



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

ADVANCE FOR RELEASE AT 4 P.M. EST
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2007
WWW.OJP.USDOJ.GOV/BJP

BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
Contact: Stu Smith: 202-307-0784
After hours: 301-983-9354

ONE IN EVERY 31 U.S. ADULTS WAS IN A PRISON OR JAIL OR ON PROBATION OR PAROLE AT THE END OF LAST YEAR

WASHINGTON – The U.S. adult correctional population — incarcerated or in the community — reached 7.2 million men and women, an increase of 159,500 during the year, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today in a new report. About 3.2 percent of the U.S. adult population, or 1 in every 31 adults, was in the nation’s prisons or jails or on probation or parole at the end of 2006.

The number of men and women who were being supervised on probation or parole in the United States at year-end 2006 reached 5 million for the first time, an increase of 87,852 (or 1.8 percent) during the year. A separate study found that on December 31, 2006, there were 1,570,861 inmates under state and federal jurisdiction, an increase of 42,932 (or 2.8 percent) in 2006.

During 2006 the number of inmates under state jurisdiction rose by 37,504 (2.8 percent). The number of prisoners under federal jurisdiction rose by 5,428 (2.9 percent).

In 2006 the number of prisoners in the 10 states with the largest prison populations increased by 3.2 percent, which was more than three times the average annual growth rate (0.9 percent) in these states from 2000 through 2005. These states accounted for 65 percent of the overall increase in the U.S. prison population during 2006. The federal system remained the largest prison system with 193,046 inmates under its jurisdiction.

At year-end 2006, state prisons were operating between 98 percent and 114 percent of capacity, compared to between 100 percent and 115 percent in 2000. This trend indicates that prison populations are increasing at the same rate as expansion rates.

Last year 7.2 percent (113,791) of state and federal inmates were held in private prison facilities; another 5.0 percent (77,987) were held in local jails. About a quarter of all inmates in privately-operated facilities were being held for the federal system.

(MORE)

On December 31, 2006, there were 798,202 adult men and women on parole. Parolees are criminal offenders supervised conditionally in the community following a prison term. The parole population grew by 17,586 — an increase of 2.3 percent. This was greater than the average annual increase of 1.5 percent since 1995.

Of those adults on parole on January 1, 2006, (665,300) and those released from prison to parole supervision during the year (485,900) from the 46 jurisdictions that provided information, about 16 percent were re-incarcerated. This percentage has remained relatively stable since 1998.

Of those parolees still under supervision at yearend 2006, nearly 2 in 5 had been convicted of a drug offense, while about 1 in 4 had been convicted of a violent or property offense.

Fourteen States reported double-digit increases in their parole population in 2006, led by North Dakota (up 23 percent). Double-digit decreases were reported in three States, led by Oklahoma (down 29 percent).

More than 8 in 10 offenders (4,237,073) under community supervision on December 31, 2006, were on probation. Probationers are criminal offenders who have been sentenced to a period of conditional supervision in the community, generally in lieu of incarceration. During 2006, the probation population increased by 70,266 probationers (1.7 percent).

About half of all probationers had been convicted of a felony (49 percent), about half were convicted of a misdemeanor (49 percent), and 2 percent were convicted of other infractions. More than 7 in 10 were on probation for a non-violent offense, including more than a quarter for a drug law violation and a sixth for driving while intoxicated.

Five states accounted for more than half (57 percent) of the growth in the probation population during 2006: California (up 13,447), Minnesota (up 8,411), Alabama (up 7,159), Colorado (up 6,594), and Pennsylvania (up 4,664).

Of the 2.2 million probationers who exited supervision during 2006, almost 6 in 10 completed their full-term sentence or were released from supervision early; nearly 1 in 5 were incarcerated.

The two reports, *Prisoners in 2006* (NCJ-219416), and *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2006* (NCJ-220218), were written by BJS statisticians Heather Couture, Paige M. Harrison and William J. Sabol and Thomas P. Bonczar and Lauren E. Glaze respectively. Following publication, the reports can be found at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/p06.htm and www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/ppus06.htm

(MORE)

For additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical reports and programs, please visit the BJS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has five component bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office for Victims of Crime. Additionally, OJP has two program offices: the Community Capacity Development Office, which incorporates the Weed and Seed strategy, and the Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) Office. More information can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

###

BJS08004