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# Prisoners in 1998

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The total number of prisoners under the jurisdiction of Federal or State adult correctional authorities was 1,302,019 at yearend 1998. During the year the States and the District of Columbia added 49,798 prisoners, and the Federal prison system added 10,068 prisoners. Overall, the Nation's prison population grew 4.8%, which was less than the average annual growth of 6.7% since 1990. In absolute numbers, prison growth during 1998 was equivalent to 1,151 more inmates per week, up from 1,130 per week in 1997.

At yearend 1998, more than 1,825,000 U.S. residents were in either jail or prison. State and Federal prisons housed two-thirds of the incarcerated population. Jails, which are locally operated and typically hold persons awaiting trial and those with sentences of a year or less, held the other third (592,462).

Relative to the number of U.S. residents, the rate of incarceration in prisons at yearend 1998 was 461 sentenced inmates per 100,000 residents — up from 292 in 1990. On December 31, 1998, 1 in every 113 men and 1 in every 1,754 women were sentenced prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal authorities.

## Highlights

December 31	Number of inmates		Sentenced prisoners per 100,000 resident population		Population housed as a percent of highest capacity	
	Federal	State	Federal	State	Federal	State
1990	65,526	708,393	20	272	151%	115%
1995	100,250	1,025,624	32	379	126	114
1996	105,544	1,077,824	33	394	125	116
1997	112,973	1,129,180	35	410	119	115
1998	123,041	1,178,978	38	423	127	113

- During 1998 the number of female prisoners rose by 6.5%, greater than the increase in male prisoners (4.7%). At yearend 1998, 84,427 women were in State or Federal prisons — 6.5% of all prison inmates.
- On December 31, 1998, State prisons were operating at between 13% and 22% above capacity, while Federal prisons were operating at 27% above capacity.
- California (161,904), Texas (144,510), and the Federal system (123,041) together held 1 in every 3 prisoners in the Nation. Fifteen States, each holding fewer than 5,000 inmates, together held less than 4% of the Nation's prisoners.
- Seven jurisdictions had increases of at least 10% in 1998, led by Mississippi (16.7%) and North Dakota (14.8%). Four jurisdictions — Alaska (down 1.6%), Hawaii (-1.1%), Massachusetts (-1.0%), and Maine (-0.5%) — experienced decreases.
- Eighteen States housed inmates in other State or Federal facilities in 1998. Wisconsin had the most inmates in other States (3,028).
- Factors underlying the growth in the State prison population between 1990 and 1997 included —
  - a 39% rise in the number of parole violators returned to prison and a 4% increase in new court commitments.
  - a drop in annual release rates of inmates from 37% in 1990 to 31% in 1997.
  - an increase in the average time served in prison by released inmates (from 22 months in 1990 to 27 months in 1997) and in the time expected to be served by those entering prison (from 38 months to 43 months).
  - a small but growing number (10%) of inmates who will serve 20 or more years in prison before release and 5% who will never be released.
- Analyses of imprisonment rates from 1990 to 1997 reveal —
  - a 49% increase among males and a 71% increase among females in the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents.
  - widespread disparities by race and Hispanic origin. In 1997 the rate among black males in their late twenties reached 8,630 prisoners per 100,000 residents compared to 2,703 among Hispanic males and 868 among white males.

**Table 1. Number of persons held in State or Federal prisons or in local jails, 1990-98**

Year	Total inmates in custody	Number of State and Federal prisoners on December 31		Inmates in local jails on June 30	Incarceration rate <sup>b</sup>
		Jurisdiction <sup>a</sup>	Custody		
1990	1,148,702	773,919	743,382	405,320	461
1991	1,219,014	825,559	792,535	426,479	483
1992	1,295,150	882,500	850,566	444,584	508
1993	1,369,185	970,444	909,381	459,804	531
1994	1,476,621	1,054,702	990,147	486,474	567
1995	1,585,589	1,125,874	1,078,542	507,044	601
1996	1,646,020	1,183,368	1,127,528	518,492	618
1997	1,744,001	1,242,153	1,176,922	567,079	649
1998 <sup>c</sup>	1,825,400	1,302,019	1,232,900	592,462	672
Average annual increase,					
1990 - 98	6.0%	6.7%	6.5%	4.9%	

Note: Jail counts for 1994-98 exclude persons supervised outside of a jail facility.

<sup>a</sup>Includes prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding.

<sup>b</sup>Number of prison and jail inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents at yearend.

<sup>c</sup>The 1998 prison custody count was estimated and rounded to nearest 100.

From yearend 1990 to yearend 1998 —

- The Nation's incarcerated population rose by nearly 676,700 inmates, increasing at an average annual rate of 6.0%.

- State, Federal, and local governments had to accommodate an additional 84,587 inmates per year (or the equivalent of 1,627 new inmates per week).

- The rate of incarceration increased from 1 in every 217 U.S. residents to 1 in every 149.

- The Nation's prison and local jail facilities added space for about 675,270 inmates. By 1998 State prisons were 13% above their highest capacity; Federal prisons 27% above their rated capacity; and local jails 3% below their rated capacity.

**U.S. prison population rose 4.8% during 1998 — the smallest annual growth rate since 1979**

The 1998 prison growth rate of 4.8% was slightly smaller than the percentage increase recorded during 1997 (5.0%) (table 2). The total prison population increased by 59,866 inmates during 1998, slightly higher than in 1997 (up 58,785). Since 1990 the total prison population has grown an average of 63,144 per year, for an overall increase of 528,100 in 8 years.

Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year ("sentenced prisoners") represented 96% of the total prison population at yearend 1998. During the 12-month period, the sentenced prison population grew 4.8% (table 3). The remaining prisoners had sentences of a year or less or were currently unsentenced (that is, awaiting trial in States with combined prison-jail systems).

The sentenced Federal prison population grew at over twice the rate of the sentenced State prison population during 1998 (9.2% compared to 4.4%). The sentenced Federal population grew faster than in 1997 (6.9%), while growth in the sentenced State population was down from 1997 (4.8%).

**Prisoners under military jurisdiction, by branch of service, yearend 1997 and 1998**

Branch of service	Number		Percent change, 1997-98	Percent of prisoners, 1998
	1998	1997		
<b>To which prisoners belonged</b>				
Total	2,426	2,772	-12.5%	100.0%
Air Force	484	575	-15.8	20.0
Army	862	1,063	-18.9	35.3
Marine Corps	682	628	8.6	28.1
Navy	389	490	-20.6	16.0
Coast Guard	9	16	-43.8	0.4
<b>Holding prisoners</b>				
Total	2,426	2,772	-12.5%	100.0%
Air Force	128	103	24.3	5.3
Army	1,115	1,494	-22.7	47.6
Marine Corps	617	571	8.1	25.4
Navy	526	604	-12.9	21.7

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

**At yearend 1998 U.S. military authorities held 2,426 prisoners in 69 facilities**

About 84% of prisoners held by the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps were convicted inmates; 16% were unconvicted persons whose cases had not been tried. Fifty-seven percent of the prisoners (1,377) had sentences of 1 year or more.

At yearend 1998 the Army's Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and five other local or regional Army facilities held almost half (48%) of all inmates under military jurisdiction. The 7 Marine Corps facilities held 25% of all inmates; the 11 Navy facilities, 22% of all inmates; and the 45 Air Force facilities held 5% of all inmates.

The operational capacity of the 69 military confinement facilities totaled 4,588. At yearend 1998 these facilities were operating at 53% of their operational capacity.

On December 31, 1998, the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents was 461. Of the 11 States with rates greater than that for the Nation, 7 were in the South, 3 were in the West, and 1 was in the Midwest. Three States — Minnesota (117), Maine (125), and North Dakota (128) — had rates that were less than a third of the national rate. The District of Columbia, a wholly urban jurisdiction, held 1,913 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents.

Since 1990 the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents has risen from 292 to 461. During this period, incarceration rates rose most in the South (from 316 to 520) and West (from 277 to 417). The rate in the Midwest rose from 239 to 360, and the rate in the Northeast grew from 232 to 328. The number of sentenced Federal prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents increased from 20 to 38.

**Table 2. Change in the State and Federal prison populations, 1990-98**

Year	Number of inmates	Annual increase	
		Number	Annual percent change
1990	773,919		
1991	825,559	51,640	6.7%
1992	882,500	56,941	6.9
1993*	970,444	64,992	7.4
1994	1,054,702	84,258	8.7
1995	1,125,874	71,172	6.7
1996	1,183,368	57,494	5.1
1997	1,242,153	58,785	5.0
1998	1,302,019	59,866	4.8
Average annual increase, 1990-98		63,144	6.7%

Note: All counts are for December 31 of each year and may reflect revisions of previously reported numbers.

\*Includes the jurisdiction populations in Massachusetts and Texas for the first time. The 1993 count (947,492), excluding the noncustody population in Texas and Massachusetts, may be used for comparisons.

**Table 3. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by region and jurisdiction, yearend 1997 and 1998**

Region and jurisdiction	Total			Sentenced to more than 1 year			Incarceration rate, 1998 <sup>a</sup>
	Advance 1998	1997	Percent change, 1997-98	Advance 1998	1997	Percent change, 1997-98	
<b>U.S. total</b>	1,302,019	1,242,153	4.8%	1,252,830	1,195,498	4.8%	461
Federal State	123,041	112,973	8.9	103,682	94,987	9.2	38
	1,178,978	1,129,180	4.4	1,149,148	1,100,511	4.4	423
<b>Northeast</b>	178,225	171,237	4.1%	169,731	162,744	4.3%	328
Connecticut <sup>b</sup>	17,605	17,241	2.1	12,193	11,920	2.3	372
Maine	1,612	1,620	-0.5	1,562	1,542	1.3	125
Massachusetts <sup>c</sup>	11,832	11,947	-1.0	10,739	10,847	-1.0	275
New Hampshire	2,169	2,168	0.0	2,169	2,168	0.0	182
New Jersey <sup>e</sup>	31,121	28,361	9.7	31,121	28,361	9.7	382
New York	72,638	70,295	3.3	72,289	70,021	3.2	397
Pennsylvania	36,377	34,964	4.0	36,373	34,957	4.1	303
Rhode Island <sup>b</sup>	3,445	3,371	2.2	2,175	2,100	3.6	220
Vermont <sup>b</sup>	1,426	1,270	12.3	1,110	828	34.1	188
<b>Midwest</b>	228,177	218,369	4.5%	226,788	217,383	4.3%	360
Illinois <sup>d,e</sup>	43,051	40,788	5.5	43,051	40,788	5.5	357
Indiana	19,197	17,903	7.2	19,016	17,730	7.3	321
Iowa <sup>d,e</sup>	7,394	6,938	6.6	7,394	6,938	6.6	258
Kansas <sup>e</sup>	8,183	7,911	3.4	8,183	7,911	3.4	310
Michigan	45,879	44,771	2.5	45,879	44,771	2.5	466
Minnesota	5,572	5,326	4.6	5,557	5,306	4.7	117
Missouri	24,974	23,998	4.1	24,949	23,998	4.0	457
Nebraska	3,676	3,402	8.1	3,588	3,329	7.8	215
North Dakota	915	797	14.8	814	715	13.8	128
Ohio <sup>e</sup>	48,450	48,016	0.9	48,450	48,016	0.9	432
South Dakota	2,435	2,242	8.6	2,430	2,242	8.4	329
Wisconsin	18,451	16,277	13.4	17,477	15,639	11.8	334
<b>South</b>	511,525	490,493	4.3%	499,184	479,278	4.2%	520
Alabama	23,326	22,290	4.6	22,655	21,680	4.5	519
Arkansas	10,638	10,021	6.2	10,561	9,936	6.3	415
Delaware <sup>b</sup>	5,558	5,435	2.3	3,211	3,264	-1.6	429
Dist. of Col. <sup>b</sup>	9,949	9,353	6.4	9,949	9,353	6.4	1,913
Florida <sup>d</sup>	67,224	64,626	4.0	67,193	64,574	4.1	447
Georgia <sup>d</sup>	39,262	36,505	7.6	38,758	35,787	8.3	502
Kentucky	14,987	14,600	2.7	14,987	14,600	2.7	379
Louisiana	32,227	29,265	10.1	32,227	29,265	10.1	736
Maryland	22,572	22,232	1.5	21,540	21,088	2.1	418
Mississippi	16,678	14,296	16.7	15,855	13,676	15.9	574
North Carolina	31,811	31,612	0.6	27,193	27,567	-1.4	358
Oklahoma <sup>e</sup>	20,892	20,542	1.7	20,892	20,542	1.7	622
South Carolina	22,115	21,173	4.4	21,236	20,264	4.8	550
Tennessee <sup>e</sup>	17,738	16,659	6.5	17,738	16,659	6.5	325
Texas <sup>e</sup>	144,510	140,351	3.0	144,510	140,351	3.0	724
Virginia	28,560	28,385	0.6	27,191	27,524	-1.2	399
West Virginia	3,478	3,148	10.5	3,478	3,148	10.5	192
<b>West</b>	261,051	249,081	4.8%	253,445	241,106	5.1%	417
Alaska <sup>b</sup>	4,097	4,165	-1.6	2,541	2,571	-1.2	413
Arizona <sup>d</sup>	25,311	23,484	7.8	23,955	22,353	7.2	507
California	161,904	155,790	3.9	159,109	152,739	4.2	483
Colorado	14,312	13,461	6.3	14,312	13,461	6.3	357
Hawaii <sup>b</sup>	4,924	4,978	-1.1	3,670	3,448	6.4	307
Idaho	4,083	3,911	4.4	4,083	3,911	4.4	330
Montana	2,734	2,517	8.6	2,734	2,517	8.6	310
Nevada	9,651	9,024	6.9	9,651	9,024	6.9	542
New Mexico	4,985	4,688	6.3	4,732	4,450	6.3	271
Oregon	8,927	7,999	11.6	8,596	7,589	13.3	260
Utah	4,391	4,301	2.1	4,337	4,280	1.3	205
Washington	14,161	13,214	7.2	14,154	13,214	7.1	247
Wyoming	1,571	1,549	1.4	1,571	1,549	1.4	327

<sup>a</sup>The number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 U.S. residents.

<sup>b</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include total jail and prison population.

<sup>c</sup>The incarceration rate includes an estimated 6,200 inmates sentenced to more than 1 year but held in local jails or houses of corrections.

<sup>d</sup>Population figures are based on custody counts.

<sup>e</sup>"Sentenced to more than 1 year" includes some inmates "sentenced to 1 year or less."

**Table 4. Change in the number of sentenced prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, 1990-98**

Region and jurisdiction	Population difference	Percent change	Average annual percent change
<b>U.S. total</b>	505,712	67.7%	6.7%
Federal	53,279	105.7%	9.4%
State	452,433	64.9	6.5
<b>Northeast</b>	50,668	42.6%	4.5%
Connecticut	4,422	56.9	5.8
Maine	82	5.5	0.7
Massachusetts <sup>a</sup>	2,840	36.0	3.9
New Hampshire	827	61.6	6.2
New Jersey	9,993	47.3	5.0
New York	17,394	31.7	3.5
Pennsylvania	14,092	63.2	6.3
Rhode Island	589	37.1	4.0
Vermont	429	63.0	6.3
<b>Midwest</b>	81,207	55.8%	5.7%
Illinois	15,535	56.5	5.8
Indiana <sup>a</sup>	6,401	50.7	5.3
Iowa	3,427	86.4	8.1
Kansas	2,408	41.7	4.5
Michigan <sup>a</sup>	11,612	33.9	3.7
Minnesota	2,381	75.0	7.2
Missouri	10,006	67.0	6.6
Nebraska	1,302	57.0	5.8
North Dakota	379	87.1	8.1
Ohio	16,628	52.3	5.4
South Dakota	1,089	81.2	7.7
Wisconsin	10,039	--	--
<b>South</b>	216,593	76.6%	7.4%
Alabama	7,290	47.4	5.0
Arkansas	3,287	45.2	4.8
Delaware	970	43.3	4.6
Dist. of Col. <sup>a</sup>	3,151	46.4	4.9
Florida	22,813	51.4	5.3
Georgia	17,087	78.8	7.5
Kentucky	5,964	66.1	6.5
Louisiana	13,628	73.3	7.1
Maryland	4,806	28.7	3.2
Mississippi	7,771	96.1	8.8
North Carolina <sup>a</sup>	9,429	53.1	5.5
Oklahoma	8,607	70.1	6.9
South Carolina	5,028	31.0	3.4
Tennessee	7,350	70.8	6.9
Texas <sup>b</sup>	87,726	154.5	12.4
Virginia	9,773	56.1	5.7
West Virginia	1,913	122.2	10.5
<b>West</b>	103,965	69.6%	6.8%
Alaska	690	37.3	4.0
Arizona	10,174	73.8	7.2
California <sup>a</sup>	64,987	69.0	6.8
Colorado	6,641	86.6	8.1
Hawaii	1,962	114.9	10.0
Idaho	2,122	108.2	9.6
Montana	1,309	91.9	8.5
Nevada	3,828	65.7	6.5
New Mexico	1,665	54.3	5.6
Oregon	2,104	32.4	3.6
Utah	1,863	75.3	7.3
Washington	6,159	77.0	7.4
Wyoming <sup>a</sup>	461	41.5	4.4

--Not calculated because of changes in reporting procedures.

<sup>a</sup>Growth may be slightly overestimated due to a change in reporting from custody to jurisdiction counts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes 6,742 "paper-ready" State inmates in held in local jails in 1990.

### Seven States reported increases of at least 10% during 1998

Between January 1 and December 31, Mississippi experienced the largest increase (up 16.7%), followed by North Dakota (14.8%), Wisconsin (13.4%), Vermont (12.3%), Oregon (11.6%), West Virginia (10.5%), and Louisiana (10.1%). Four States experienced a decline in prison populations. Alaska had the largest decline (down 1.6%), followed by Hawaii (down 1.1%), Massachusetts (down 1.0%), and Maine (down 0.5%).

In absolute numbers of inmates, 11 jurisdictions grew by at least 2,000. The Federal system (up 10,068 inmates), experienced the largest growth, followed by California (up 6,114), Texas (up 4,159), Louisiana (up 2,962), and New Jersey (up 2,760). These five jurisdictions, which incarcerated nearly 40% of all prisoners, accounted for 44% of the total growth during 1997.

### Growth in sentenced State prisoners showed little regional variation

During 1998 the number of sentenced State and Federal prisoners grew by an additional 1,102 inmates per week. The 1998 average weekly increase was 15 inmates greater than the weekly increase in 1997 and 71 greater than in 1996.

Unlike recent years, there was little regional variation in the growth of the sentenced State prison population during 1998. The Western States had the highest percentage increase, with a gain of 5.1% in the number of sentenced prisoners, followed closely by the Midwest and Northeast (both rose 4.3%), and the South (4.2%).

Twenty-three States recorded higher growth rates of sentenced prisoners in 1998 than in 1997. Of these, four recorded growth rates over 10% in 1998: Vermont (34.1%), Mississippi (15.9%), North Dakota (13.8%), and Louisiana (10.1%). Five States reported increases of less than 2% during 1998, including New Hampshire, which reported an increase of one sentenced inmate. Delaware (-1.6%), North Carolina (-1.4%), Alaska and Virginia (both -1.2%), and Massachusetts (-1.0%) experienced declines.

Since 1990 the sentenced inmate population in State prisons has grown 64.9% (table 4). During this period 14 States reported increases of at least 75%, led by Texas (up 155%) and West Virginia (up 122%). Maine was the only State to report an increase of less than 10% (up 5.5%). During this time the Federal system reported an increase of 106% — 53,279 additional inmates with sentences of more than 1 year.

**Table 5. The 10 highest and lowest jurisdictions for selected characteristics of the prison population, yearend 1998**

Prison population	Number of inmates	Incarceration rates, 1998	Rate per 100,000 State residents <sup>a</sup>	1-year growth, 1997-98	Percent change	Growth since 1990	Average percent change <sup>b</sup>
<b>10 highest:</b>							
California	161,904	Louisiana	736	Mississippi	16.7%	Texas	12.4%
Texas	144,510	Texas	724	North Dakota	14.8	West Virginia	10.5
Federal	123,041	Oklahoma	622	Wisconsin	13.4	Hawaii	10.0
New York	72,638	Mississippi	574	Vermont	12.3	Idaho	9.6
Florida	67,224	South Carolina	550	Oregon	11.6	Federal	9.4
Ohio	48,450	Nevada	542	West Virginia	10.5	Mississippi	8.8
Michigan	45,879	Alabama	519	Louisiana	10.1	Montana	8.5
Illinois	43,051	Arizona	507	New Jersey	9.7	North Dakota	8.1
Georgia	39,252	Georgia	502	Federal	8.9	Colorado	8.1
Pennsylvania	36,377	California	483	South Dakota	8.6	Iowa	8.1
<b>10 lowest:</b>							
North Dakota	915	Minnesota	117	Alaska	-1.6%	Maine	0.7%
Vermont	1,426	Maine	125	Hawaii	-1.1	Maryland	3.2
Wyoming	1,571	North Dakota	128	Massachusetts	-1.0	South Carolina	3.4
Maine	1,612	New Hampshire	182	Maine	-0.5	New York	3.5
New Hampshire	2,169	Vermont	188	New Hampshire	0.0	Oregon	3.6
South Dakota	2,435	West Virginia	192	North Carolina	0.6	Michigan	3.7
Montana	2,734	Utah	205	Virginia	0.6	Massachusetts	3.9
West Virginia	3,445	Nebraska	215	Ohio	0.9	Rhode Island	4.0
Rhode Island	3,478	Rhode Island	220	Wyoming	1.4	Alaska	4.0
Nebraska	3,676	Washington	247	Mississippi	1.5	Wyoming	4.4

<sup>a</sup>The number of prisoners with a sentence of more than 1 year per 100,000 residents in the State population. The Federal Bureau of Prisons and the District of Columbia are excluded.

<sup>b</sup>The average annual percent change from 1990 to 1998.

**Among States, Louisiana had the highest incarceration rate; Minnesota, the lowest**

At yearend 1998 the 10 jurisdictions with the largest prison populations had under their jurisdiction 782,326 inmates, or 60% of the Nation's total prison population (table 5). California (161,904), Texas (144,510), and the Federal system (123,041) accounted for a third of the population. The 10 States with the smallest prison populations each held fewer than 4,000 inmates. Collectively, these States held only 1.8% of the Nation's total prison population.

Louisiana had the highest prison incarceration rate (736 sentenced inmates per 100,000 residents), followed by Texas (724), Oklahoma (622), Mississippi (574), and South Carolina (550). Six States had prison incarceration rates below 200, led by Minnesota (117), Maine (125), and North Dakota (128).

Since 1990 three States had average annual prison population increases of at least 10%: Texas (12.4%), West Virginia (10.5%), and Hawaii (10.0%).

Seven States had average annual growth rates of less than 4%, led by Maine (0.7%), Maryland (3.2%), and South Carolina (3.4%).

**Female prisoner population nearly doubled since 1990**

During 1998 the number of women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal prison authorities increased 6.5%, from 79,268 to 84,427, outpacing the rise in the number of men for the third consecutive year (table 6). The number of men grew from 1,162,885 to 1,217,592, an increase of 4.7%.

Since 1990 the annual rate of growth of the female inmate population has averaged 8.5%, higher than the 6.6% average increase in the number of male inmates. While the total number of male prisoners has grown 67% since 1990, the number of female prisoners has increased 92%. By yearend 1998 women accounted for 6.5% of all prisoners nationwide, up from 5.7% in 1990.

Relative to their number in the U.S. resident population, men were 16 times

more likely than women to be incarcerated in a State or Federal prison. At yearend 1998 there were 57 sentenced female inmates per 100,000 women in the United States, compared to 885 sentenced male inmates per 100,000 men.

**Table 6. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by gender, yearend 1990, 1997, and 1998**

	Men	Women
<b>All inmates</b>		
Advance 1998	1,217,592	84,427
Final 1997	1,162,885	79,268
Final 1990	729,840	44,065
Percent change, 1997-98		4.7%
Average annual 1990-98	6.6	8.5
<b>Sentenced to more than 1 year</b>		
Advance 1998	1,174,124	78,706
Final 1997	1,121,663	73,835
Percent change, 1997-98		4.7%
<b>Incarceration rate*</b>		
<b>1998</b>	885	57
<b>1990</b>	572	32

\*The number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 residents on December 31.

**Table 7. Women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, 1990-98**

	Number of female inmates		Percent change		Incarceration rate, 1998 <sup>b</sup>
	1998	1990	1997-98	Average, 1990-98 <sup>a</sup>	
<b>U.S. total</b>	84,427	44,065	6.5%	8.5%	57
Federal	9,186	5,011	10.6%	7.9%	5
State	75,241	39,054	6.0	8.5	51
<b>Northeast</b>	9,367	6,293	3.6%	5.1%	31
Connecticut	1,357	683	-3.1	9.0	43
Maine	63	44	1.6	4.6	9
Massachusetts <sup>c</sup>	750	582	2.3	3.2	13
New Hampshire	116	44	6.4	12.9	19
New Jersey	1,653	1,041	17.7	6.0	39
New York	3,631	2,691	-0.3	3.8	38
Pennsylvania	1,517	1,006	6.5	5.3	24
Rhode Island	235	166	10.3	4.4	18
Vermont	45	36	-15.1	2.8	9
<b>Midwest</b>	13,684	7,521	7.0%	7.8%	42
Illinois	2,646	1,183	8.9	10.6	43
Indiana <sup>c</sup>	1,198	681	11.9	7.3	39
Iowa	491	212	-7.0	11.1	33
Kansas	523	284	9.9	7.9	39
Michigan <sup>c</sup>	2,052	1,688	-0.2	2.5	41
Minnesota	288	159	11.6	7.7	12
Missouri	1,880	777	11.0	11.7	67
Nebraska	254	145	14.4	7.3	28
North Dakota	69	20	11.3	16.7	19
Ohio	2,912	1,947	2.5	5.2	50
South Dakota	202	77	19.5	12.8	54
Wisconsin	1,169	348	18.4	--	42
<b>South</b>	33,345	15,366	5.3%	10.2%	65
Alabama	1,525	955	12.1	6.0	64
Arkansas	696	435	13.9	6.1	52
Delaware	440	226	14.9	8.7	51
District of Col. <sup>c</sup>	478	606	17.4	-2.9	173
Florida	3,526	2,664	3.1	3.6	45
Georgia	2,474	1,243	8.4	9.0	61
Kentucky	1,046	479	-0.6	10.3	51
Louisiana	2,126	775	13.8	13.4	94
Maryland	1,140	877	2.9	3.3	39
Mississippi	1,213	448	26.1	13.3	77
North Carolina <sup>c</sup>	1,932	945	3.9	9.4	35
Oklahoma	2,091	1,071	1.9	8.7	122
South Carolina	1,412	1,053	8.4	3.7	63
Tennessee	886	390	11.0	10.8	31
Texas <sup>d</sup>	10,343	2,196	0.4	--	102
Virginia	1,806	927	5.6	8.7	47
West Virginia	211	76	13.4	13.6	23
<b>West</b>	18,845	9,874	7.9%	8.4%	58
Alaska	302	128	-0.7	11.3	54
Arizona	1,780	835	14.1	9.9	66
California <sup>c</sup>	11,694	6,502	7.1	7.6	67
Colorado	1,070	433	12.8	12.0	53
Hawaii	430	171	-17.0	12.2	60
Idaho	321	120	22.1	13.1	52
Montana	248	76	48.5	15.9	56
Nevada	743	406	6.9	7.8	85
New Mexico	315	193	-15.8	6.3	32
Oregon	523	362	16.2	4.7	29
Utah	270	125	26.8	10.1	25
Washington	1,018	435	10.2	11.2	35
Wyoming <sup>c</sup>	131	88	-3.7	5.1	55

--Not calculated because of changes in reporting procedures.

<sup>a</sup>The average annual percentage increase from 1990 to 1998.

<sup>b</sup>The number of female prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 U.S. residents.

<sup>c</sup>Growth from 1990 to 1998 may be slightly overestimated due to a change in reporting from custody to jurisdiction counts.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes an unknown number of female inmates in 1990 who were "paper-ready" State inmates held in local jails.

Over a third of all female prisoners were held in the three largest jurisdictions: California (11,694), Texas (10,343), and the Federal system (9,186) (table 7). Oklahoma (with 122 sentenced female inmates per 100,000 female State residents) and Texas (with 102) had the highest female incarceration rates. Maine and Vermont (both with 9 sentenced female prisoners per 100,000 female residents) had the lowest incarceration rates.

Since 1990 the female prisoner population grew at annual average rate of at least 10% in 18 States. North Dakota reported the highest average annual increase in female prisoners (16.7%), while the District of Columbia was the only jurisdiction to report fewer female prisoners since 1990, averaging a 2.9% annual decline.

**Table 8. State prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding, by State, yearend 1997 and 1998**

	State prisoners held in local jails			
	Number		As a percent of State inmates	
	1998	1997	1998	1997
<b>U.S. total</b>	24,925	22,941	2.1%	2.0%
New Jersey	3,811	2,864	12.2%	10.1%
Colorado	2,716	1,886	19.0	14.0
New York	2,288	918	3.1	1.3
Virginia	2,169	3,753	7.6	13.2
Tennessee	2,119	1,428	11.9	8.6
Mississippi	1,639	1,463	9.8	9.5
Indiana	1,408	1,323	7.3	7.4
Alabama	1,403	1,824	6.0	8.2
New Mexico	1,230	557	24.7	11.9
Kentucky	1,073	1,144	7.2	7.8
Oklahoma	920	802	4.4%	3.9%
Utah	779	348	17.7	8.1
West Virginia	651	775	18.7	24.2
Massachusetts	509	484	4.3	4.1
Arkansas	432	1,376	4.1	13.7
South Carolina	377	400	1.7	1.9
Wisconsin	296	284	1.6	1.9
North Carolina	255	282	0.8	0.9
Michigan*	208	151	0.5	0.3
Arizona*	197	211	0.8	0.9
Montana	144	217	5.3%	9.7%
Idaho	77	31	1.9	0.8
Minnesota	67	50	1.2	0.9
New Hampshire	54	66	2.5	3.0
Wyoming	41	29	2.6	1.9
Pennsylvania	27	25	0.1	0.1
North Dakota	21	68	2.3	8.5
Oregon	14	72	0.2	0.9
Missouri	0	55	--	0.2
Alaska	0	55	--	1.3

Note: Excludes 10,795 Louisiana inmates at yearend 1997 and 13,211 inmates at yearend 1998 held in local jails as a result of a partnership with local authorities. See *Jurisdiction notes*.

--Not calculated.

\*In States without jail backups in the count, the percentage is based on the total of State inmates in jail and prison.

## Local jails held over 24,000 State prisoners because of crowding

At the end of 1998, 30 States reported a total of 24,925 State prisoners held in local jails or other facilities because of crowding in State facilities (table 8). These inmates held in local jails represent 2.1% of all State prisoners, up slightly from 2.0% in 1997.

New Mexico and West Virginia had the largest percentage of their inmate population housed in local jails, 24.7% and 18.7% respectively. Three other States — Utah (17.7%), New Jersey (12.2%), and Tennessee (11.9%) — had at least 10% of their population housed in local jail facilities.

In addition to housing inmates in local jails, 18 States eased prison crowding by placing inmates in other States or in Federal facilities. On December 31, 1998, 11,105 prisoners nationwide were held under such arrangements — representing about 1% of all State prisoners. Wisconsin placed the most inmates (3,028), followed by the District of Columbia (2,660) and Michigan (1,317). The District of Columbia (26.7%), Hawaii (23.8%), and Arkansas (21.6%) had more than 20% of their prison population housed in facilities of other States or the Federal system.

States housing prisoners in other States or Federal facilities	Prisoners held in other States or Federal facilities	
	Number	As a percent of all State prisoners
U.S. total	11,105	0.9%
Wisconsin	3,028	16.4
Dist. of Col.	2,660	26.7
Michigan	1,317	2.9
Hawaii	1,174	23.8
Arkansas	887	21.6
Montana	394	14.4
Delaware	300	5.4
Vermont	247	17.3
Idaho	200	4.9
Indiana	184	1.0
Massachusetts	173	1.5
Alabama	114	0.5
Iowa	100	1.3
Wyoming	100	6.4
Oregon	80	0.9
New Hampshire	79	3.6
North Dakota	50	5.5
Colorado	18	0.1

## Prison capacity measures vary

The extent of prison crowding is difficult to determine because of the absence of uniform measures for defining capacity. Jurisdictions apply a variety of capacity measures to reflect both the available space to house inmates and the ability to staff and operate an institution. To estimate the capacity of their prisons, jurisdictions were asked to supply three measures for yearend 1998: rated, operational, and design capacities. These measures were defined as follows:

*Rated capacity* is the number of beds or inmates assigned by a rating official to institutions within the jurisdiction.

*Operational capacity* is the number of inmates that can be accommodated, based on a facility's staff, existing programs, and services.

*Design capacity* is the number of inmates that planners or architects intended for the facility.

Of the 52 reporting jurisdictions, 30 supplied a rated capacity; 43, an operational capacity; and 35, a design capacity (table 9). Twenty-two jurisdictions provided only 1 measure or the same figure for each measure they reported. For the 30 jurisdictions with more than 1 reported type of capacity, estimates of population as a percent of capacity are based on the highest and lowest figures provided.

### Prisoners in custody of correctional authorities in the U.S. Territories, yearend 1997 and 1998

	Total			Sentenced to more than 1 year			
	Advance 1998	Final 1997	Percent change, 1997-98	Advance 1998	Final 1997	Percent change, 1997-98	Incarceration rate, 1998*
Total	17,824	15,762	13.1%	13,406	11,790	13.7%	315
American Samoa	112	102	9.8	95	92	3.3	153
Guam	629	464	35.6	272	301	-9.6	182
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	112	63	77.8	52	63	-17.5	78
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico	16,524	14,716	12.3	12,747	11,097	14.9	330
U.S. Virgin Islands	447	417	7.2	240	237	1.3	203

\*The number of prisoners with a sentence of more than 1 year per 100,000 persons in the resident population. Midyear population estimates were provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, International Data Base.

### U.S. Territories held nearly 18,000 inmates in 1998

The U.S. Territories and Commonwealths — American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands — reported 17,824 inmates under the jurisdiction of their prison systems at yearend 1998 — an increase of 13.1% since 1997.

Prisoners with a sentence of more than 1 year totaled 13,406 (or three-quarters of the total territorial prison population). Since 1995, the number of sentenced prisoners held in U.S. Territories has grown 40%, compared to the 15% increase in the number of sentenced State prisoners.

Relative to the resident populations in the Territories, the rate of incarceration was 315 prisoners per 100,000 residents — over two-thirds of the combined rate of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Of the 5 Territories, the Northern Mariana Islands had the lowest prison incarceration rate (78 inmates per 100,000 residents), while Puerto Rico (with 330) had the highest rate.

Puerto Rico, the largest of the Territories, had the most sentenced prisoners (12,747 at yearend 1998), up from 11,097 in 1997. In 1998, 24 States and the District of Columbia had fewer sentenced inmates than Puerto Rico; 23 States had equal or lower incarceration rates.

**Table 9. Reported Federal and State prison capacities, yearend 1998**

Region and jurisdiction	Type of capacity measure			Population as a percent of —	
	Rated	Operational	Design	Highest capacity <sup>a</sup>	Lowest capacity <sup>a</sup>
Federal <sup>a</sup>	86,315	...	...	127%	127%
<b>Northeast</b>					
Connecticut <sup>c</sup>	...	...	...	...	...
Maine	1,460	1,629	1,460	99%	110%
Massachusetts	...	...	9,162	122	122
New Hampshire	1,841	1,864	1,744	109	117
New Jersey <sup>b</sup>	...	...	17,282	158	158
New York	60,879	65,717	53,409	107	132
Pennsylvania <sup>b</sup>	24,247	30,992	24,247	117	150
Rhode Island	3,858	3,858	3,858	89	89
Vermont	1,140	1,140	1,023	103	115
<b>Midwest</b>					
Illinois	32,062	32,062	27,342	134%	157%
Indiana	13,983	17,119	...	101	123
Iowa	5,701	5,701	5,701	130	130
Kansas	8,189	...	...	100	100
Michigan <sup>b</sup>	...	44,804	...	99	99
Minnesota <sup>b</sup>	5,567	5,724	5,724	96	99
Missouri <sup>b</sup>	...	26,302	...	95	95
Nebraska <sup>b</sup>	...	2,963	2,371	124	155
North Dakota <sup>b</sup>	1,005	952	1,005	84	89
Ohio	37,245	...	...	130	130
South Dakota <sup>b</sup>	...	2,470	...	99	99
Wisconsin <sup>b</sup>	...	11,136	...	136	136
<b>South</b>					
Alabama	21,800	21,800	21,800	100%	100%
Arkansas <sup>b</sup>	10,208	10,208	10,208	100	100
Delaware <sup>b</sup>	...	4,206	3,192	125	165
District of Columbia <sup>d</sup>	7,973	7,289	...	91	100
Florida <sup>b</sup>	77,370	70,785	52,407	87	128
Georgia <sup>b</sup>	...	39,320	...	100	100
Kentucky	11,428	11,180	7,421	122	187
Louisiana <sup>b</sup>	19,016	18,975	...	100	100
Maryland <sup>b</sup>	...	22,688	...	99	99
Mississippi <sup>b</sup>	...	13,916	14,649	103	108
North Carolina <sup>b</sup>	27,866	...	27,866	113	113
Oklahoma	...	21,578	...	93	93
South Carolina <sup>b</sup>	...	22,595	21,265	96	102
Tennessee <sup>b</sup>	16,130	15,778	...	97	99
Texas	148,756	148,756	151,430	95	97
Virginia <sup>p</sup>	29,171	29,171	29,171	90	90
West Virginia	2,698	2,827	2,695	100	105
<b>West</b>					
Alaska	2,603	2,691	2,603	119%	123%
Arizona	...	23,036	23,036	110	110
California	...	...	79,875	203	203
Colorado <sup>b</sup>	...	9,842	8,037	118	144
Hawaii	...	3,122	2,197	120	171
Idaho <sup>b</sup>	3,167	3,991	3,167	95	120
Montana	...	1,748	1,244	126	178
Nevada <sup>b</sup>	9,251	...	6,820	104	142
New Mexico	...	3,447	...	109	109
Oregon <sup>b</sup>	...	8,646	...	102	102
Utah	...	4,280	4,462	81	84
Washington <sup>b</sup>	8,902	11,575	11,575	122	159
Wyoming	1,231	1,243	1,047	115	137

... Data not available.

<sup>a</sup>Population counts exclude jail backups and inmates held in other States.

<sup>b</sup>See NPS jurisdiction notes.

<sup>c</sup>Connecticut no longer reports capacity because of a law passed in 1995.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes DC inmates held in State or Federal facilities.

**Most jurisdictions were operating above capacity**

Prisons generally require reserve capacity to operate efficiently. Dormitories and cells need to be maintained and repaired periodically, special housing is needed for protective custody and disciplinary cases, and space may be needed to cope with emergencies.

At yearend 1998, 16 States and the District of Columbia reported that they were operating at or below 99% of their highest capacity. Thirty-seven States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal prison system reported operating at 100% or more of their lowest capacity. Utah, which was operating at 84% of its lowest capacity, had the least crowded prison system. California, operating at over twice its highest reported capacity (203%), had the most crowded system.

**Table 10. State prison population as a percent of capacity, yearend 1998**

	State prisons <sup>a</sup>
Highest capacity	1,007,153
Lowest capacity	933,478
<b>Net change in capacity, 1997-98</b>	
Highest	59,403
Lowest	58,686
<b>Population as a percent of capacity<sup>b</sup></b>	
Highest	
1990	115
1995	114
1996	116
1997	115
1998	113
Lowest	
1990	127
1995	125
1996	124
1997	124
1998	122

Note: States were asked to report their rated, operational, and design capacities. Data reflect the highest and lowest of the three capacities.

<sup>a</sup>Data include estimated capacity figures for Connecticut at yearend 1995-98.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes inmates sentenced to prison but held in local jails because of crowding.



By yearend 1998 the Federal prison system was estimated to be operating at 27% over capacity, increasing since yearend 1997 (19%). Overall, State prisons were estimated to be operating at 13% above their highest capacity, down from the 15% for last year (table 10). Based on the lowest capacity figures, State prisons were operating at 22% over capacity at yearend 1998, continuing the steady decline from 31% in 1992.

### An increasing percentage of prisoners are black or Hispanic

	Percent of prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction*	
	1990	1997
Total	100.0%	100.0%
White	50.1	47.9
Black	48.6	49.4
American Indian/ Alaska Native	0.9	1.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.4	0.8

\*Based on adjusted NPS counts.

Between 1990 and 1997 the number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year rose by more than 455,500 — or 62% (table 11). The number of white males increased by 54%, the number of black males by 61%, the number of white females and black females by 80%. At yearend 1997 (the latest available data), there were more black males in State or Federal prisons (548,900) than white males (541,700).

Relative to the number of U.S. residents, the number of sentenced prisoners rose by 50% (from 297 prisoners per 100,000 residents in 1990 to 445 per 100,000 residents in

1997) (table 12). Blacks were at least 6 times more likely than whites to be in State or Federal prison at yearend 1997, unchanged from 1990.

Hispanic inmates, who may be of any race, totaled an estimated 213,100 at yearend 1997 — increasing 64% from 1990 (table 13). The number of Hispanic males rose 62%, while the number of Hispanic females rose 97%. During the 7-year period, the Hispanic female incarceration rate rose 55% (from 56 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 Hispanic female residents to

87), while the Hispanic male rate rose 25% (from 1,016 to 1,272).

Nearly 12,000 American Indians were held in State or Federal prisons on December 31, 1997 (table 14). Excluding inmates held in 69 Indian Country detention facilities, run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs or tribal authorities, there were 492 sentenced inmates per 100,000 American Indians. Among Indian women the incarceration rate was 80 per 100,000, 2½ times the rate among white women.

**Table 11. Number of sentenced prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction, by gender and race, 1990, 1995-97**

Year	Total	Male			Female		
		All <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	Black <sup>b</sup>	All <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	Black <sup>b</sup>
1990	739,980	699,416	350,700	340,300	40,564	20,200	19,700
1995	1,085,022	1,021,059	487,400	509,800	63,963	30,500	31,900
1996	1,137,722	1,068,123	511,300	528,600	69,599	33,800	34,000
1997	1,195,498	1,121,663	541,700	548,900	73,835	36,300	35,500

Note: Previous estimates for 1996 by gender and race have been revised. Sentenced prisoners are those with a sentence of more than 1 year.

<sup>a</sup>Includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and other racial groups.

<sup>b</sup>The numbers for gender and race were estimated and rounded to the nearest 100.

**Table 12. Number of sentenced prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction, per 100,000 residents, by gender and race, 1990, 1995-97**

Year	Total	Male			Female		
		All <sup>a</sup>	White	Black	All <sup>a</sup>	White	Black
1990	297	564	338	2,234	31	19	117
1995	411	781	449	3,095	47	27	176
1996	427	810	468	3,164	51	30	185
1997	445	841	491	3,253	53	32	192

Note: Based on estimates of the U.S. resident population on July 1 of each year and adjusted for the census undercount. See *Methodology* for further details.

<sup>a</sup>Includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and other racial groups.

**Table 13. Number of sentenced Hispanic prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction, by gender, 1990, 1995-97**

Year	Number of sentenced Hispanic prisoners			Sentenced prisoners per 100,000 Hispanic residents		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1990	130,000	123,500	6,500	548	1,016	56
1995	190,100	181,300	8,800	675	1,264	64
1996	200,400	189,300	11,100	688	1,279	78
1997	213,100	200,300	12,800	698	1,272	87

Note: Sentenced prisoners are those with a sentence of more than 1 year. The total number of Hispanic inmates was estimated in each year by multiplying the percent identifying as Hispanic in the 1991 and 1997 surveys by the NPS sentenced inmate counts. Estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100.

**Table 14. Number of sentenced American Indian prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction, by gender, 1990, 1995-97**

Year	Number of sentenced American Indian prisoners			Sentenced prisoners per 100,000 American Indian residents		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1990	6,000	5,600	400	275	516	35
1995	9,800	9,000	800	419	769	72
1996	11,000	10,100	900	462	850	77
1997	11,900	10,900	1,000	492	905	80

Note: The number of American Indian inmates was based on reports in NPS, which exclude those held in detention facilities in Indian country. The number with sentences of more than 1 year have been estimated and rounded to the nearest 100.

**Middle-aged inmates comprise a growing part of the Nation's prison populations**

	Percent of inmates held in State or Federal prison*	
	1991	1997
Total	100.0%	100.0%
17 or younger	0.6	0.4
18-19	2.9	2.6
20-24	17.4	15.8
25-29	23.6	18.7
30-34	21.3	19.3
35-39	14.4	17.5
40-44	9.1	12.0
45-54	7.2	10.3
55 or older	3.4	3.3

\*Based on data from the 1991 and 1997 surveys of State and Federal prison inmates.

The Nation's prison population is aging. Based on data from the 1997 surveys of State and Federal prison inmates, 30% were between the ages of 35 and 44, compared with 23% in 1991. This rise was offset by a decline in the percentage of inmates 18 to 34. The percentage of inmates age 55 or older did not change — about 3% in both years. Nearly half of 1% were under age 18 in 1997, unchanged from 1991.

**An estimated 7% of black males in their twenties and thirties were in prison in 1997**

When incarceration rates are estimated separately by age group, black males in their twenties and thirties are found to have very high rates relative to other groups (table 15). Expressed in terms of percentages, 8.6% of black non-Hispanic males age 25 to 29 were in prison in 1997, compared to 2.7% of Hispanic males and about 0.9% of white males in the same age group. Although incarceration rates drop with age, the percentage of black males age 45 to 54 in prison in 1997 was still nearly 2.8% — larger than the highest rate among Hispanic males (age 25 to 29) and nearly 3 times larger than the highest rate (0.9%) among white males (age 30 to 34).

Female incarceration rates, though substantially lower than male incarceration rates at every age, reveal similar racial and ethnic disparities. Black non-Hispanic females (with an incarceration rate of 200 per 100,000) were more than twice as likely as

Hispanic females (87 per 100,000) and 8 times more likely than white non-Hispanic females (25 per 100,000) to be in prison in 1997. These differences among white, black, and Hispanic females were consistent across all age groups.

**Table 15. Number of sentenced prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction per 100,000 residents, by gender, race, Hispanic origin, and age, 1997**

Age	Number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents of each group							
	Male				Female			
	Total <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	Black <sup>b</sup>	Hispanic	Total <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	Black <sup>b</sup>	Hispanic
Total	841	386	3,209	1,273	53	25	200	87
18-19	776	274	2,587	1,184	28	17	83	30
20-24	1,956	789	6,999	2,603	78	41	215	128
25-29	2,143	868	8,630	2,703	134	58	452	210
30-34	2,002	950	7,485	2,587	176	83	650	235
35-39	1,682	806	6,814	2,207	141	66	546	213
40-44	1,257	615	4,841	2,217	82	37	337	131
45-54	700	394	2,775	1,263	42	21	154	99
55 or older	155	100	509	394	5	4	20	10

Note: Based on estimates of the U.S. resident population on July 1, 1997, and adjusted for the 1990 census undercount.

<sup>a</sup>Includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, American

Indians, Alaska Natives, and other racial groups.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes Hispanics.

**Table 16. Estimated number of sentenced prisoners under State jurisdiction, by offense, gender, race, and Hispanic origin, 1997**

Offenses	All	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic
<b>Total</b>	1,100,500	1,033,200	67,300	366,500	511,700	186,900
<b>Violent offenses</b>	519,800	501,100	18,700	172,300	246,900	81,400
Murder <sup>a</sup>	128,700	123,100	5,600	41,200	63,900	20,000
Manslaughter	17,400	15,700	1,700	6,100	7,200	3,300
Rape	28,200	27,900	300	12,800	11,700	2,200
Other sexual assault	65,800	65,200	600	38,900	16,100	8,200
Robbery	155,600	150,900	4,700	32,200	94,500	24,000
Assault	102,900	98,400	4,500	31,800	46,100	20,300
Other violent	21,200	19,900	1,300	9,300	7,600	3,400
<b>Property offenses</b>	241,900	224,000	17,900	103,700	97,600	34,400
Burglary	117,600	114,300	3,300	49,900	48,100	16,600
Larceny	46,200	40,300	5,900	17,500	20,700	6,400
Motor vehicle theft	20,300	19,500	800	7,900	7,300	4,600
Fraud	29,500	22,600	6,900	15,400	10,800	2,800
Other property	28,300	27,300	1,000	13,000	10,700	3,900
<b>Drug offenses</b>	227,400	203,900	23,500	43,200	127,700	51,200
<b>Public-order offenses<sup>b</sup></b>	108,700	101,600	7,100	46,800	38,000	19,300
<b>Other/unspecified<sup>c</sup></b>	2,700	2,600	100	500	1,400	600

Note: Data are for inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year under the jurisdiction of State correctional authorities. The number of inmates by offense were estimated using 1997 Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities and rounded to the nearest 100.

<sup>a</sup>Includes nonnegligent manslaughter.

<sup>b</sup>Includes weapons, drunk driving, court offenses, commercialized vice, morals and decency charges, liquor law violations, and other public-order offenses.

<sup>c</sup>Includes juvenile offenses and unspecified felonies.

**Growth linked to increasing number of inmates in State prison for violent and drug offenses**

Between 1990 and 1997 the distribution of the four major offense categories — violent, property, drug, and public-order offenses — changed slightly among State prisoners. The percent held for property and drug offenses dropped while the percent held for public-order offenses rose.

	Percent of sentenced State inmates	
	1990	1997
Total	100%	100%
Violent	46	47
Property	25	22
Drug	22	21
Public-order	7	10

In absolute numbers, an estimated 519,800 inmates in State prison at yearend 1997 were held for violent offenses, 155,600 for robbery, 128,700 for murder, 102,900 for assault and 94,000 for rape and other sexual assaults (table 16). In addition, 241,900 inmates were held for property offenses, 227,400 for drug offenses and 108,700 for public-order offenses.

Overall, the largest growth in State inmates between 1990 and 1997 was among violent offenders. During the 7-year period, the number of violent offenders grew 203,900, while the number of drug offenders grew 77,700 (table 17). As a percentage of the total growth, violent offenders accounted for 50% of the total growth, drug offenders 19%, property offenders 16%, and public-order offenders 15%.

**Sources of population growth differ among men and women and among white, black, and Hispanic inmates**

Detailed estimates of the State inmates at yearend 1990 and 1997 reveal differences in the sources of growth among male and female inmates. During this period the number of female inmates serving time for drug offenses nearly doubled, while the number of male

**Table 17. Partitioning the total growth of sentenced prisoners under State jurisdiction, by offense and gender, 1990-97**

	Total		Male		Female	
	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total
Total	410,900	100%	380,400	100%	30,600	100%
Violent	203,900	50	196,300	52	7,600	25
Property	66,900	16	60,700	16	6,200	20
Drug	77,700	19	66,000	17	11,700	38
Public-order	62,900	15	57,700	15	5,200	17

**Table 18. Partitioning the total growth of sentenced prisoners under State jurisdiction, by offense, gender, race, and Hispanic origin, 1990-97**

	White		Black		Hispanic	
	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total	Increase, 1990-97	Percent of total
Total	123,100	100%	197,000	100%	71,600	100%
Violent	54,700	44	100,800	51	37,700	53
Property	28,500	23	26,700	14	10,200	14
Drug	13,600	11	47,900	24	12,500	18
Public-order	27,100	22	21,400	11	11,000	15

inmates in for drug offenses rose 48%. The number serving time for violent offenses, however, rose at about the same pace (up 64% for men and 68% for women).

	Percent change in number of State inmates, 1990-97*	
	Male	Female
Total	58%	83%
Violent	64	68
Property	37	53
Drug	48	99
Public-order	131	274

\*Based on State inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year.

The increasing number of violent offenders accounted for the 52% of the total growth among male inmates and 25% among female inmates. Drug offenders accounted for the largest source of the total growth among female inmates (38%), compared to 17% among male inmates. The increasing number of property offenses accounted for a slightly higher percent of the growth among female inmates (20%) than among male inmates (16%). Although the number of public-order offenders rose sharply, they account for only 15% of the total growth among male inmates and 17% of the growth among female inmates.

The sources of population growth also differed among white, black, and Hispanic prisoners. Between 1990 and 1997 the number of black inmates serving time for drug offenses increased by 60%, while the number of white inmates increased by 46% and the number of Hispanic inmates by 32%. The number of violent offenders also rose more sharply among black inmates (up 69%) and Hispanic inmates (up 86%) than among white inmates (up 47%).

	Percent change in number of State inmates, 1990-97*		
	White	Black	Hispanic
Total	51%	64%	62%
Violent	47	69	86
Property	38	38	42
Drug	46	60	32
Public-order	138	129	132

\*Based on State inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year.

Overall, the increasing number of drug offenses accounted for 24% of the total growth among black inmates, 18% of the total growth among Hispanic inmates, and 11% of the growth among white inmates (table 18). Violent offenders accounted for the largest source of growth for all groups — among white State inmates (44%), black inmates (51%), and Hispanic inmates (53%).

**Rise in State prison population linked to increasing numbers of parole violators returned to prison**

Underlying the growth in the State prison population between 1990 and 1997 has been a 39% increase in the number of offenders returned to prison for parole violations (table 19). In 1997, 186,659 of the offenders entering State prison had violated the conditions of their release, up from 133,870 in 1990. These offenders had been released to parole either by decision of a parole board or by provision of the statute under which they were sentenced. While on parole, they had been arrested for or convicted of a new offense or had violated a condition of their release (such as failing a drug test, absconding, or failing to meet financial obligations imposed by a court). (For reasons for imprisoning violators, see *Probation and Parole Violators in State Prison, 1991*, August 1995, NCJ 149076.)

In contrast, the number of new court commitments to State prison remained nearly unchanged, totaling approximately 334,500 in 1997. Though the number admitted in 1997 was 3.5% larger than the number in 1990, the number of new court commitments has fluctuated during the 7-year period.

**State prison growth the result of declining release rates and increasing time served**

While the actual number of prisoners released each year grew between 1990 and 1997, the rate of release (or the number released relative to the number of inmates in prison) dropped sharply. In 1997 nearly 490,000 offenders were released from prison, up from 405,374 in 1990 (table 20). However, the release rate dropped from 37 per 100 State prisoners in 1990 to 31 per 100 in 1997.

A major source of prison growth is increasing time served. Among inmates released from prison for the first time on their current offense (that is, first releases) the average time served has increased from 22 months in 1990 to 27 months in 1997. Among those entering prison, the average time expected to be served before first release rose from 38 months to 43 months.

	New court commitments to State prison*	
	Mean sentence	Mean minimum time to be served
1990	70 mos.	38 mos.
1995	72	42
1997	65	43

\*Based on inmates with sentences of more than 1 year.

**Current inmates have served longer; however, 40% expect to be released in next 12 months**

Consistent with recent changes in sentencing and release policies, State prisoners report having served more time since admission than inmates in the past. Based on the 1991 and 1997 Surveys of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities, an estimated 53% of State inmates in 1997 had served less than 3 years, down from 71% in 1991 (table 21). Nearly 10% had served 10 years or more in 1997, up from 4% in 1991.

Though their average length of stay in prison had increased, 40% of inmates in 1997 said they expected to be released within the next 12 months, compared to 42% of the inmates in 1991. Most of the increase in time served was due to a sharp drop in the percentage of inmates who expected to serve less than 2 years (18% in 1997 down from 26% in 1991).

In both years about 95% of inmates were expected to be released from prison at some time. An estimated 3.2% of inmates in 1997 said they expected to never be released. In addition, based on the sentence length, 2% (of the 5.9% who did not know a release date) may never be released.

**Table 19. Number of sentenced inmates admitted to State prisons, by type of admission, 1990-97**

Year	All admissions	New court	
		commitments	Parole violators
1990	460,739	323,069	133,870
1991	466,286	317,237	142,100
1992	480,676	334,301	141,961
1993	475,100	318,069	146,366
1994	498,919	322,141	168,383
1995	521,970	337,492	175,726
1996	512,618	326,547	172,633
1997	538,375	334,525	186,659
Percent change,			
1990-97	16.9%	3.5%	39.4%

Note: Sentenced inmates are those with a sentence of more than 1 year. Admissions exclude returned escapees and AWOL's and transfers from other jurisdictions. Admissions for Alaska were estimated for 1994.

**Table 20. Trends in State prison releases, release rates, and time served by first releases, 1990-97**

Year	Number of releases	Release rate <sup>b</sup>	Time served by first releases <sup>a</sup>		
			Mean	Percent 6 months or less	Percent 10 years or more
1990	405,374	37.0%	22 mos.	26.5%	1.4%
1991	421,687	36.5	22	24.1	1.4
1992	430,198	35.5	22	26.2	1.4
1993	417,838	33.3	21	29.0	1.3
1994	418,372	30.8	22	26.1	1.3
1995	455,140	31.2	23	21.0	1.3
1996	467,193	30.8	25	18.1	1.4
1997	489,914	30.8	27	16.5	1.7

Note: All data are limited to inmates with sentences of more than 1 year and exclude escapees, AWOLs, and transfers.

<sup>a</sup>Includes all inmates released for the first time on the current sentence.

Time served is based on prison time only and excludes jail time credits.

<sup>b</sup>The number of releases per 100 sentenced prisoners at the beginning of each year, plus the number admitted during the year.

**Table 21. Time served since admission and time expected to be served until release, by inmates held in State prison, 1991 and 1997**

	1997	1991
<b>Time served since admission<sup>a</sup></b>		
Total	100 %	100 %
Less than 12 months	18.8	31.0
12 to 35	33.9	40.1
36 to 59	19.3	13.1
60 to 119	18.7	11.6
120 to 179	5.6	3.2
180 to 239	2.7	0.9
240 or more	1.1	0.2
<b>Remaining time expected to be served until release<sup>b</sup></b>		
Total	100 %	100%
Less than 6 months	21.9	24.1
6 to 12	17.8	17.4
13 to 59	33.5	33.0
60 to 119	9.6	8.1
120 to 239	5.5	4.3
240 or more	2.7	2.0
Life	3.2	2.3
Don't know	5.8	8.8
<b>Estimated total time expected to be served on current sentence<sup>c</sup></b>		
Total	100 %	100%
Less than 24 months	17.5	25.8
24 to 47	20.6	23.5
48 to 71	15.1	12.7
72 to 119	16.4	12.5
120 to 179	9.3	7.4
180 to 239	5.0	3.5
240 or more	7.0	4.0
Life	3.2	2.2
Don't know	5.9	8.4

Note: Data are based on the 1991 and 1997 Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities.

<sup>a</sup>Includes time served in local jails that was credited to the prison sentence and prior prison time served by returned parole violators.

<sup>b</sup>Based on the time served from date of interview to the expected date of release as reported by each inmate.

<sup>c</sup>Based on the time served when interviewed plus time to be served until the expected date of release.

## Methodology

### National Prisoner Statistics

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), with the U.S. Bureau of the Census as its collection agent, obtains yearend and midyear counts of prisoners from departments of correction in each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In an effort to collect comparable data from all jurisdictions, National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) distinguishes prisoners in custody from those under jurisdiction. To have custody of a prisoner, a State must hold that person in one of its facilities. To have jurisdiction means that a State has legal authority over the prisoner. Prisoners under a State's jurisdiction may be in the custody of a local jail, another State's prison, or other correctional facility. Some States are unable to provide both custody and jurisdiction counts. (See *NPS jurisdiction notes*.)

Excluded from NPS counts are persons confined in locally administered confinement facilities who are under the jurisdiction of local authorities. NPS counts include all inmates in State-operated facilities in Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont, which have combined jail-prison systems.

### Military Corrections Statistics

BJS obtains yearend counts of prisoners in the custody of U.S. military authorities from the Department of Defense Corrections Council. In 1994 the council, comprised of representatives from each branch of military service, adopted a standardized report (DD Form 2720) with a common set of items and definitions. This report provides information on persons held in U.S. military confinement facilities inside and outside the continental United States, by branch of service, sex, race, Hispanic origin, conviction status, sentence length, and offense. It also includes data on the number of facilities, and their design and rated capacities.

### Surveys of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities

The Surveys of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, which BJS conducts regularly every 5 to 6 years, provide detailed data on individual characteristics of prison inmates. Based on scientifically selected samples of facilities and of inmates held in them, these surveys provide detailed information unavailable from any other source. (See *Substance Abuse and Treatment, State and Federal Prisoners, 1997*, NCJ 172871, for a description of the 1997 surveys, sample designs, and accuracy.)

For this report, information on sex, race/Hispanic origin, age, offense, sentence length, time served since admission and remaining time to be served was drawn from the 1991 and 1997 surveys. Because the data are restricted to persons in prison, they may overstate the average sentence and time to be served by those entering prison. Person with shorter sentences leave prison more quickly, resulting in longer average sentences among persons in the inmate surveys.

### National Corrections Reporting Program

BJS obtains data on time served by released State prisoners from the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP). The data cover persons released from custody regardless of the jurisdiction where the prisoner was sentenced. The number of jurisdictions reporting data varies for year to year. In 1997, 36 States reported data on releases. While NCRP collects individual level data on all offenders, time served calculations in this report were restricted to prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year.

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*Estimating age-specific incarceration rates*

The number of sentenced prisoners within each age group was estimated for men, women, whites, blacks, and Hispanics. Estimates for 1990 and 1997 were produced by combining data from NPS and from the State and Federal prison inmate surveys. The following procedures were used:

1. To obtain estimates of the number of sentenced State and Federal inmates by sex, race, and Hispanic origin in each year, NPS custody counts for men and women were used. These counts of State and Federal inmates were multiplied by the proportion white, black, Hispanic, or other race as estimated from the State and Federal inmate surveys in each year. The estimates were then adjusted to equal the number of sentenced inmates by sex in State and Federal prisons as reported in NPS for yearend 1990 and 1997.

2. To obtain estimates by age in each year, age distributions for each demographic group were drawn from the State and Federal prison inmate surveys. These percentages were then multiplied by the number of sentenced inmates for each group defined by sex, race, and Hispanic origin.

3. Estimates of the U.S. resident population for July 1, 1990, and 1997, were obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. (See *U.S. Population Estimates, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1990 to 1995*, PPL-41, and updates for 1996 and 1997.) These data were then adjusted for the 1990 decennial census, using the 1990 Post Enumeration Survey.

4. Age-specific rates of incarceration for each demographic group were calculated by dividing the estimated number of sentenced prisoners in each age group by the number of U.S. residents in each age group and then multiplying by 100,000.

**NPS jurisdiction notes**

**Alabama** — Capacity figures exclude community programs.

**Alaska** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

**Arizona** — Population counts are based on custody data.

Operational capacity excludes temporary beds and double bunks used in situations of crowding.

**Arkansas** — Only one type of capacity, set by the Board of Corrections and Community Punishment, is reported.

**Colorado** — Capacity figures exclude Bent County Correctional Center, Huerfano Correctional Center, Crowley County Correctional Center, and facilities under contract in Minnesota.

**Connecticut** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

Legislation in 1995 abolished the capacity law so that prisons no longer have a rated or operational capacity. Design capacity is recorded separately in each facility.

Population counts for 1997 were revised.

**Delaware** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

Capacity counts include Department of Correction halfway houses.

**District of Columbia** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

Design capacity is no longer meaningful because of the prison closure program.

**Federal** — Rated capacity excludes contract beds.

**Florida** — Population counts are based on custody data.

Rated capacity is the maximum safe capacity, and operational capacity has been redefined as total capacity.

**Georgia** — Population counts are based on custody data.

Facilities in Georgia are not given rated or design capacities.

**Hawaii** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

**Idaho** — Operational capacity is the emergency maximum capacity.

**Illinois** — Population counts are based on custody data.

Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

Capacity figures include 721 inmates on electronic detention.

**Iowa** — Population counts are based on custody data.

Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Kansas** — Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Louisiana** — Operational capacity is based on day-to-day operations. Rated and operational capacities include contractual work release facilities.

Population counts include 12,018 males and 1,193 females housed in local jails as a result of a partnership with the Louisiana Sheriff's Association and local authorities.

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**Maryland** — Design capacity is no longer reported because of renovations and other changes. Operational capacity was estimated by applying a percentage to the population count on December 31, 1998.

**Massachusetts** — Population counts are for December 28, 1998.

By law, offenders may be sentenced to terms of up to 2½ years in locally operated jails. Such offenders are included in counts and rates for local jails. About 6,200 inmates with sentences of more than 1 year were held in local jails in 1998.

**Michigan** — Population counts are based on jurisdiction data, excluding inmates held in local jails. Counts include adults housed in institutions, camps, community correction centers, out of state, and on electronic monitoring.

Rated capacity is no longer kept. Operational capacity includes institution and camp net capacities and populations in community programs.

**Minnesota** — Capacity is defined as the total beds minus 10% of the segregation beds and 2% of the remaining beds which are reserved for maintenance.

**Mississippi** — Operation and design capacities include private prison capacities.

**Missouri** — Design capacities are not available for older prisons. Operational capacity is defined as the number of beds.

**Nebraska** — Operational capacity is defined as stress capacity (or 125% of design capacity), which is ordered by the governor and set by the Department of Corrections.

**Nevada** — Rated capacity is defined as emergency capacity.

Design capacity is defined as one bed per cell. Capacity figures include 500 beds in a private facility.

**New Jersey** — Rated and operational capacity figures are not maintained.

Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**North Carolina** — Operational capacity has been eliminated due to a legislative cap.

**North Dakota** — Capacity figures include a new facility opened in 1998 and double bunking in the State Penitentiary.

**Ohio** — Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Oklahoma** — Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Oregon** — Under a new law, inmates with under a 1 year maximum sentence remain under the control of local counties.

Rated and design capacities are not recognized.

**Pennsylvania** — Reported capacities are single-cell capacities. Operational capacity is based on multiple occupancy.

**Rhode Island** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

**South Carolina** — Population counts include unsentenced inmates on Youthful Offender Act observation status.

Operational capacity includes triple cell beds and excludes administrative segregation, infirmary/hospital, and mental health beds. Design capacity also excludes triple cell beds.

**South Dakota** — Operational capacity is planned capacity. Rated and design capacities are not recognized.

**Tennessee** — Rated capacity is the total beds available based on the original design plus any modifications. Operational capacity is the percent of total beds deemed appropriate by the Department of Corrections.

Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Texas** — Population counts of inmates with a sentence of more than 1 year include an undetermined number with a sentence of 1 year or less.

**Vermont** — Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include jail and prison populations.

Population counts are jurisdiction counts that include inmates housed in other States but exclude inmates on furlough or intermediate sanctions.

**Virginia** — Population counts for inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less were affected by a new law on January 1, 1995, making the State responsible for felons with a sentence of 6 months or more, and a subsequent change, effective July 1, 1997, limiting responsibility to those with a sentence of 1 year or more.

Rated, operational, and design capacity are calculated using an operational capacity method in which all inmates housed in a cell are counted.

**Washington** — Reported capacities exclude work release and pre-release facilities because the facilities are not reserved specifically for State inmates.

**Wisconsin** — Counts exclude temporary probation or parole placements and persons on escape status. Counts include Alternatives to Revocation (ATRs), adult inmates held in contract juvenile facilities, and inmates held in local jails or in out-of-State, private, and Federal prisons due to crowding.

Operational capacity excludes contracted local jails, Federal, other State, and private facilities.

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The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D., is director.

BJS Bulletins present the first release of findings from permanent data collection programs such as the National Prisoner Statistics.

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This report in portable document format and in ASCII, its tables, and related statistical data are available at the BJS World Wide Web Internet site:  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>