Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 (PRAT - 2005) User's Guide

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1. About the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 (PRAT - 2005)

This data analysis tool allows you to calculate recidivism estimates of former inmates released from state prisons in 30 states in 2005. The tool defines recidivism as an arrest for a new crime following release. You may generate monthly cumulative recidivism rates or annual failure rates for the entire sample or for persons with specific demographic characteristics, criminal histories, and sentence attributes.

Data are from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) Recidivism Study of State Prisoners Released in 2005, which tracked a sample of former inmates from 30 states for 5 years following release in 2005. The findings are based on prisoner records obtained from the state departments of corrections through the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) and criminal history records obtained through requests to the FBI's Interstate Identification Index (III) and state repositories via the International Justice and Public Safety Network (Nlets).

2. Differences between 1994 and 2005 recidivism data

Between 1994 and 2005, the characteristics of the U.S. prison population changed, the number of states participating in the BJS prisoner recidivism study increased, and the nation's criminal history recordkeeping improved. As a result, the recidivism estimates generated by this tool on prisoners released in 2005 should not be directly compared to estimates from the 1994 prisoner recidivism analysis tool.

3. How to access the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005

You can access the PRAT - 2005 analysis tool from the BJS home page at http://www.bjs.gov/.

- Select Data Analysis Tools on the top navigation bar. Disregard the drop-down menu. Click once on the heading Data Analysis Tools **(figure 1)**.

Figure 1: BJS Home Page

- The All Data Analysis Tools page lists all BJS and partner data analysis tools. Scroll down to locate the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 on the page **(figure 2)**.

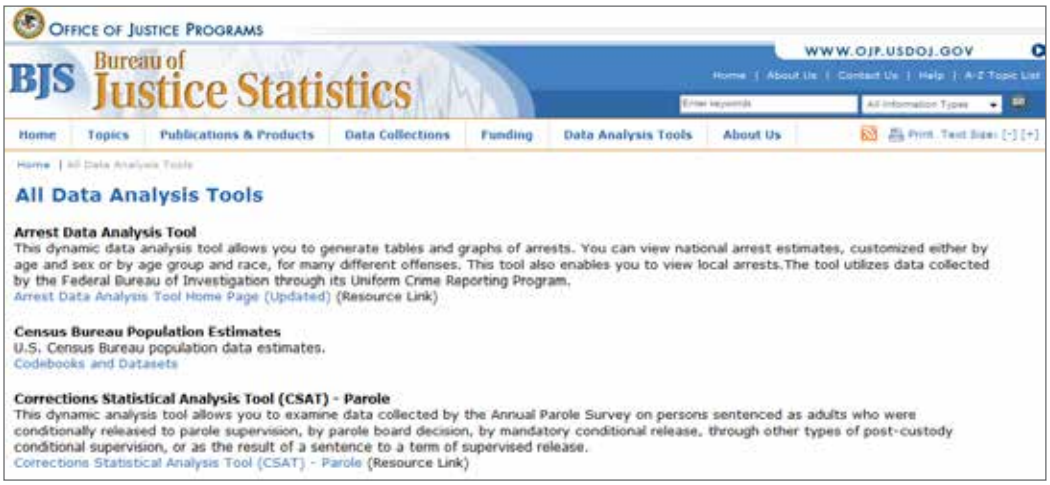

Figure 2: All Data Analysis Tools home page

- Select the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 Home Page (Resource Link) found after the short description under Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005. This will lead you to the home page **(figure 3)**.

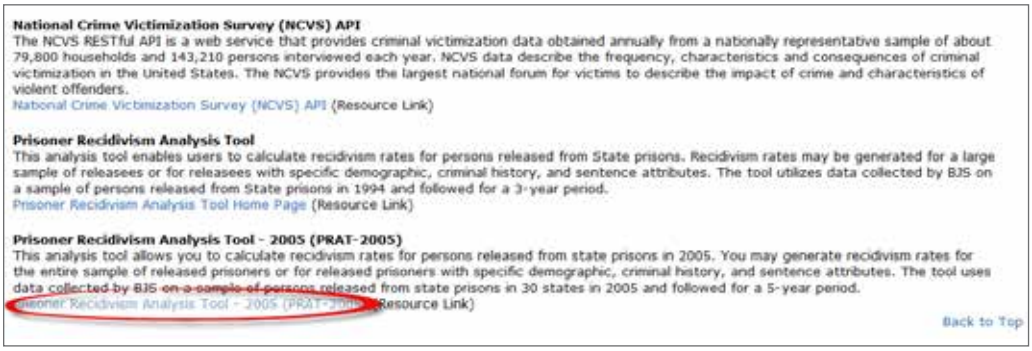

Figure 3: Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 Home Page link on the All Data Analysis Tools page

4. Analyze recidivism data

- Select Analysis from the PRAT - 2005 home page to display the data selection form **(figure 4)**.

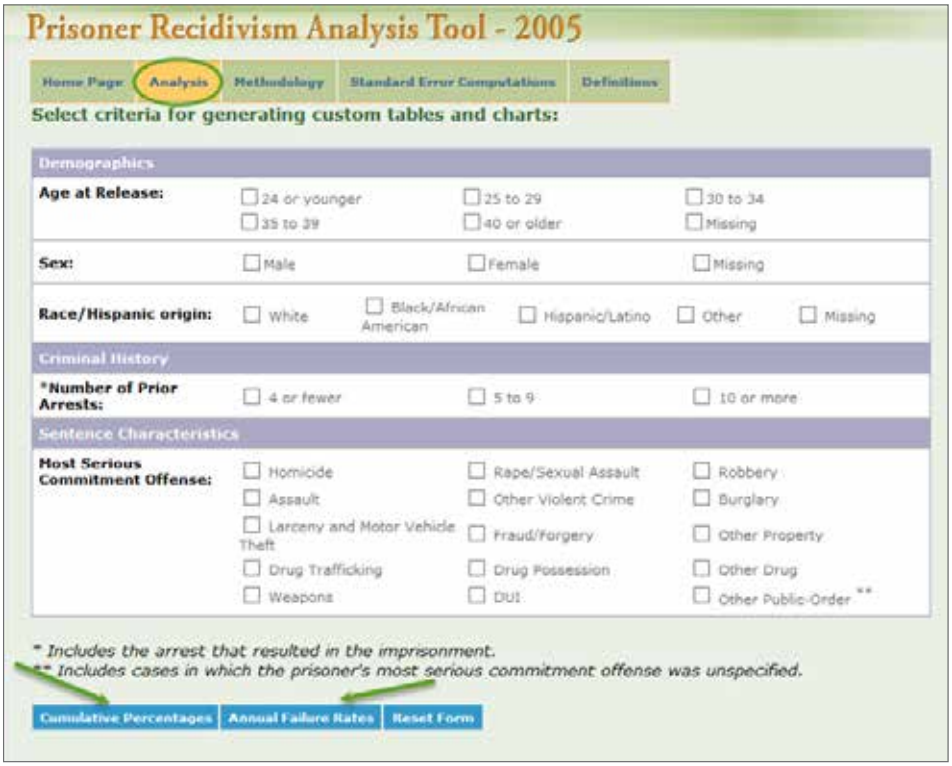

Figure 4: Analysis tab of PRAT – 2005

- You may generate recidivism estimates for the entire sample of prisoners released in 2005 or create custom tables and figures for subgroups defined by prisoner demographic characteristics, criminal histories, and sentence attributes.
- Under Demographics, you can specify the age ranges at release from prison, sex, race, and ethnicity of the offenders to include in your analysis.
- Under Criminal History, you can select the number of offenders' prior arrests to include in your analysis.
- Under Sentence Characteristics, you can choose the offenders' most serious commitment offenses to include in your analysis.
- You may choose one or more values for each offender attribute. If you do not select any value for the attribute, the tool will generate estimates for that attribute as if you had selected all the values.

5. View results as cumulative percentages or annual failure rates

- After you have made your selections, you can choose to view recidivism estimates as cumulative percentages or annual failure rates.
- The Cumulative Percentages tab will generate cumulative recidivism rates (the percentage of former prisoners who recidivated at the end of each month or year).
- The Annual Failure Rate is the number of persons who recidivated during the year divided by the number who had not recidivated at the beginning of the year since being released from prison.

6. Interpret the output report for cumulative percentages

- Select the Cumulative Percentages tab at the bottom of the Analysis page to generate results.
- You may need to scroll down the Results page to see all graphs and bulleted lists. This is a sample output report of white males released from prison at ages 25 to 29, with any criminal history and commitment offense **(figure 5)**.

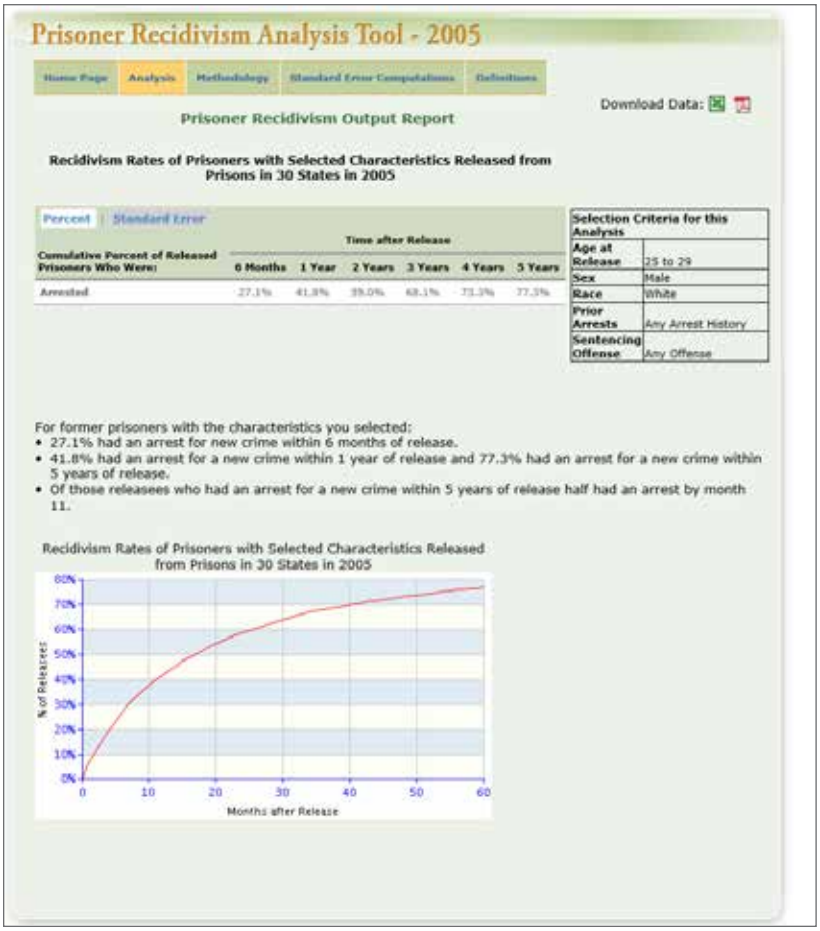

Figure 5: Cumulative percentage recidivism rates for white males released from prison at ages 25 to 29

- The table on the left provides your results followed by a bulleted list with more detail and explanation.
- The table on the right lists your selection criteria.
- Below the table is a line graph of the results followed by a bulleted list with more detail.
- The Standard Error link in figure 5 displays the standard errors for the recidivism measures.
- When you display the standard errors table, you will see another table of 95% confidence intervals for the recidivism measures. This is an example of standard error and 95% confidence interval tables for recidivism rates of white males released from prison at ages 25 to 29 **(figure 6)**.

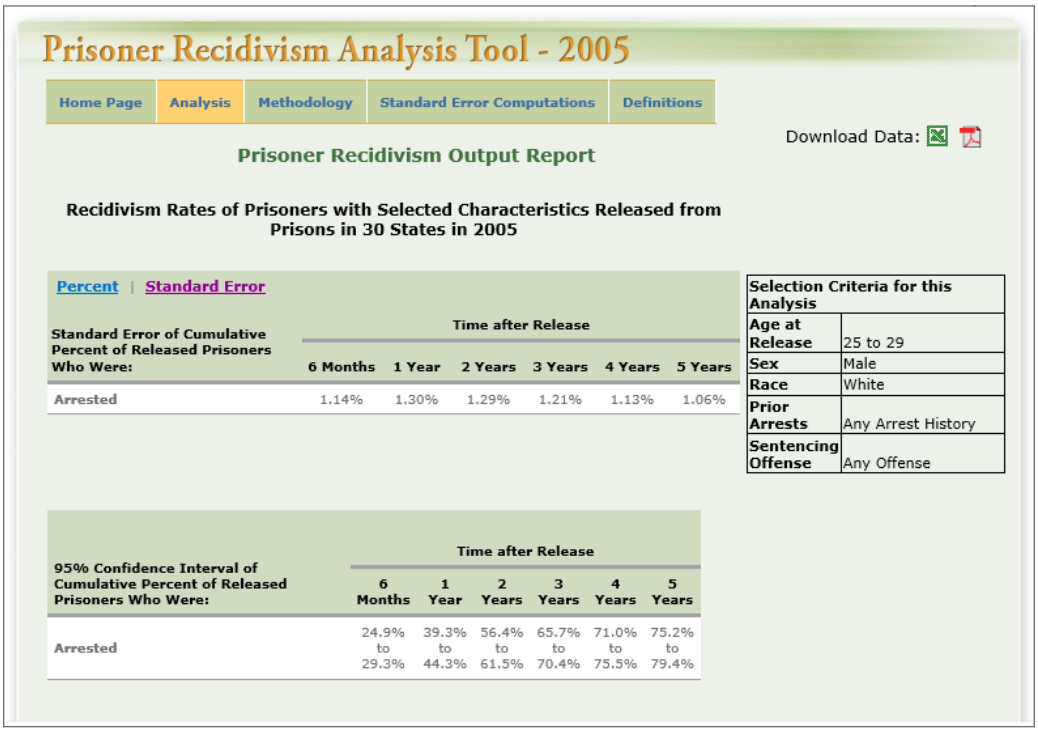

Figure 6: Standard errors and 95% confidence intervals for recidivism rates of white males released from prison at ages 25 to 29

- For more information on how this tool calculates standard errors and confidence intervals, select Standard Error Computations from the top navigation.
- Use the Excel ( ) or PDF ( ) icon to download the analysis results in the applicable format. These icons are on the top right portion of the Results page. You may need to wait for a few seconds for the download dialog box to appear.
- To save a graph, right-click on the graphic and select Save Picture As or Save Image As. Then open the image in the application you prefer. You can also copy and paste the graph from most browsers. In Microsoft Excel, select Paste Special and then select Bitmap.

7. Interpret the output report for annual failure rates

- Select the Annual Failure Rates tab at the bottom of the Analysis tab to generate results.
- You may need to scroll down the Results page to see the graph, table, and bulleted lists. This is a sample output report of annual failure rates for black females, of any age and commitment offense, who have four or fewer prior arrests **(figure 7)**.

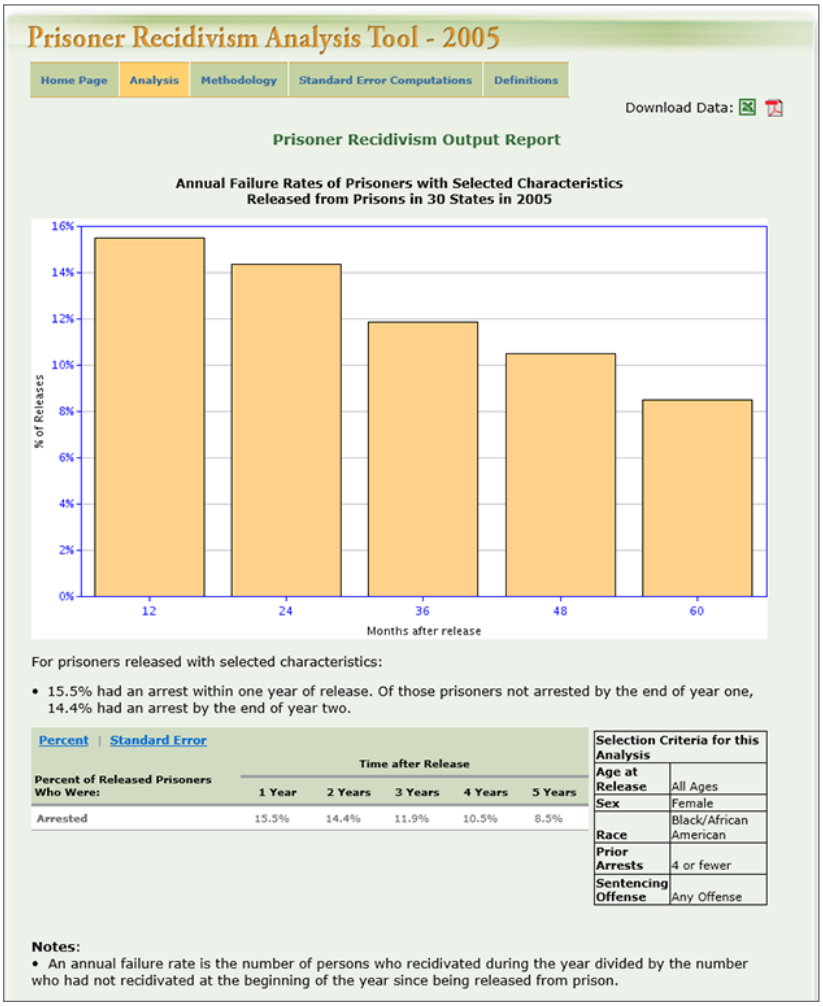

Figure 7: Annual failure rates for black females with four or fewer prior arrests

- The bar graph illustrates annual failure rates for each year.
- Below the bar graph is a bulleted list with more detail about your results.
- The table on the left provides percentages for each year.
- The table on the right lists your selection criteria.
- The Standard Error link displays the standard errors for the recidivism measures.

- When you display the standard errors table, you will see another table of 95% confidence intervals for the recidivism measures. This is an example of standard error and 95% confidence interval tables for annual failure rates for black females with four or fewer prior arrests **(figure 8)**.

Percent | Standard Error

Standard Error of Percent of Released Prisoners Who Were:	Time after Release				
	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years
Arrested	1.45%	1.48%	1.40%	1.36%	1.25%

Selection Criteria for this Analysis	
Age at Release	All Ages
Sex	Female
Race	Black/African American
Prior Arrests	4 or fewer
Sentencing Offense	Any Offense

Notes:
• An annual failure rate is the number of persons who recidivated during the year divided by the number who had not recidivated at the beginning of the year since being released from prison.

95% Confidence Interval of Percent of Released Prisoners Who Were:	Time after Release				
	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years
Arrested	12.7% to 18.3%	11.7% to 17.1%	9.5% to 14.3%	8.3% to 12.8%	6.6% to 10.5%

Figure 8: Standard errors and 95% confidence intervals for annual failure rates for black females with four or fewer prior arrests

- For more information on how this tool calculates standard errors and confidence intervals, select Standard Error Computations from the top navigation.
- Use the Excel ( ) or PDF ( ) icon to download the data in the applicable format. These icons are on the top right portion of the Results page. You may need to wait for a few seconds for the download dialog box to appear.
- To save a graph, right-click on the graphic and select Save Picture As or Save Image As. Then open the image in the application you prefer. You can also copy and paste the graph from most browsers. In Microsoft Excel, select Paste Special and then select Bitmap.

8. No results

The tool displays a dialog box when your selection criteria do not generate any sample cases **(figure 9)**. When this occurs, change your selection criteria and try again.

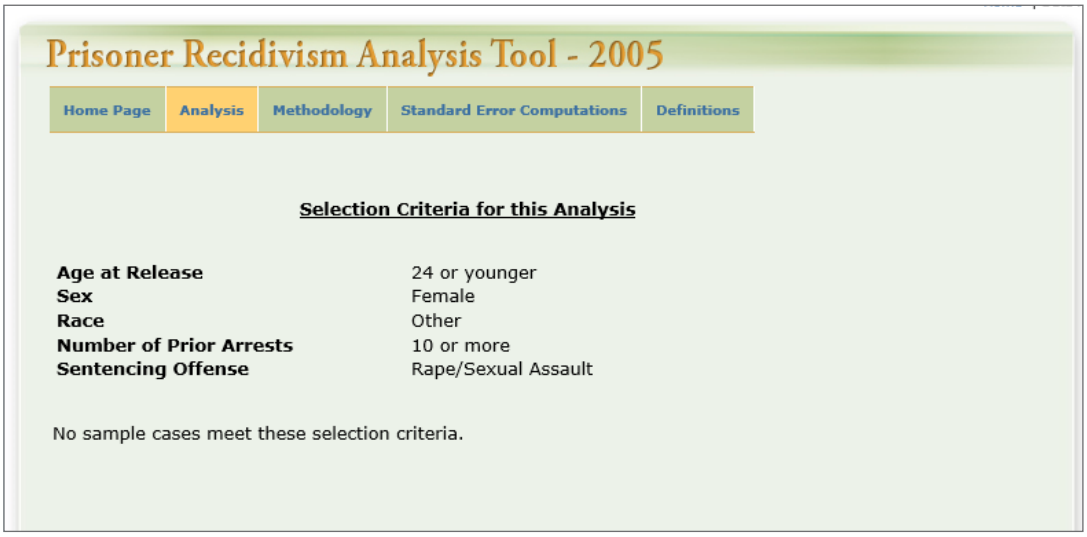

Figure 9: No results

9. Method

The Method page of this tool describes the sample design, data collection, and adjustment of sample weights. It also provides a caveat that data from this tool cannot be directly compared to data from prior BJS recidivism surveys.

10. Standard error computations

The Standard Error Computations tab provides technical detail about how BJS calculated standard errors in its most recently published statistical report on recidivism of prisoners released in 2005. This webpage also provides more information about how this data tool generates standard errors and describes confidence intervals around estimates.

11. Definitions

The Definitions tab provides the legal definitions of the criminal offenses listed under the Sentence Characteristics category in the Analysis tab.

12. For questions about the tool

Please direct any comments or questions about the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 to:

askbjs@usdoj.gov
(202) 307-0765
Please include "PRAT" in the subject line of the e-mail

Bureau of Justice Statistics
U.S. Department of Justice
810 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531

13. How to cite data from this tool

Please use the following information when citing the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005:

Snyder, Howard N., Durose, Matthew R., Cooper, Alexia, and Mulako-Wangota, Joseph. Bureau of Justice Statistics. (Insert table title). Generated using the Prisoner Recidivism Analysis Tool - 2005 (PRAT-2005) at http://www.bjs.gov/recidivism_2005_arrest/. (2/4/2016).