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# Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

NEWS

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ACQUISITIONS

# Prisoners in 1990

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The number of prisoners under the jurisdiction of Federal or State correctional authorities at yearend 1990 reached a record high of 771,243. The States and the District of Columbia added 52,331 prisoners; the Federal system, 6,355. The increase for 1990 brings total growth in the prison population since 1980 to 441,422 — an increase of about 134% in the 10-year period (table 1).

The 1990 growth rate (8.2%) was less than the percentage increase recorded during 1989 (12.8%), and the number of new prisoners added during 1990 was 26,271 less than the number added during the preceding year (80,888). The 1990 increase translates into a nationwide need for approximately 1,100 prison bedspaces per week, compared to 1,600 prison bedspaces per week needed in 1989.

Table 1. Change in the State and Federal prison populations, 1980-90

Year	Number of inmates	Annual percent change	Total percent change since 1980
1980	329,821		
1981	369,930	12.2%	12.2%
1982	413,806	11.9	25.5
1983	436,855	5.6	32.5
1984	462,002	5.8	40.1
1985	502,507	8.8	52.4
1986	544,972	8.5	65.2
1987	585,084	7.4	77.4
1988	631,669	8.0	91.5
1989	712,557	12.8	116.0
1990	771,243	8.2	133.8

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

Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year (referred to as "sentenced prisoners") accounted for 93% of the total prison population at the end of 1990, growing by 8.6% during the year (table 2). The remaining prisoners had sentences of a year or less or were unsentenced (like those, for example, awaiting trial in States with combined prison-jail systems).

The number of sentenced Federal prisoners increased at a faster rate than sentenced prisoners in the States during 1990 (10.7% versus 8.5%). For both the State and Federal systems, the rate of increase in the number of sentenced prisoners was lower than in 1989 (12.5% and 12.0%).

Among the 13,318 Federal prisoners with no sentences or sentences of a year or less were 1,910 under the jurisdiction of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a decrease of 45 from the number held at the end of 1989 (1,955). The number of Federal prisoners with no sentences or sentences of less than a year increased by 1,315 during 1990 (from 12,003 to 13,318), while the number of sentenced prisoners increased by 5,040.

Total prison populations in Alaska, the District of Columbia, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Tennessee altogether decreased by 1,675 inmates during 1990. The District of Columbia accounted for more than half of this decline. The States with the highest percentages of growth during 1990 were Vermont (15.9%), Washington (15.4%), and New Hampshire (15.1%). Thirteen States reported total prisoner increases of 10% or more since yearend 1989. California's increase of more than 10,000 prisoners during the year was the largest gain in the

May 1991

This Bulletin presents counts of the Nation's prisoners at the end of 1990. The 1990 increase of nearly 59,000 prisoners equals a demand for approximately 1,100 new prison beds per week nationwide. Prisons were estimated to be operating from 18% to 29% above their capacities at yearend.

Strong evidence exists that during the 1980's there was an increasing probability that a convicted offender would go to prison. The ratio of prison admissions to reported serious crimes and arrests for serious crimes increased to levels unequalled in almost 30 years of reporting.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics expresses its appreciation to the departments of corrections in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Prison System, that make it possible for us to gather and report data on the Nation's prisoners.

Steven D. Dillingham, Ph.D.  
Director

number of prisoners for any single jurisdiction. At the end of 1990, about 1 in 8 prisoners nationwide were confined in a California institution. California accounted for more than 17% of the increase nationwide during the year.

**Table 2. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by region and jurisdiction, yearend 1989 and 1990**

Region and jurisdiction	Total			Sentenced to more than 1 year			
	Advance 1990	Final 1989	Percent change, 1989-90	Advance 1990	Final 1989	Percent change, 1989-90	Incarceration rate, 1990*
<b>U.S. total</b>	771,243	712,557	8.2%	739,763	680,955	8.6%	293
Federal	65,526	59,171	10.7	52,208	47,168	10.7	21
State	705,717	653,386	8.0	687,555	633,787	8.5	272
<b>Northeast</b>	123,394	113,965	8.3%	119,062	109,394	8.8%	232
Connecticut	10,500	9,301	12.9	7,771	6,309	23.2	238
Maine	1,523	1,455	4.7	1,480	1,432	3.4	118
Massachusetts	8,273	7,524	10.0	7,899	7,268	8.7	132
New Hampshire	1,342	1,166	15.1	1,342	1,166	15.1	117
New Jersey	21,128	19,439	8.7	21,128	19,439	8.7	271
New York	54,895	51,227	7.2	54,895	51,227	7.2	304
Pennsylvania	22,290	20,469	8.9	22,281	20,458	8.9	183
Rhode Island	2,394	2,479	-3.4	1,585	1,469	7.9	157
Vermont	1,049	905	15.9	681	626	8.8	117
<b>Midwest</b>	145,802	136,338	6.9%	145,493	136,042	6.9%	239
Illinois	27,516	24,712	11.3	27,516	24,712	11.3	234
Indiana	12,732	12,341	3.2	12,615	12,220	3.2	223
Iowa	3,967	3,584	10.7	3,967	3,584	10.7	139
Kansas	5,777	5,616	2.9	5,777	5,616	2.9	227
Michigan	34,267	31,639	8.3	34,267	31,639	8.3	366
Minnesota	3,176	3,103	2.4	3,176	3,103	2.4	72
Missouri	14,919	13,921	7.2	14,919	13,921	7.2	287
Nebraska	2,403	2,393	.4	2,286	2,278	.4	140
North Dakota	483	451	7.1	435	404	7.7	67
Ohio	31,855	30,538	4.3	31,855	30,538	4.3	289
South Dakota	1,345	1,252	7.4	1,345	1,252	7.4	187
Wisconsin	7,362	6,788	8.5	7,335	6,775	8.3	149
<b>South</b>	282,952	262,115	7.9%	274,813	252,614	8.8%	315
Alabama	15,665	13,907	12.6	15,365	13,575	13.2	370
Arkansas	6,766	6,409	5.6	6,718	6,306	6.5	277
Delaware	3,506	3,458	1.4	2,231	2,284	-2.3	321
District of Col.	9,121	10,039	-9.1	6,660	6,735	-1.1	1,125
Florida	44,387	39,999	11.0	44,387	39,866	11.1	336
Georgia	22,345	20,885	7.0	21,605	19,619	10.1	327
Kentucky	9,023	8,289	8.9	9,023	8,289	8.9	241
Louisiana	18,599	17,257	7.8	18,599	17,257	7.8	427
Maryland	17,798	16,514	7.8	16,684	15,378	8.5	347
Mississippi	8,375	7,911	5.9	8,179	7,700	6.2	311
North Carolina	18,412	17,454	5.5	17,713	16,628	6.5	264
Oklahoma	12,322	11,608	6.2	12,322	11,608	6.2	383
South Carolina	17,319	15,720	10.2	16,208	14,808	9.5	451
Tennessee	10,388	10,630	-2.3	10,388	10,630	-2.3	207
Texas	50,042	44,022	13.7	50,042	44,022	13.7	290
Virginia	17,319	16,477	5.1	17,124	16,273	5.2	274
West Virginia	1,565	1,536	1.9	1,565	1,536	1.9	85
<b>West</b>	153,569	140,968	8.9%	148,187	135,737	9.2%	276
Alaska	2,622	2,744	-4.4	1,851	1,908	-3.0	348
Arizona	14,261	13,251	7.6	13,781	12,726	8.3	375
California	97,309	87,297	11.5	94,122	84,338	11.6	311
Colorado	7,018	6,908	1.6	7,018	6,908	1.6	209
Hawaii	2,533	2,464	2.8	1,708	1,752	-2.5	150
Idaho	2,074	1,850	12.1	2,074	1,850	12.1	201
Montana	1,425	1,328	7.3	1,409	1,328	6.1	174
Nevada	5,322	5,112	4.1	5,322	5,112	4.1	444
New Mexico	2,961	2,934	1.0	2,879	2,759	4.3	184
Oregon	6,436	6,744	-4.6	6,436	6,744	-4.6	221
Utah	2,503	2,394	4.6	2,482	2,368	4.8	143
Washington	7,995	6,928	15.4	7,995	6,928	15.4	162
Wyoming	1,110	1,016	9.3	1,110	1,016	9.3	237

Note: The advance count of prisoners is conducted immediately after the calendar year ends. Prisoner counts for 1989 may differ from those reported in previous publications. Counts for 1990 are subject to revision as updated figures become available. Explanatory notes for each jurisdiction are reported in the appendix.  
\*The number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 resident population.

### Rates of Incarceration Increase

On December 31, 1990, the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents was 293, also a new record. Ten of the 16 jurisdictions with rates equal to or greater than the rate for the Nation were located in the South, 4 were in the West, 1 was in the Midwest, and 1 was in the Northeast.

Since 1980 the number of sentenced inmates per 100,000 residents has risen nearly 111%, from 139 to 293. During this period, per capita incarceration rates have grown most rapidly in the Northeast, increasing by 167% (from 87 to 232), and the West, up by nearly 163% (from 105 to 276). The per capita number of sentenced prisoners in the Midwest climbed 119% (from 109 to 239), and the rate rose 68% in the South (from 188 to 315). The number of sentenced Federal prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents has increased 133% (from 9 to 21) over the same period.

**Prison populations in Western States grow the fastest**

Regionally, during 1990 the percentage increase in the number of sentenced prisoners was highest in the Western States, with a gain of 9.2% (table 3). The number of sentenced prisoners grew by 8.8% in the

Northeast, 8.8% in the South, and 6.9% in the Midwest. The sentenced Federal prison population grew by 10.7%.

In 14 States the percentage change in the number of sentenced prisoners during 1990 was equal to or higher than that of 1989. Among these jurisdictions, four had in-

creases of at least 10%, led by New Hampshire (15.1%), Texas (13.7%), Alabama (13.2%), and Georgia (10.1%).

From the end of 1985 to December 31, 1990, net gains in the number of sentenced prisoners have averaged about 1,000 prisoners per week — a weekly gain of about

**Table 3. Annual change in the number of sentenced prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by region and jurisdiction, yearend 1985 through 1990**

Region and jurisdiction	Annual change					Annual percent change				
	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89	89-90	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<b>U.S. total</b>	41,516	38,728	44,678	75,465	58,808	8.6%	7.4%	8.0%	12.5%	8.6%
Federal	3,836	2,992	2,584	5,061	5,040	11.7	8.2	6.5	12.0	10.7
State	37,680	35,736	42,094	70,404	53,768	8.4	7.4	8.1	12.5	8.5
<b>Northeast</b>	6,346	8,441	7,243	14,884	9,668	8.8%	10.7%	8.3%	15.7%	8.8%
Connecticut	283	311	86	1,586	1,462	7.0	7.2	1.9	33.6	23.2
Maine	15	(4)	(18)	212	48	1.2	-3	-1.5	17.4	3.4
Massachusetts	236	576	483	813	631	4.6	10.7	8.1	12.6	8.7
New Hampshire	99	85	152	147	176	14.5	10.9	17.5	14.4	15.1
New Jersey*	685	3,949	967	2,503	1,689	6.0	32.9	6.1	14.8	8.7
New York	3,942	2,393	3,700	6,685	3,668	11.4	6.2	9.1	15.0	7.2
Pennsylvania	1,046	1,081	1,637	2,575	1,823	7.4	7.1	10.1	14.4	8.9
Rhode Island	44	(16)	188	290	116	4.6	-1.6	19.0	24.6	7.9
Vermont	(4)	66	48	73	55	-9	15.0	9.5	13.2	8.8
<b>Midwest</b>	7,481	8,141	9,507	15,795	9,451	7.9%	7.9%	8.6%	13.1%	6.9%
Illinois	822	394	1,231	3,631	2,804	4.4	2.0	6.2	17.2	11.3
Indiana	196	671	637	949	395	2.0	6.7	6.0	8.4	3.2
Iowa	90	74	183	550	383	3.3	2.7	6.4	18.1	10.7
Kansas	613	436	154	(319)	161	13.0	8.2	2.7	-5.4	2.9
Michigan	2,987	3,137	3,733	4,027	2,628	16.8	15.1	15.6	14.6	8.3
Minnesota	119	84	253	304	73	5.1	3.4	9.9	10.9	2.4
Missouri	513	1,048	819	1,745	998	5.2	10.2	7.2	14.3	7.2
Nebraska	221	9	145	170	8	12.8	.5	7.4	8.1	.4
North Dakota	(14)	19	34	(10)	31	-3.7	5.3	8.9	-2.4	7.7
Ohio	1,599	1,777	2,222	4,076	1,317	7.7	7.9	9.2	15.4	4.3
South Dakota	13	83	(117)	236	93	1.3	7.9	-10.3	23.2	7.4
Wisconsin	322	409	213	436	560	6.0	7.2	3.5	6.9	8.3
<b>South</b>	11,683	8,823	13,143	23,669	22,199	6.0%	4.3%	6.1%	10.3%	8.8%
Alabama	755	1,098	(245)	1,218	1,790	7.0	9.5	-1.9	9.9	13.2
Arkansas	90	740	520	345	412	2.0	15.7	9.6	5.8	6.5
Delaware	197	203	42	83	(53)	11.2	10.4	1.9	3.8	-2.3
District of Columbia	183	827	700	421	(75)	4.0	17.3	12.5	6.7	-1.1
Florida	3,746	132	2,321	5,285	4,421	13.2	.4	7.2	15.2	11.1
Georgia	487	1,874	294	1,601	1,986	3.2	11.8	1.7	8.9	10.1
Kentucky	307	1,149	717	1,135	734	6.2	21.7	11.1	15.9	8.9
Louisiana	410	1,075	867	1,015	1,342	3.0	7.5	5.6	6.2	7.8
Maryland	256	353	660	1,806	1,306	2.1	2.8	5.1	13.3	8.5
Mississippi	353	158	532	449	479	5.7	2.4	7.9	6.2	6.2
North Carolina	366	(255)	133	377	1,085	2.3	-1.6	.8	2.3	6.5
Oklahoma	1,378	(69)	809	1,160	714	16.5	-7	8.4	11.1	6.2
South Carolina	1,114	840	1,040	1,906	1,400	11.2	7.6	8.8	14.8	9.5
Tennessee	464	48	2,136	855	(242)	6.5	.6	28.0	8.7	-2.3
Texas	1,002	287	1,616	3,585	6,020	2.7	.7	4.2	8.9	13.7
Virginia	828	386	997	2,345	851	7.1	3.1	7.7	16.8	5.2
West Virginia	(253)	(23)	4	83	29	-14.7	-1.6	.3	5.7	1.9
<b>West</b>	12,170	10,331	12,201	16,056	12,450	14.3%	10.6%	11.4%	13.4%	9.2%
Alaska	136	101	95	46	(57)	8.9	6.1	5.4	2.5	-3.0
Arizona	765	1,520	1,020	1,148	1,055	9.2	16.8	9.7	9.9	8.3
California	9,399	7,087	8,968	10,558	9,784	19.4	12.3	13.8	14.3	11.6
Colorado	418	1,004	957	1,143	110	12.3	26.4	19.9	19.8	1.6
Hawaii	93	11	(22)	242	(44)	6.5	.7	-1.4	16.0	-2.5
Idaho	104	(13)	149	266	224	7.7	-9	10.4	16.8	12.1
Montana	(18)	96	64	57	81	-1.6	8.6	5.3	4.5	6.1
Nevada	780	(117)	447	231	210	20.7	-2.6	10.1	4.7	4.1
New Mexico	194	280	137	36	120	9.2	12.1	5.3	1.3	4.3
Oregon	394	687	534	753	(308)	9.0	14.4	9.8	12.6	-4.6
Utah	122	92	107	424	114	7.5	5.3	5.8	21.8	4.8
Washington	(316)	(472)	(315)	1,112	1,067	-4.6	-7.1	-5.1	19.1	15.4
Wyoming	99	55	60	40	94	13.0	6.4	6.6	4.1	9.3

Note: Sentenced prisoners are those with sentences of more than 1 year.

( ) Indicates a decline in the number of sentenced prisoners.

\*In 1987 New Jersey began to include in its jurisdiction count the number of State-sentenced prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding.

922 State prisoners and 75 Federal prisoners per week over the period. The largest net gains have occurred in the South (306 inmates per week) followed by the West (243), the Midwest (194), and the Northeast (179). During 1990 the average growth in the number of sentenced State and Federal prisoners was equal to a demand for 1,131 additional bed-spaces per week, about 354 fewer than the average weekly growth in 1989.

The sentenced prisoner population had increased in four States by 90% or more since 1985: California (94%), Colorado (107%), Michigan (93%), and New Hampshire (97%). California's increase of 45,796 sentenced prisoners since 1985 accounts for 72% of the increase for the West and 19% of the increase among all States over the period. In 1985, 10.8% of the Nation's sentenced State prisoners were in California; in 1990, 13.7%. (For additional State comparisons, see table 4.)

### Male prisoner population growth outpaces that of females

The number of male inmates (727,398) increased at a faster rate during 1990 (8.3%) than the number of female inmates (7.9%) (table 5). This is the first year since 1981 that the number of male inmates has increased at a faster rate than the number of female inmates. The rate of incarceration for sentenced males (566 per 100,000 males in the resident population) was

**Table 4. The prison situation among the States, yearend 1990**

10 States with the largest 1990 prison populations	Number of inmates	10 States with the highest incarceration rates, 1990*	Prisoners per 100,000 residents	10 States with the largest percent increases in prison population			
				1989-90	Percent increase	1985-90*	Percent increase
California	97,309	South Carolina	451	Vermont	15.9%	Colorado	107.3%
New York	54,895	Nevada	444	Washington	15.4	New Hampshire	96.5
Texas	50,042	Louisiana	427	New Hampshire	15.1	California	94.0
Florida	44,387	Oklahoma	383	Texas	13.7	Michigan	93.0
Michigan	34,267	Arizona	375	Connecticut	12.9	New Jersey	86.4
Ohio	31,855	Alabama	370	Alabama	12.6	Rhode Island	83.3
Illinois	27,516	Michigan	366	Idaho	12.1	Connecticut	70.8
Georgia	22,345	Alaska	348	California	11.5	Arizona	67.2
Pennsylvania	22,290	Maryland	347	Illinois	11.3	New York	59.1
New Jersey	21,128	Florida	336	Iowa	10.7	Pennsylvania	56.7

Note: The District of Columbia as a wholly urban jurisdiction is excluded.  
\*Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year.

**Table 5. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by sex of inmate, yearend 1989 and 1990**

	Men	Women
<b>Total</b>		
Advance 1990	727,398	43,845
Final 1989	671,911	40,646
Percent change, 1989-90	8.3%	7.9%
<b>Sentenced to more than 1 year</b>		
Advance 1990	699,443	40,320
Final 1989	643,685	37,270
Percent change, 1989-90	8.7%	8.2%
Incarceration rate, 1990*	566	31

\*The number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 residents of each sex on December 31, 1990.

**Table 6. Women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, yearend 1990**

Jurisdiction	Number of female inmates	Percent of all inmates	Percent change in female inmate population, 1989-90
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>43,845</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
Federal	5,011	7.6	13.0
State	38,834	5.5	7.2
<b>States with at least 500 female inmates:</b>			
California	6,502	6.7%	8.4%
New York	2,696	4.9	9.4
Florida	2,664	6.0	4.4
Texas	2,144	4.4	4.9
Ohio	1,980	6.2	-8
Michigan	1,688	4.9	6.4
Georgia	1,220	5.5	9.9
Illinois	1,183	4.3	16.1
Oklahoma	1,058	8.6	8.5
South Carolina	1,053	6.1	13.3
New Jersey	1,041	4.9	17.5
Pennsylvania	1,006	4.5	6.6
Alabama	955	6.1	13.0
North Carolina	949	5.2	12.6
Virginia	914	5.3	15.1
Maryland	827	4.6	13.6
Arizona	803	5.6	2.9
Missouri	798	5.3	11.1
Louisiana	775	4.2	11.0
Connecticut	683	6.5	5.6
Indiana	680	5.3	9.0
Massachusetts	582	7.0	16.9
District of Columbia	565	6.2	-3.9

about 18 times higher than for sentenced females (31 per 100,000 females in the resident population). At the end of 1990, women accounted for 5.7% of prisoners nationwide (table 6).

The 1990 growth rate (7.9%) for female inmates was less than the percentage increase recorded during 1989 (24.4%). As shown below, the percentage change was low in 1990 across all the regions and at the Federal level.

	Percent increase in female inmate population	
	1989-90	1988-89
U.S. total	7.9%	24.4%
Federal	13.0	36.8
State	7.2	23.1
Northeast	9.2	29.8
Midwest	7.1	19.5
South	7.2	23.6
West	6.3	22.3

In 1990, 22 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal system had more than 500 female inmates. Among these jurisdictions, 10 had increases of at least 10%, led by New Jersey's increase of 17.5% (from 886 in 1989 to 1,041 in 1990). California's increase during 1990, 502 inmates, accounted for 15.7% of the nationwide increase of 3,199.

#### Local jails held more than 18,000 because of State prison crowding

At the end of 1990, 21 jurisdictions reported a total of 18,380 State prisoners held in local jails or other facilities because of crowding in State facilities (table 7). The number of State prisoners held locally decreased by 3.6% over that of yearend 1989. Three States — Louisiana, New Jersey, and Virginia — accounted for more than half of the prisoners sentenced to prison but incarcerated locally. Five States — Arkansas, Louisiana, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Virginia — held more than

10% of their State-sentenced prisoners in local jails because of State facility crowding. Overall, 2.4% of the State prison population was confined in local jails on December 31, 1990, because of prison crowding.

#### Prison capacity estimates are difficult to compare

The extent of crowding in the Nation's prisons is difficult to determine precisely because of the absence of uniform measures for defining capacity. A wide variety of capacity measures is in use among the 52 reporting jurisdictions because capacity may reflect both available space to house inmates and the ability to staff and operate an institution. To estimate the capacity of

the Nation's prisons, jurisdictions were asked to supply up to three measures for yearend 1990 — 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.

**Table 7. State prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding, by State, yearend 1989 and 1990**

States housing prisoners in local jails	Prisoners held in local jails			
	Number		As a percent of all prisoners	
	1989	1990	1989	1990
U.S. total	19,074	18,380	2.7%	2.4%
Alabama	1,018	879	7.3	5.6
Arizona <sup>a</sup>	117	52	.9	.4
Arkansas	596	777	9.3	11.5
Colorado <sup>a</sup>	410	653	5.9	9.3
District of Columbia <sup>b</sup>	821	826	8.2	9.1
Idaho	130	152	7.0	7.3
Indiana <sup>a</sup>	525	757	4.3	5.9
Kentucky	1,411	693	17.0	7.7
Louisiana	4,138	4,493	24.0	24.2
Maine	22	10	1.5	.7
Massachusetts <sup>a</sup>	377	430	5.0	5.2
Mississippi	1,159	775	14.7	9.3
New Jersey	3,024	2,741	15.6	13.0
Oklahoma	0	210	0	1.7
Oregon	127	61	1.9	.9
South Carolina	405	443	2.6	2.6
Tennessee <sup>c</sup>	2,733	1,869	25.7	18.0
Utah	91	0	3.8	0
Vermont <sup>c</sup>	34	34	3.8	3.2
Virginia	1,863	2,325	11.3	13.4
West Virginia <sup>a</sup>	0	102	0	6.5
Wisconsin	73	98	1.1	1.3

<sup>a</sup>For States not including jail backups in their jurisdiction counts, the percentage of jurisdiction population was calculated using the total number of State inmates in jail and prison.

<sup>b</sup>Includes inmates housed in other States as a result of prison crowding.

<sup>c</sup>Inmates sentenced to State prison but held in local lockups.

Of the 52 reporting jurisdictions, 32 supplied rated capacities, 42 provided operational capacities, and 38 submitted design capacities (table 8). As a result, estimates of total capacity and measures of the relationship

to population are based on the highest and lowest capacity figures provided. (Twenty-six jurisdictions reported 1 capacity measure or gave the same figure for each capacity measure they reported.)

### Most jurisdictions are operating above capacity

Prisons generally require reserve capacity to operate efficiently. Prison 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 the end of 1990, nine States reported they were operating below 95% of their highest capacity. Forty-two jurisdictions and the Federal prison system reported operating at 100% or more of their lowest capacity; 34 of these held populations that met or exceeded their highest reported capacities.

Overall, at the end of 1990 State prisons were estimated to be operating at 115% of their highest capacities and 127% of their lowest capacities (table 9). Prisons in Southern States were found to be operating closest to their reported capacity on each measure. The Federal system was estimated to be operating at 51% over capacity. Between 1989 and 1990, State and Federal prison capacities were estimated to have increased by approximately 20,000-50,000 beds (based on the highest and lowest capacities reported in table 8). At the end of 1990, prisons nationwide were estimated to be from 18% to 29% over their capacities (table 10).

Table 8. Reported Federal and State prison capacities, yearend 1990

Region and jurisdiction	Rated capacity	Operational capacity	Design capacity	Population <sup>a</sup> as a percent of	
				Highest capacity	Lowest capacity
<b>Federal<sup>b</sup></b>	...	...	43,312	151%	151%
<b>Northeast</b>					
Connecticut	9,159	10,075	...	104%	115%
Maine	1,123	1,193	1,193	127	127
Massachusetts	...	...	4,864	170	170
New Hampshire	1,268	1,492	1,112	90	121
New Jersey	...	...	13,383	137	137
New York	55,820	56,833	45,946	97	119
Pennsylvania	...	...	14,338	156	156
Rhode Island	2,396	2,444	2,314	98	103
Vermont	647	647	647	157	157
<b>Midwest</b>					
Illinois	22,691	22,691	18,987	121%	145%
Indiana	10,861	...	...	117	117
Iowa	3,035	3,035	3,035	131	131
Kansas	...	5,405	...	107	107
Michigan	26,266	...	...	130	130
Minnesota	3,198	3,198	3,198	99	99
Missouri	14,822	14,893	...	100	101
Nebraska	...	...	1,666	144	144
North Dakota	...	576	576	84	84
Ohio	...	...	20,598	155	155
South Dakota	1,189	1,130	1,189	113	119
Wisconsin	5,241	5,241	5,241	139	139
<b>South</b>					
Alabama	13,782	13,782	13,782	107%	107%
Arkansas	...	6,535	...	92	92
Delaware	2,915	3,138	2,015	112	174
District of Columbia	8,253	9,121	7,764	100	117
Florida	50,645	45,237	34,826	88	128
Georgia	...	22,424	...	100	100
Kentucky	8,051	7,866	...	103	106
Louisiana	14,697	14,697	14,697	96	96
Maryland	...	17,907	12,246	99	145
Mississippi	8,136	8,594	8,091	88	94
North Carolina	15,942	19,324	...	95	115
Oklahoma	...	8,088	...	150	150
South Carolina	15,438	15,438	11,958	109	141
Tennessee	...	8,803	...	97	97
Texas <sup>c</sup>	49,325	46,859	49,325	94	100
Virginia	13,537	13,537	13,537	111	111
West Virginia	1,700	1,565	1,850	85	100
<b>West</b>					
Alaska	2,808	...	...	93%	93%
Arizona	...	13,884	...	103	103
California	...	...	52,698	185	185
Colorado	...	6,120	4,605	115	152
Hawaii	...	2,141	1,577	118	161
Idaho	...	1,845	1,586	104	121
Montana	1,079	1,407	1,079	101	132
Nevada	5,406	5,406	4,394	98	121
New Mexico	3,225	3,596	3,225	82	92
Oregon	...	6,170	...	103	103
Utah	...	2,911	3,032	83	86
Washington	5,411	6,446	6,446	124	148
Wyoming	793	795	614	140	181

... Data not available.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes inmates who had been sentenced to State prison but were held in local jails because of crowding and who were included in the total prisoner count.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes prisoners housed in contract or other non-Federal facilities.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes 2,743 inmates who resided in boot camps, private prisons, or psychiatric facilities and 726 male inmates in halfway houses.

**Table 9. State prison population and capacity, by region, 1990**

Region	Prison population	Highest capacity	Lowest capacity	Population as a percent of	
				Highest capacity	Lowest capacity
U.S. total	690,157	598,495	543,190	115%	127%
Northeast	120,609	105,269	92,956	115	130
Midwest	145,704	115,619	111,785	126	130
South	270,698	271,259	237,487	100	114
West	153,146	106,348	100,962	144	152

Note: Population counts exclude prisoners sentenced to State prison but held in local jails.

**Table 11. Court commitments to State prisons, relative to offenses and arrests, 1960-89**

Year	Commitments to prison per 1,000	
	Selected serious offenses	Adult arrests for same offenses
1960	62	299
1965	45	261
1970	23	170
1975	26	185
1980	25	196
1981	29	214
1982	35	218
1983	39	244
1984	39	246
1985	42	266
1986	43	268
1987	48	301
1988	51	292
1989	62	332

Note: Selected offenses include murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary. Data for crimes reported to the police and adult arrests are from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the U.S., 1973-89* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office). Commitments to prison are inmates admitted from sentencing courts. The data on which this table is based are presented in the appendix table.

**Prison population growth may reflect increasing certainty of punishment**

There is some evidence that during the period 1980-89 changes in criminal justice policies have increased a criminal's probability of being incarcerated from levels existing in prior years. Murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary are among the most

serious crimes and account for approximately half of prison commitments from courts. In 1960 there were 62 prison commitments for every 1,000 of these crimes reported to law enforcement agencies (table 11). During the rest of the decade this ratio steadily declined until it reached 23 in 1970 and was relatively stable during the 1970's. Between 1980 and 1989 the ratio increased from 25 commitments per 1,000 reported crimes to 62.

**Table 10. Population as a percent of reported capacity for State and Federal prisons, 1985-90**

	U.S. total	Federal prisons	State prisons
Highest capacity 1990	641,807	43,312	598,495
Lowest capacity 1990	586,502	43,312	543,190
<b>Net change in capacity, 1989-90</b>			
Highest	20,664	10,818	9,845
Lowest	54,886	10,818	44,068
<b>Population as a percent of capacity*</b>			
Highest			
1985	106%	123%	105%
1989	110	163	107
1990	118	151	115
Lowest			
1985	121%	154%	119%
1989	129	163	127
1990	129	151	127

Note: States were asked to report their rated, operational, and design capacities. Tabulations reflect the highest and lowest of the 3 capacities reported for 1985, 1989, and 1990. \*Excludes inmates who had been sentenced to State prison but were held in local jails because of crowding and who were included in the total prisoner count.

Similarly, between 1960 and 1970 the ratio of prison commitments to adult arrests for the selected crimes declined from 299 per 1,000 to 170. This ratio was relatively stable during the 1970's, but it increased between 1980 and 1989, from 196 commitments per 1,000 adult arrests to 332. (See *Methodological note* for more detail on these data.)

Prison-admissions-to-crime ratios for individual States provide an alternative measure of prison use to population-based rates. Population-based incarceration rates take into account the number of sentenced prisoners and the size of the resident population in a jurisdiction. The crime-based rate measures entry into prison relative to the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies during a year.



**Table 12. State prison admissions, relative to selected serious offenses and the adult population, by State, 1980 and 1989**

Region and State	Admissions per 1,000 selected serious offenses		Admissions per 100,000 adults	
	1980	1989	1980	1989
<b>U.S. total</b>	25	62	80	172
<b>Northeast</b>	15	52	48	117
Connecticut	37	106	105	242
Maine	28	65	54	81
Massachusetts	8	28	26	62
New Hampshire	14	44	30	53
New Jersey	14	54	49	113
New York	13	52	56	158
Pennsylvania	17	45	33	64
Rhode Island	12	36	35	75
Vermont	32	71	77	110
<b>Midwest</b>	28	62	71	128
Illinois*	32	48	78	124
Indiana	37	64	88	119
Iowa	28	60	50	89
Kansas	26	56	69	121
Michigan	20	54	67	141
Minnesota	12	35	25	57
Missouri	24	65	74	153
Nebraska	35	61	56	85
North Dakota	47	100	36	58
Ohio	45	96	97	193
South Dakota	61	161	71	135
Wisconsin	26	54	46	70
<b>South</b>	38	73	116	220
Alabama	49	69	138	165
Arkansas	50	64	104	342
Delaware	30	88	88	172
District of Columbia	36	69	213	366
Florida	24	98	109	432
Georgia	49	74	156	251
Kentucky	47	70	86	112
Louisiana	31	50	100	157
Maryland	30	70	107	183
Mississippi	43	81	97	167
North Carolina	61	97	158	266
Oklahoma	38	98	111	274
South Carolina	47	63	153	190
Tennessee	33	34	89	79
Texas	38	48	129	180
Virginia	36	111	75	157
West Virginia	30	56	38	58
<b>West</b>	17	51	66	150
Alaska	42	136	115	262
Arizona	24	65	97	204
California	15	50	66	162
Colorado	16	48	55	111
Hawaii	9	14	28	32
Idaho	34	77	78	124
Montana	34	52	55	57
Nevada	26	111	136	302
New Mexico	17	39	53	136
Oregon	27	54	83	139
Utah	15	38	39	69
Washington	14	37	46	100
Wyoming	38	83	71	104

Note: Prison admissions refer to the number of prisoners received from courts with sentences of more than 1 year. Selected offenses are murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary. Adults are defined as the resident population age 18 or older.  
\*The FBI estimated the number of reported crimes in 1989.

Sources: National Prisoner Statistics, Uniform Crime Reports, and Bureau of the Census estimates of population.

**Table 13. Adult arrests for drug violations, 1985-89**

Year	Total	Number of adult arrests for drug violations	
		Sale or manufacture	Possession
1985	718,597	170,307	548,290
1986	742,687	186,414	556,273
1987	849,521	219,176	630,345
1988	1,050,576	287,858	762,718
1989	1,247,763	404,275	843,488
Percent change, 1985-89	73.6%	137.4%	53.8%

Source: Estimates derived from FBI, *Crime in the U.S.*, 1985-89.

Between 1980 and 1989 the ratio of court commitments to prison and reported crimes increased 148%, from 25 commitments per 1,000 crimes to 62 (table 12). Over the same period the number of prison commit

ments per 100,000 adult residents went up 115%, from 80 to 172. The Northeast had the largest percentage increase in the number of commitments relative to reported crime and experienced the largest gain in prison commitments relative to population. However, in both 1980 and 1989 the South had the largest number of court commitments to prison relative to reported crime and to population.

Besides the increased use of prison relative to reported crime, arrests, and resident population, prison population has also been affected by changes in the extent of the illegal drug problem. An estimated two-thirds of those in State prisons for a drug offense were convicted of trafficking or manufacturing illegal drugs.\* Since 1985 the number of adult arrests for drug violations has increased by 74%, and the number of arrests for sales or manufacturing of illegal drugs has grown by 137% (table 13).

\*For additional information on drug offenders in State prisons, see *Profile of State Prison Inmates, 1986*, BJS Special Report, NCJ-109926, January 1988, and *Drug Use and Crime*, BJS Special Report, NCJ-111940, July 1988.

**Methodological note**

This bulletin is based upon an advance count of prisoners conducted for the National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) program immediately after the end of each calendar year. A detailed, final count containing any revisions to the jurisdictions' advance count will be published later.

The data used to compute the rates in table 11 are presented in the appendix table.

**Explanatory notes**

**Alabama.** Capacity in community programs is not included in the reported capacity figures.

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

**Arizona.** Population counts are based on custody data. Population counts exclude inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

**California.** Population counts are based on custody data.

**Colorado.** Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" include an undetermined number of "Inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less." Population counts exclude 652 male inmates and 1 female inmate housed in local jails awaiting pickup.

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

**Delaware.** Population counts are based on custody data. Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations.

**District of Columbia.** Population counts are based on custody data. Prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations. Population counts exclude those inmates housed in Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities. Population counts exclude 826 male inmates housed in other States as a result of crowding. Female capacities are included in the male capacities reported.

**Federal.** Population counts for "Unsentenced inmates" include 1,886 males and

24 females who come under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Capacity figures apply to Bureau of Prisons Institutions only and do not include capacity provided by contract facilities. Female capacities are included in the male capacities reported.

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

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

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

**Illinois.** Population counts are based on custody data. Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" include an undetermined number of inmates with sentence of 1 year or less."

**Indiana.** Population counts are based on custody data and exclude inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

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

**Kansas.** Female capacities are included in the male capacities reported.

**Maine.** Population counts are as of January 1, 1991. Female capacities are included in the male capacities reported.

**Maryland.** While population totals are actual manual counts, breakdowns for sentence length are estimates based on the actual sentence length breakdowns of Maryland's automated data system.

**Massachusetts.** Starting with December 31, 1990, Massachusetts is reporting "Unsentenced inmates." Population counts are based on custody data. Population counts exclude 418 male and 12 female inmates housed in local jails because of crowding. Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" include an undetermined number of "Inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less." Population totals are actual counts; however, the male/female breakdown is an estimate believed to be within 0.1% of the actual counts. 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

Appendix table. Data used to compute the rates in table 11

Year	Number of court commitments to prison for any offense	Number of selected serious offenses reported to the police	Estimated number of adult arrests for same offenses
1960	74,852	1,200,560	250,465
1965	74,724	1,669,890	286,684
1970	67,304	2,943,820	395,679
1975	112,803	4,305,020	609,765
1980	130,323	5,139,720	666,520
1981	149,186	5,141,530	697,847
1982	164,648	4,769,490	754,742
1983	173,289	4,387,990	709,525
1984	166,927	4,257,680	679,032
1985	183,131	4,402,070	688,795
1986	203,315	4,730,570	757,587
1987	225,627	4,720,200	749,651
1988	245,310	4,784,330	840,633
1989	297,827	4,814,240	897,252

Note: The number of court commitments to prison is based on the total number of entries from sentencing courts with sentences of more than 1 year. The number of reported offenses is derived from annual publications from the FBI on the number of murders, nonnegligent manslaughters, rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults, and burglaries reported to the police. The estimated number of adult arrests for these crimes is derived by multiplying the estimated total number of arrests by the percentage of known arrests age 18 or older, as reported annually by the FBI. For 1960 and 1965, estimates of adult arrests were based on FBI

data for total known arrests for those years and were weighted for reporting coverage (see *Crime in the U.S., 1970*, tables 24 and 25). By year, the percentage of adult arrests among all arrests for these crimes was:

1960 - 66.6%	1983 - 72.8%
1965 - 61.6%	1984 - 73.2%
1970 - 61.5%	1985 - 73.2%
1975 - 60.8%	1986 - 75.4%
1980 - 67.4%	1987 - 75.8%
1981 - 69.1%	1988 - 77.3%
1982 - 71.7%	1989 - 77.8%

are included in published population counts and rates for local jails and correctional institutions.

**Michigan.** Population counts are based on custody data. Capacity figures exclude the capacities of the Community Residential Program.

**Mississippi.** Female capacities are included in the male capacities reported.

**Montana.** Starting with the December 31, 1990, data, Montana is reporting "Inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less." Montana is currently operating under emergency capacity; therefore, they are reporting emergency rather than operational capacity.

**Nevada.** Female capacities include the Nevada Women's Facility and the Reno Correctional Facility but exclude space at Nevada's Restitution Centers. Capacity for women at Nevada's Restitution Centers is included with the male capacity.

**New Jersey.** Rated, operational, and design capacities include 568 bedspaces in county facilities.

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

**Ohio.** Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" include an undetermined number of "Inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less."

**Oklahoma.** Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" may include a small undetermined number of inmates with a sentence of 1 year.

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

**Tennessee.** Population counts for "Inmates with over 1 year maximum sentence" include an undetermined number of "Inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less." Population counts include 1,854 males and 15 females housed in local jails because of crowding in State prison facilities and exclude 2,593 felons sentenced to serve time in local jails. (The State pays to house these 2,593 felons, but the local courts maintain jurisdiction.)

**Texas.** Population counts are based on custody data. The courts have ordered that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Institutional Division (TDCJ-ID) cannot house more inmates than 95% of capacity. Approximately 2,928 beds are exempt from this rule, and the inmates in these beds do not count toward the calculation of 95% capacity. The population counts include all inmates within TDCJ-ID; however, the capacity figures exclude the 2,928 exempt beds.

**Vermont.** Population counts are as of December 6, 1990. Prisons and jails form an almost completely integrated system. However, some county and municipal authorities do operate local lockups. NPS data include both jail and prison populations. The counts for jail crowding include 34 male inmates housed in local lockups. The capacity figures exclude the 34 male inmates housed in local lockups.

**Washington.** Capacity figures exclude space in State work-release facilities that housed 609 male and 69 female inmates on December 31, 1990.

**West Virginia.** The female population counts are based on custody data. Population counts exclude 87 male and 15 female inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

**Wyoming.** The operational capacity figure is the absolute total bedspace available to Wyoming's Department of Corrections, and it includes 60 bedspaces in community centers.

The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office for Victims of Crime.

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Revised April 1991)

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