

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Law Enforcement
Assistance Administration

National Criminal Justice
Information and Statistics Service

National Prisoner Statistics Bulletin SD-NPS-PSF-5A, April 1978

**Prisoners
in State
and Federal
Institutions
on December 31, 1977**

Advance Report

A record 292,325 prisoners were held in custody by Federal and State correctional authorities on December 31, 1977. Of these, 1,778 were housed in local jails because of overcrowding in State correctional facilities.¹ Furthermore, 5,313 additional prisoners, not included in the total, were held in local jails because of overcrowded prisons in six States that do not consider such prisoners to be under custody of State correctional authorities. Taken together, 7,091 prisoners throughout the United States were housed in local jails for lack of space in State facilities; a year earlier the figure was 7,725.

The yearend count was the third in a row to reach an all-time high, although the rate of growth in 1977 was only about half that of 1976.² Although the overwhelming majority of the prison inmates were serving sentences of at least a year and a day, 13,732 were serving shorter sentences or were unsentenced.³

There were 12,055 women, representing 4 percent of the total, in Federal and State prisons on December 31, 1977. Consistent with the pattern of the last several years, the growth rate of the female portion of the prisoner population during 1977 was considerably higher than for males—10 percent versus 5 percent.

Federal institutions held 30,920 prisoners on the last day of 1977, a rise of 6 percent over the number reported 12 months earlier. For State juris-

dictions as a whole, the number of inmates increased 5 percent, from 249,305 to 261,405. There was a 6 percent increase in both the South and the North Central region and 4 percent in the Northeast but virtually no change in the West.⁴

Twelve States reduced their inmate population during 1977, compared with only four in 1976. The largest 1977 decline occurred in California (1,465); the next largest was in Mississippi (408), the only jurisdiction with a decrease in both 1976 and 1977. Among the 39 jurisdictions experiencing net increases in prisoners for 1977, Florida posted the largest (1,963), followed by Texas (1,722), New York (1,640), Michigan (1,439), and Louisiana (1,255). In the latter State, the growth resulted chiefly from the reassignment of a sizeable number of locally held prisoners to State facilities upgraded to meet occupancy standards.

Among the eleven States housing inmates in local jails in order to alleviate overcrowding, only five—Maryland, South Carolina, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Oregon—considered them to be in the custody of the State correctional system. The other six jurisdictions—Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia—did not consider them to be in State custody.

Additional details from the 1977 count of inmates in State and Federal correctional facilities will be contained in a final report to be published this year.

¹All 1977 data are preliminary and subject to revision. These data were collected through the National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) program for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration by the Bureau of the Census.

²Figures for December 31, 1976, and December 31, 1977, appear in the accompanying table; those for December 31, 1975, in Prisoners in State and Federal Institutions on December 31, 1975, NPS Bulletin No. SD-NPS-PSF-3, February 1977.

³Examples of unsentenced inmates were those held for safekeeping, those undergoing court-ordered

evaluation, civil narcotics addicts, and, in States operating an integrated jail-prison system, those held awaiting trial or sentencing.

⁴States included within each region are listed in the accompanying table.

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Prisoners in custody on December 31, 1976, and December 31, 1977, by region and State

Region and State	Total prisoner population			Prisoners with a sentence of more than a year			Other prisoners ⁴		
	1977	1976	Percent change	1977	1976	Percent change	1977	1976	Percent change
United States, Total	292,325	278,422	+5.0	278,593	263,307	+5.8	13,732	15,115	-9.1
Male, Total	280,270	267,476	+4.8	267,530	253,453	+5.6	12,740	14,023	-9.1
Female, Total	12,055	10,946	+10.1	11,063	9,854	+12.3	992	1,092	-9.2
Federal institutions, Total	30,920	29,117	+6.2	28,650	26,980	+6.2	2,270	2,137	+6.2
State institutions, Total	261,405	249,305	+4.9	249,943	236,327	+5.8	11,462	12,978	-11.7
Northeast	40,765	39,214	+4.0	37,820	36,275	+4.3	2,945	2,939	+0.2
Maine	666	615	+8.3	606	610	-0.7	60	5	+1,100.0
New Hampshire	239	254	-5.9	219	248	-11.7	20	6	+233.3
Vermont ¹	416	453	-8.2	279	307	-9.1	137	146	-6.2
Massachusetts ²	2,825	2,695	+4.8	2,794	2,651	+5.4	31	44	-29.5
Rhode Island ¹	685	652	+5.1	522	490	+6.5	163	162	+0.6
Connecticut ¹	2,965	3,239	-8.5	1,647	1,923	-14.4	1,318	1,316	+0.2
New York	19,352	17,712	+9.3	19,352	17,705	+9.3	0	7	-100.0
New Jersey ³	6,017	6,004	+0.2	5,728	5,685	+0.8	289	319	-9.4
Pennsylvania	7,600	7,590	+0.1	6,673	6,656	+0.3	927	934	-0.7
North Central	59,305	56,100	+5.7	58,338	54,896	+6.3	967	1,204	-19.7
Ohio	12,846	12,525	+2.6	12,846	12,525	+2.6	0	0	...
Indiana	4,648	4,903	-5.2	4,196	4,203	-0.2	452	700	-35.4
Illinois	10,884	10,053	+8.3	10,560	9,739	+8.4	324	314	+3.2
Michigan ²	13,901	12,462	+11.5	13,901	12,462	+11.5	0	0	...
Wisconsin	3,347	3,299	+1.5	3,347	3,299	+1.5	0	0	...
Minnesota	1,797	1,624	+10.7	1,797	1,624	+10.7	0	0	...
Iowa	2,125	1,956	+8.6	2,057	1,891	+8.8	68	65	+4.6
Missouri	5,302	4,997	+6.1	5,302	4,997	+6.1	0	0	...
North Dakota	216	198	+9.1	194	162	+19.8	22	36	-38.9
South Dakota	565	523	+8.0	519	478	+8.6	46	45	+2.2
Nebraska	1,425	1,474	-3.3	1,373	1,438	-4.5	52	56	+44.4
Kansas	2,249	2,086	+7.8	2,246	2,078	+8.1	3	8	-62.5
South	122,630	115,349	+6.3	118,022	110,155	+7.1	4,608	5,194	-11.3
Delaware ¹	1,070	953	+12.3	812	684	+18.7	258	269	-4.1
Maryland ²	8,148	7,912	+3.0	8,148	7,912	+3.0	0	0	...
District of Columbia ¹	2,807	2,949	-4.8	2,240	2,299	-2.6	567	650	-12.8
Virginia ³	7,659	6,690	+14.5	7,143	5,980	+19.4	516	710	-27.3
West Virginia	1,233	1,229	+0.3	1,233	1,216	+1.4	0	13	-100.0
North Carolina	14,189	13,257	+7.0	12,769	11,570	+10.4	1,420	1,687	-15.8
South Carolina ²	7,004	6,988	+0.2	6,468	6,433	+0.5	536	555	-3.4
Georgia	11,658	11,661	(-2)	11,243	11,134	+1.0	415	527	-21.3
Florida ³	19,756	17,793	+11.0	19,756	17,793	+11.0	0	0	...
Kentucky	3,661	3,657	+0.1	3,660	3,657	+0.1	1	0	Y
Tennessee	5,501	4,837	+13.7	5,480	4,817	+13.8	21	20	+5.0
Alabama ³	3,473	3,033	+14.5	3,471	3,032	+14.5	2	1	+100.0

Prisoners in custody on December 31, 1976, and December 31, 1977, by region and State

(continued)

Region and State	Total prisoner population			Prisoners with a sentence of more than a year			Other prisoners ⁴		
	1977	1976	Percent change	1977	1976	Percent change	1977	1976	Percent change
South (continued)									
Mississippi ³	1,727	2,135	-19.1	1,555	2,135	-27.2	172	0	Y
Arkansas	2,399	2,503	-4.2	2,324	2,431	-4.4	75	72	+4.2
Louisiana ³	5,951	4,696	+26.7	5,951	4,696	+26.7	0	0	...
Oklahoma	3,955	4,339	-8.8	3,330	3,649	-8.7	625	390	-9.4
Texas	22,439	20,717	+8.3	22,439	20,717	+8.3	0	0	...
West									
Montana	38,705	38,642	+0.2	35,763	35,001	+2.2	2,942	3,641	-19.2
Idaho	556	558	-0.4	551	551	0	5	7	-28.6
Wyoming	769	695	+10.6	765	682	+12.2	4	13	-69.2
Colorado	401	340	+17.9	401	340	+17.9	0	0	...
New Mexico	2,317	2,244	+3.3	2,311	2,239	+3.2	6	5	+20.0
Arizona	1,613	1,352	+19.3	1,489	1,220	+22.0	124	132	-6.1
Utah	2,982	2,850	+4.6	2,982	2,850	+4.6	0	0	...
Nevada	889	820	+8.4	824	748	+10.2	65	72	-9.7
Washington	1,187	961	+23.5	1,184	961	+23.2	3	0	Y
Oregon ²	4,356	3,893	+11.9	4,346	3,881	+12.0	10	12	-16.7
California	2,935	2,859	+2.7	2,924	2,859	+2.3	11	0	Y
Alaska ¹	19,623	21,088	-6.9	17,338	18,113	-4.3	2,285	2,975	-23.2
Hawaii ¹	577	494	+16.8	284	230	+23.5	293	264	+11.0
	500	488	+2.5	364	327	+11.3	136	161	-15.5

NOTE: For Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Oregon and Washington, all 1977 figures are estimates within a 5 percent maximum error range. For Virginia, 1976 and 1977 figures that distinguish between prisoners sentenced to more than a year and those with a shorter or no sentence are estimates; figures showing this distinction for Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Oklahoma in 1977 are also estimates. For 4 States--Florida and Maryland in both 1976 and 1977 and Mississippi and Oregon in 1976 only--figures on the number of inmates sentenced to more than one year include all prisoners with a shorter or no sentence; the proportion of such prisoners was estimated to be approximately 6 percent for Maryland and fewer than 1 percent for Florida in each year and about 10 percent for Mississippi in 1976, whereas no 1976 estimates were provided for Oregon.

Included in the Federal prison population are persons convicted under State law but consigned to the Federal correctional system for incarceration, a sizeable group in some jurisdictions. In Alaska, for example, there was a total of 103 such prisoners (99 males and 4 females) as of yearend 1977.

Y Not definable.

Z Less than 0.05 percent.

... Not applicable.

¹Both 1976 and 1977 figures include jail and prison inmates, as jails and prisons form an integrated system within the jurisdiction. In both years figures for all District of Columbia facilities except two--the D.C. Jail and the D.C. Detention Center--included inmates with a maximum sentence of a year or less or with no sentence.

²Figures for 1977 include inmates held in local jails because of overcrowding in State institutions. Such inmates are considered by these jurisdictions to be in the custody of the State correctional system. The number of inmates held in local jails as of yearend 1977 was as follows: Maryland (921); South Carolina (697); Massachusetts (59); Michigan (58); and Oregon (43). Two of these States also held such inmates at yearend 1976: Maryland (1,081) and South Carolina (786).

³Prisoners detained locally to relieve overcrowding at the State level are excluded because they are considered not to be in the custody of the State correctional system. The following jurisdictions reported having such inmates on December 31, 1977: Alabama (2,626), Virginia (824), Louisiana (780), Mississippi (575), New Jersey (255), and Florida (253). These States, together with Georgia, also held prisoners of this type on December 31, 1976.

⁴Includes prisoners with sentences of a year or less, as well as unsentenced persons. The latter include, among others, those held for safekeeping, those undergoing court-ordered evaluation, civil narcotics addicts, and, in States operating an integrated jail-prison system, those held awaiting trial or sentencing.

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