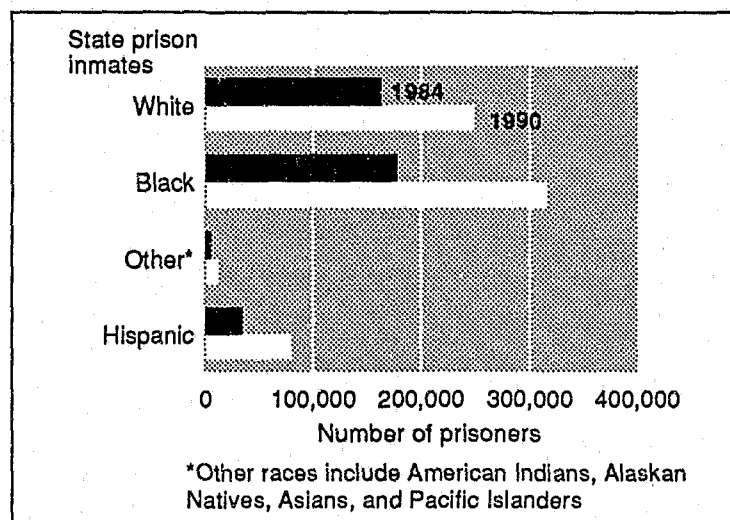
- For building and operating prisons States spent twice the amount per resident in 1990 that they had spent in 1984.

Per capita spending in 1990 totaled \$41.91, with \$39.26 for operations and \$2.65 for capital improvements. In 1984, total spending for prisons was \$20.28 per person: \$17.71 in direct expenditures and \$2.57 in capital spending.

- Total spending on State and Federal prisons in fiscal 1990 was nearly \$11.5 billion.

Based on the average daily population, the average annual cost was \$15,603 per inmate — \$15,595 for Federal prisoners and \$15,777 for State prisoners. Annual imprisonment costs per inmate were highest in the Western States, \$18,879, and lowest in the Southern States, \$13,224.

**Racial and ethnic composition of State prison population changing: percentage of blacks remains stable; Hispanics increase**



- Over the last 17 years, the racial and ethnic composition of State prison populations has been changing — the percentage of white non-Hispanics has declined, the percentage of blacks as well as persons of other races (American Indians, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Alaska Natives) has remained stable, and the percentage of Hispanics has increased.

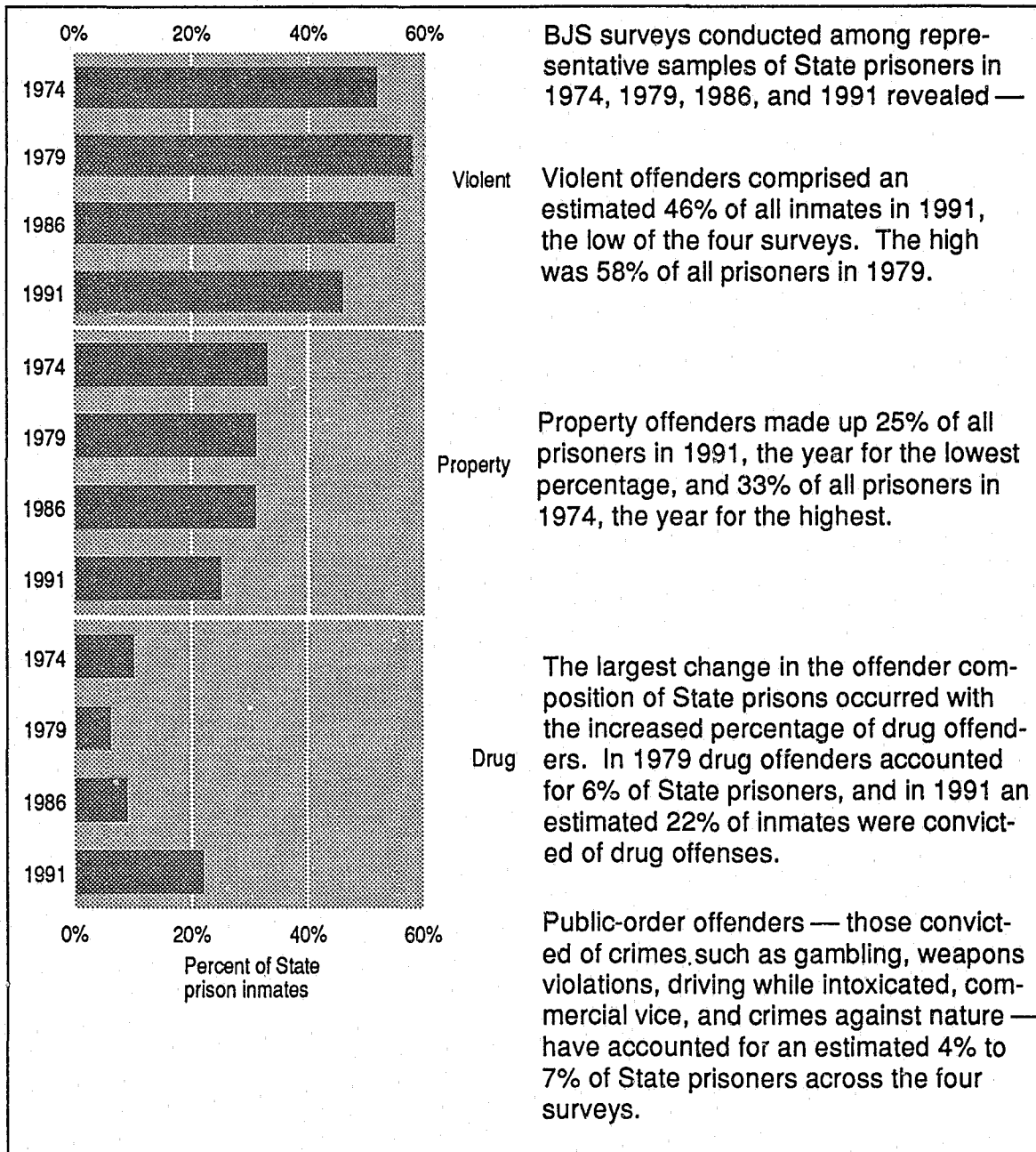
- In 1974, blacks accounted for 47% of State prisoners, the same percentage as in 1990. In 1974, Hispanics accounted for just over 6% of State prisoners; in 1990, Hispanics accounted for more than 12% of State prisoners. In 1974, an estimated 45% of State prisoners were white and not of Hispanic ethnicity; in 1990, about 38% were white, non-Hispanic.

- The disproportionate presence of blacks in State prisons, compared to their share of the U.S. resident population, has been an issue of continuing interest. In 1990, blacks accounted for 47% of State prisoners and 12% of the population. Of adult arrests for those offenses accounting for 60% of State prisoners, the percentages of blacks were as follows:

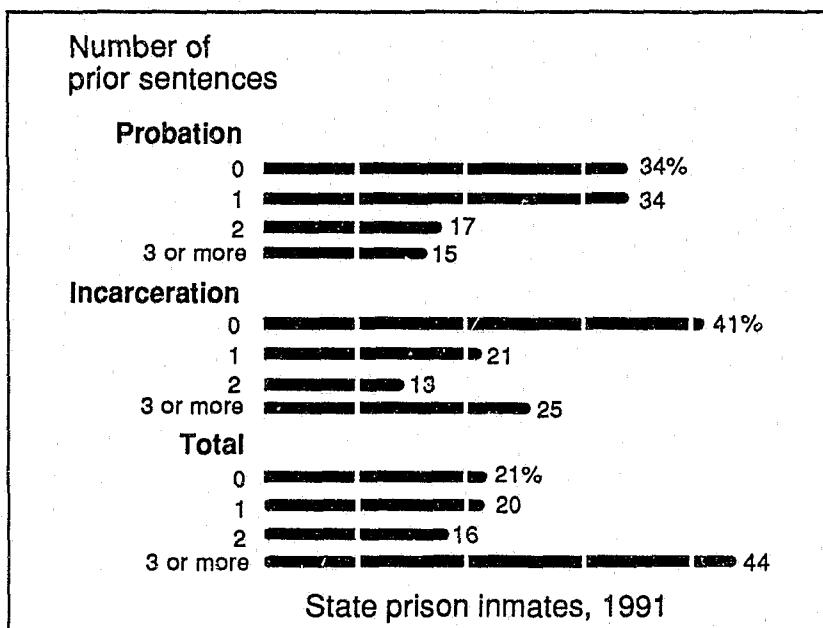
- 54% of arrests for murder
- 43% of arrests for forcible rape
- 61% of arrests for robbery
- 38%, for aggravated assault
- 40%, for drug violations
- 41%, for weapons violations.



**In 1991 drug offenders make up a larger proportion of State prison inmates than in earlier prison populations surveyed by BJS**



**In 1991, 66% of State prison inmates have at least 1 prior sentence to probation, and 59%, at least 1 prior sentence to incarceration**



- About 8 out of 10 State prison inmates in 1991 had prior sentences to probation or incarceration as an adult or juvenile. This percentage has remained unchanged since first measured in 1974.

- About 38% of State prisoners had at least one prior conviction in the juvenile justice system. In addition to the conviction for which they were in prison in 1991, about 71% of State prison inmates had prior adult convictions.

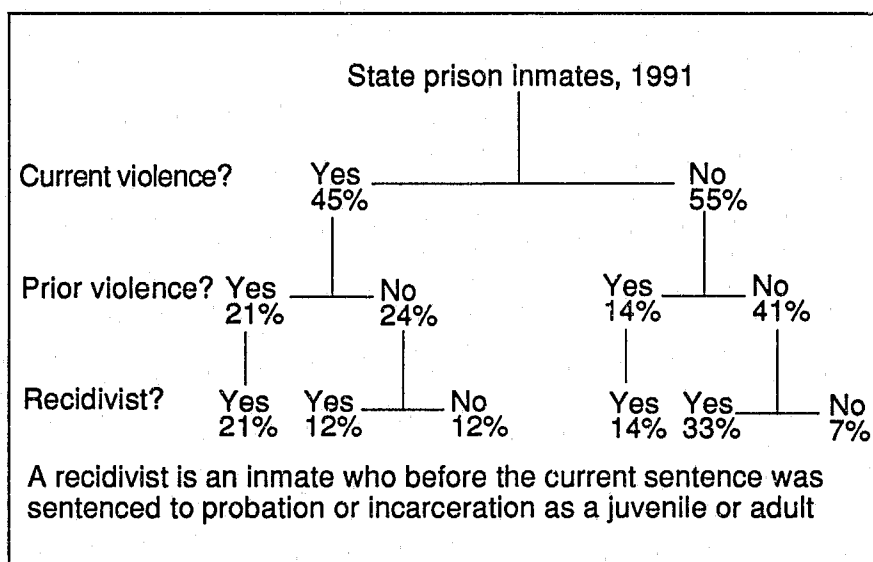
- Two-thirds of State prison inmates had served at least one prior sentence to probation and about a third of all prisoners had been under probation supervision

more than once. Nearly 60% had at least one prior sentence to incarceration. More than half of all recidivists in prison had at least three prior sentences to probation and/or incarceration.

**Conviction history of State prison inmates, 1991**

20.6%	no prior conviction
8.1	prior conviction as juvenile
41.1	prior conviction as adult
30.3	prior convictions as juvenile and adult

**In 1991, 93% of State prison inmates serving a sentence for a violent crime or had served a prior sentence to probation or incarceration**



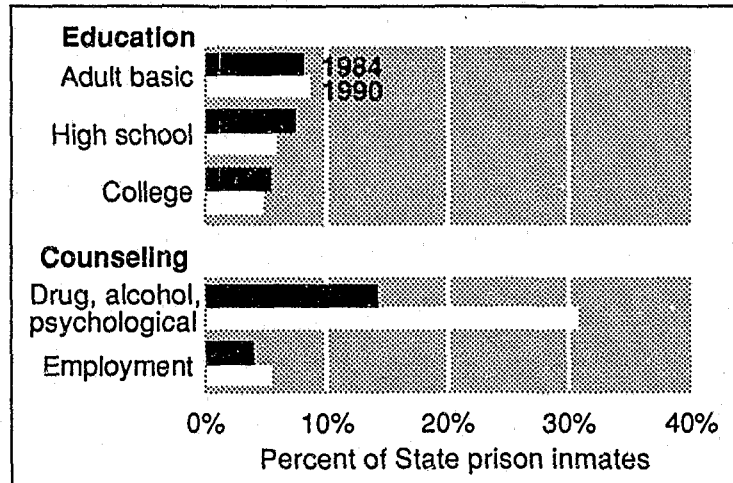
Based on interviews during the summer of 1991 with a nationally representative sample of 14,000 inmates in State correctional facilities:

- An estimated 45% were serving time after conviction for a violent crime.
- An additional 14% were serving time after conviction for a nonviolent crime but had a history of convictions for violence.

- An estimated 80% of State prisoners had served sentences to probation or incarceration before their current sentence in 1991.

- When the records for past and current sentences are combined, an estimated 93% of State prison inmates in 1991 were serving a sentence for a violent crime, had a history of violence, or were recidivists.

**In June 1990, 30% of State prison inmates active in a drug, alcohol, or psychological counseling program, versus 14% in 1984**



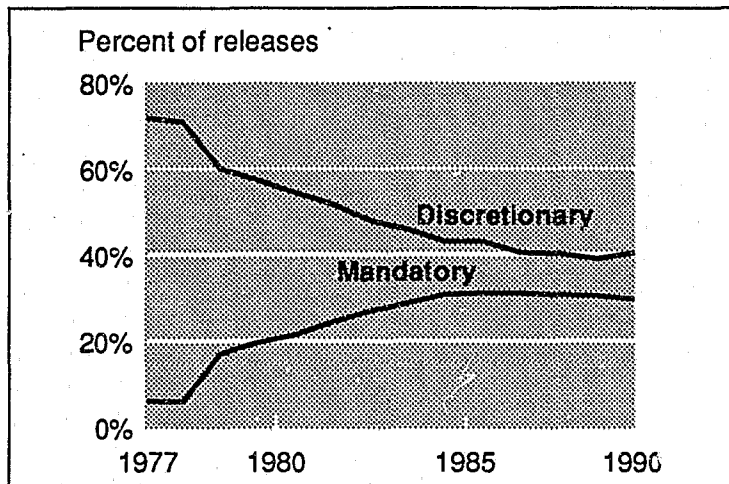
- On June 29, 1990, 30% of the inmates were participating in drug, alcohol, or psychological counseling programs, as measured by State prison census data — twice the 14% participation on June 30, 1984. In 1990 about 19% of State prisoners were enrolled in education programs on the day of the census, compared to 21% of all inmates in 1984.

- On June 29, 1990, 23% of Federal inmates were enrolled in Adult Basic Education, secondary school, General Equivalency Diploma, and college-level educational programs.

In addition, among Federal inmates —

- 24% were participating in prison industries
- 8% were participating in drug counseling programs
- 3% were involved in alcohol counseling
- 7% were receiving psychological or psychiatric counseling
- 6% were participants in special counseling programs for developing skills for daily living or community adjustment.

**Discretionary parole following a parole board decision accounts for 41% of prison releases in 1990, compared to 72% in 1984**



- Since 1977 substantial changes have occurred in the method by which most offenders are released from prison. In 1977 about 72% of the 115,213 offenders were discharged from State prison as a result of a discretionary decision by a parole board. Less than 6% left prison as a result of a mandatory release, having served their sentence minus any good-time credit. In 1990 parole boards accounted for about 41% of the nearly 395,000 State prison releases. About 30% of the releases were mandatory releases.

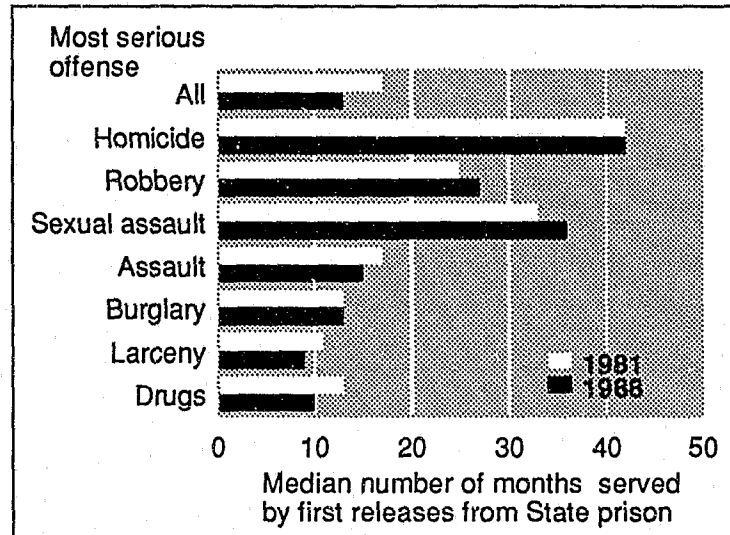
- Parole revocations represent a growing percentage of State prison admissions. In 1977, of the nearly 134,000 admissions to State prisons, offenders who had violated conditions of a previous release accounted for just under 15%. In 1990 revoked conditional release violators comprised 29% of prison admissions.

**Excluding releases to probation or other conditional releases as well as commutation and expiration of sentence, the percent of releases that were...**

	<u>Discretionary parole</u>	<u>Mandatory</u>
1977	71.9%	5.9%
1980	57.4	19.5
1985	43.2	30.8
1990	40.5	29.6

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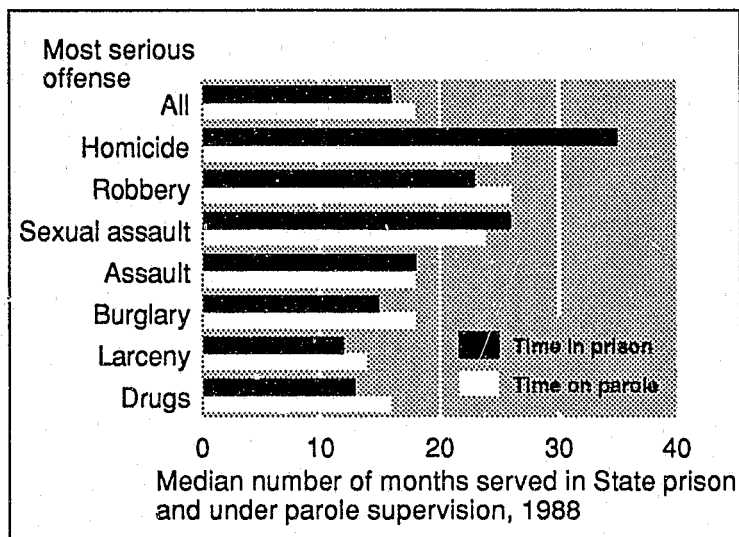
**Median time served in State prison for those released for the first time on a sentence declined from 17 months in 1981 to 13 months in 1988**



• There is no evidence that the time served in prison, prior to the first release on a sentence, has been increasing. In 1981 the median time served prior to release was 17 months; in 1988 the median time served among those released from State prisons was 13 months.

• In 1988 first releases from State prison had served the following median terms prior to release:  
homicide — 42 months  
robbery — 27 months  
rape and sexual assault — 36 months  
assault — 15 months  
burglary — 13 months  
larceny — 9 months  
drug offenses — 10 months.

**Offenders sentenced to prison often spend a longer period under supervision in the community than in confinement**



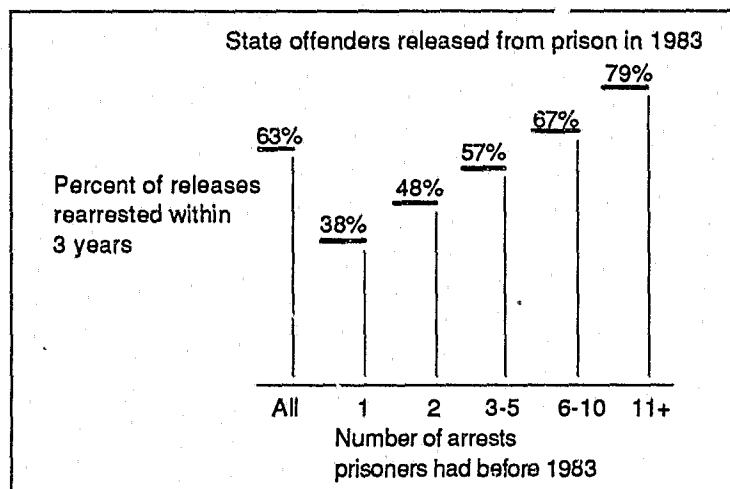
- In most jurisdictions, sentences usually entail a confinement period and a subsequent period of conditional supervision in the community. The community supervision segment of a sentence is commonly referred to as parole supervision, whether or not the conditional release to the community was determined by a parole board decision.

- Data on State offenders discharged from parole supervision in the community in 1988 reveal that while the median maximum sentence received was 48 months, offenders served a median of 16 months in prison and 18 months on parole.

- By offense, the median sentences received (in months) and the median time served prior to successful discharge from parole were —

Offense	Median sentence	Median time served	
		Prison	Parole
Total	48 mo.	16 mo.	18 mo.
Homicide	96	35	26
Robbery	60	23	26
Sexual assault	66	26	24
Assault	48	18	18
Burglary	48	15	18
Larceny	36	12	14
Drugs	36	13	16

**Inmates released from prisons in 11 States in 1983: among those arrested once before entering, 38% were rearrested within 3 years of release; among those arrested 11 or more times, 79% were rearrested**



- In the largest followup ever conducted, a study of criminal history records covering 3 years found that in a sample of prisoners released in 1983 from prisons in 11 States —

- 62.5% were rearrested for a new felony or serious misdemeanor
- 46.8% reconvicted of a new crime
- 41.4% returned to prison or jail.

- Prior to imprisonment, the 109,000 prisoners represented in the followup had been charged with a total of 1.3 million felonies and serious misdemeanors, including 215,000 violent crimes — 12,000 homicides, 19,000 rapes and sexual assaults, 84,000 robberies, and 85,000 assaults. They had also been charged with more than 628,000 property offenses, 150,000 drug offenses, and more than 320,000 other offenses during their adult criminal careers.

- Those rearrested after their release in 1983, an estimated 68,000 of the 109,000 represented by the sample, acquired more than 326,000 new arrest charges.

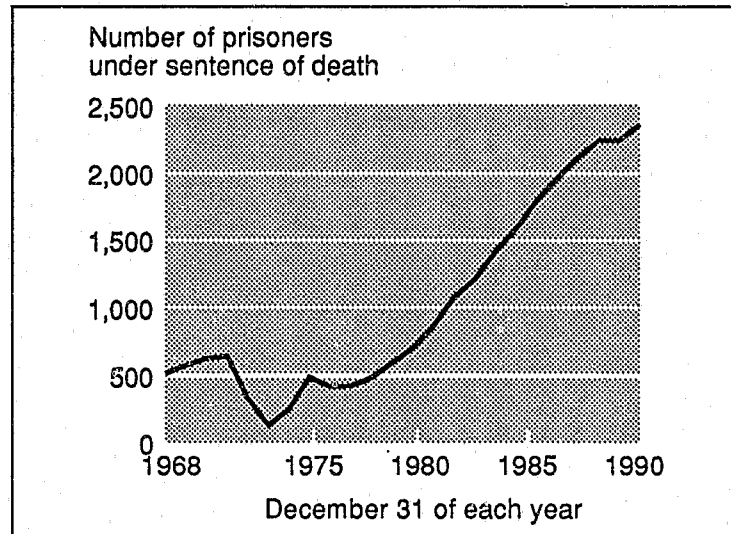
- These new charges after release included more than 50,000 new violent offenses. Among these were 2,300 homicides, 1,500 kidnappings, 3,900 rapes and sexual assaults, 17,000 robberies, and 23,000 other assaults.

- Those released from prison in 1983 accounted for an estimated 7% of all the robbery and burglary arrests in the 11 States that year.

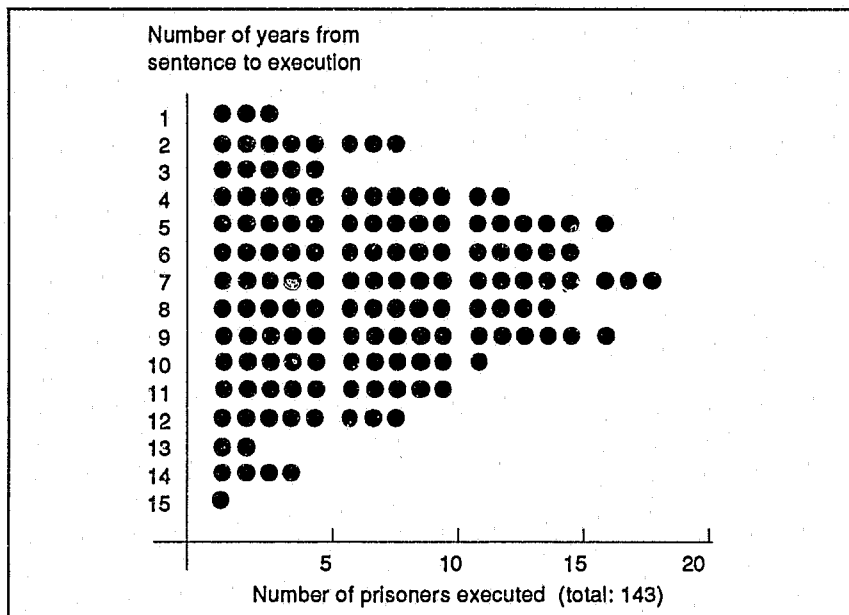
- The most important factor affecting the likelihood of rearrest was the prior arrest history. Among those serving time after their first arrest, 38% were rearrested within the 3-year followup period. Among those with 11 or more prior arrests, 79% were subsequently arrested.



**36 States and the Federal Government authorize capital punishment;  
 January 1, 1977 - December 31, 1990, 16 States executed 143 persons**

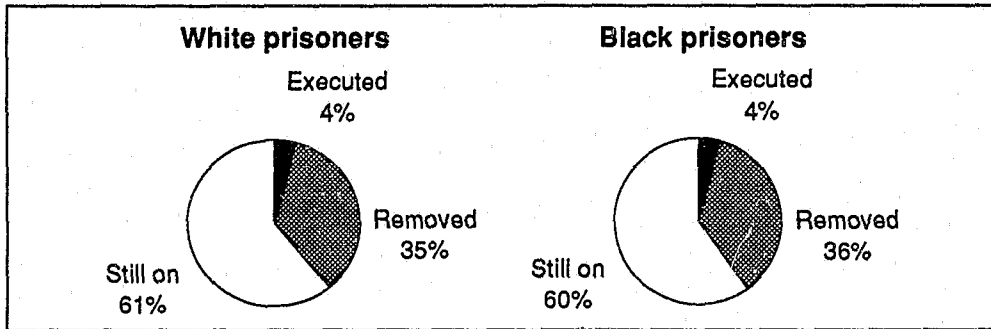


**At yearend 1990, 34 States held 2,356 prisoners under sentence of death**



**The average time from sentence to execution for the 143 persons executed between 1977 and 1990 was 6 years and 10 months**

**1,991 whites and 1,548 blacks under sentence of death, 1977-90:  
almost equal percentages of both groups executed or removed**



- At the end of 1990, among the 2,356 prisoners under a sentence of death —
  - the median time since imposition of sentence was 4 years and 8 months
  - 7 in 10 had a prior history of felony convictions
  - about 1 in 11 had a prior conviction for homicide
  - at the time when they committed the capital murder, just over 40% were on parole, or probation, or were prison inmates or escapees, or had other charges pending against them.

- Among the 143 executions since 1977 —
  - 54 (38%) were by lethal injection
  - 83 (58%), by electrocution
  - 5 (3%), by lethal gas
  - 1 (1%), by firing squad.

- Of those persons sentenced to death between January 1988 and December 1990, similar percentages of white defendants and black defendants received multiple death sentences: 15% of the whites and 13% of the blacks.

- From 1977 through 1990, 3,539 persons — white and black — were under a sentence of death. About the same percentages of the black prisoners (1,548) as of the white prisoners (1,991) were —
  - executed — 3.6% of the blacks (55)  
4.0% of the whites (79)
  - removed from under a sentence of death — 36.2% of the blacks (560)  
35.0% of the whites (697)
  - awaiting execution in December 1990 — 60.3% of the blacks (933)  
61.0% of the whites (1,215).

- At yearend 1990, almost half the 2,356 persons under sentence of death had been sentenced to death before 1985 —
  - 1974-79 153 (6.5%) sentenced
  - 1980-85 947 (40.2%)
  - 1986-90 1,256 (53.3%).

1977	1	1985	18
1979	2	1986	18
1981	1	1987	25
1982	2	1988	11
1983	5	1989	16
1984	21	1990	23

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## Notes for table on page 1

**Integrated jail and prison system.** NPS data from the following jurisdictions include both prison and jail populations: Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Vermont.

**Counts of custody populations.** The following jurisdictions reported population figures based on custody rather than jurisdiction counts: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, and Wyoming.

**Arizona.** Counts exclude 41 inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

**California.** Counts include civil narcotic addict commitments, county diagnostic cases, Federal inmates and inmates from other States, and safekeepers.

**Colorado.** Population counts for inmates with maximum sentences greater than 1 year include a small number of inmates with a maximum sentence of 1 year. All counts include inmates held in local jails, awaiting bed space in Department of Corrections facilities.

**Federal.** Population counts include 2,025 inmates whose sentence lengths are unknown and an undetermined number of prisoners held for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

**Georgia.** Counts exclude an undetermined number of inmates housed in local jails because of crowding or awaiting pick-up by State authorities.

**Idaho.** Population counts are as of June 28, 1991.

**Illinois.** Counts of inmates with maximum sentences greater than 1 year include an undetermined number of inmates with sentences of 1 year.

**Indiana.** Counts exclude 944 inmates held in local jails because of crowding or awaiting pick-up by State authorities.

**Louisiana.** Louisiana data for June 30, 1991, include 261 persons with sentences less than 1 year. This is the first time Louisiana has included this population, thus affecting the comparability with prior counts.

**Maryland.** While population totals are actual counts, breakdowns for sentence length are estimates.

**Massachusetts.** Population counts from June 28, 1991, could not be provided by sentence length. Counts of sentenced prisoners for earlier reporting periods may not be strictly comparable. Population totals are actual counts; however, the male/female breakdown is an estimate believed to be within 0.1% of the actual disaggregation. By law, offenders in Massachusetts may be sentenced to terms of up to 2 1/2 years in locally operated jails and correctional institutions. Such populations are excluded from the State count but are included in published population counts and rates for local jails and correctional institutions.

**Michigan.** Counts include inmates in the Community Residential Program.

**North Carolina.** While population totals are actual counts, the breakdowns for sentence length are estimates believed to be accurate within 1% of the actual numbers.

**Ohio.** Population counts for inmates with maximum sentences greater than 1 year include an undetermined number of inmates with maximum sentences less than 1 year.

**Oklahoma.** Population counts for inmates with maximum sentences greater than 1 year may include a small undetermined number of inmates with a sentence of 1 year.

**Tennessee.** The count of inmates with maximum sentences greater than 1 year includes a small undetermined number with sentences of 1 year.

**West Virginia.** Population counts exclude 143 inmates housed in local jails to ease crowding or awaiting pick-up by State authorities.



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