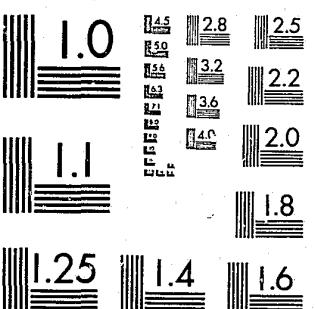


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National Institute of Justice
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Washington, D.C. 20531

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A COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH AUTHORITY WARDS IN INSTITUTIONS AND ON PAROLE

June 30 each year, 1973-1982

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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INTRODUCTION

The following tables show characteristics of Youth Authority wards in institutions and camps and on parole as of June 30th of each year from 1973 through 1982.

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Certain types of cases are excluded:

AUG 14 1983

ACQUISITIONS

- o wards in reception centers;
- o wards in institutions on contract or temporary detention status;
- o wards in Department of Mental Health facilities;
- o wards in county jails on revoke status;
- o wards awaiting delivery to institutions;
- o wards who are absent from institutions for various reasons, i.e., out-to-court, furlough, escape, etc.;
- o wards on parole from other states who are residing in California.

In order to provide uniformity over the years, the following adjustments were made in the data:

1. For the years 1973 and 1974, the age shown in all tables is median age at last birthday. The age shown in 1975-1982 is a computer calculated mean age based on actual age in years and months and is not significantly different from the median age as manually calculated in prior years.

2. Because they have housed only a small number of wards, separate tables for Southern Community Drug Center, SPACE, Department of Corrections and federal institutions are not shown. However, these data are included in the totals (Table 1) for the applicable years of operation.

3. Only one table (Table 2) is included for females in institutions. Since 1973, Ventura has been the only institution housing female wards except the few wards which may have been in CDC, SCDC, SPACE and federal institutions.

4. The commitment offense groups shown in the tables are composed of the following offenses:

(a) Violent type offenses: homicide, robbery, all types of assaults, rape (violent), and kidnap/extortion (Note: Rape and kidnap are not included in the years 1973 and 1974);

(b) Property type offenses: burglary, theft (including auto), forgery and check offenses, and arson (Note: Arson not included for the years 1973 and 1974);

(c) Narcotic and drug offenses: all offenses relating to narcotics and dangerous drugs;

(d) Miscellaneous juvenile offenses (formerly called Welfare and Institutions Code violations): all age-related offenses such

as incorrigibility, truancy, runaway, foster home or county camp failure, and escape from county camp or juvenile hall;

(e) Other offenses: all offenses not specifically mentioned above.

The tables shown below are those that appear in this report. The percents may in some instances not add to 100.0 because of independent rounding.

Table 1. Characteristics of Youth Authority Male Wards in Institutions

Table 2. Characteristics of Youth Authority Female Wards in Institutions

Table 3. Characteristics of Youth Authority Male Wards on Parole

Table 4. Characteristics of Youth Authority Female Wards on Parole

Table 5. Characteristics of Youth Authority Male Wards in Selected Institutions (nine pages)

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The number of male wards in institutions on June 30, 1982 reached the highest point in the decade.
2. The proportion of male minorities in institutions increased from 60 percent in 1973 to 74 percent in 1982, and female minorities, from 53 percent to 59 percent.
3. The proportion of male wards in institutions on criminal court commitments has fluctuated between 43 and 51 percent during 1973 through 1981. In 1982 it dropped below 42 percent as a result of the Department's policy of rejecting the more serious criminal court commitments.
4. For males, the violent type offense percentages increased since 1975 from 50 percent to 63 percent in 1982. Female wards in institutions for violent type offenses rose from 41 percent (1975) to 66 percent (1982). These increases have resulted from increasing numbers of violent offenders being committed to the Youth Authority (prior to 1981) and rising length of stay for those offenders.

SUMMARY

This 10-year summary includes the fiscal year ending figures for the period June 30, 1973 through June 30, 1982. The fluctuations in the institutional populations over the decade were due to a combination of factors -- changes in the California youth population, probation subsidy, changes in Youthful Offender Parole Board members, changes in board policy, law changes, judicial decisions, etc. The 1982 institutional population was the highest in 10 years. The parole population declined steadily over the early part of the decade, with the low occurring in 1979. It has increased slightly each year since.

Some very distinct changes have occurred in the nature of the ward population over the last decade.

SEX

The percentage of male and female wards in institutions in 1973 was about 94 percent male and 6 percent female. In the following years, the percentage of male wards rose to 96 percent while the percentage of female wards declined to 4 percent.

The parole population was about 86 percent male wards in 1973 and has since increased to approximately 96 percent male.

COURT OF COMMITMENT

The proportion of male wards in institutions on criminal court commitments has fluctuated between 43 and 51 percent during 1973 through 1981. In 1982 it dropped below 42 percent as a result of the Department's policy of rejecting the more serious criminal court commitments. Female criminal court wards represented about 29 percent of the female population in 1973, increasing to 47 percent in 1977, and dropping back to 29 percent by 1982.

AREA OF COMMITMENT

In 1973 the Southern California area contributed approximately 63 percent of the male institutional population. This percentage fluctuated between 60 and 65 percent over the decade, but the 1982 percentage was a record high at 68 percent.

COMMITMENT OFFENSE

The commitment offense perhaps best illustrates the changing characteristics of Youth Authority wards. Since 1975, the proportion of wards in institutions for violent type offenses (homicide, robbery, assault, violent rape, and kidnapping) increased from 50 percent to 63 percent for males and from 41 percent to 66 percent for females. The proportion of male wards in institutions for property offenses (burglary, theft and arson) increased steadily--from 34 percent in 1975 to 41 percent in 1979, but has since dropped to 33 percent. The proportion of female wards in institutions for property offenses has increased from 18 percent in 1975 to 29 percent in 1982.

Wards under commitment for narcotic and drug offenses, which were noteworthy by their percentage increases in the late sixties and reaching their peak in the early seventies, have now receded to where they are a minor contribution to the total.

Conversely to the trend in violent-type offenses, the number of wards committed for miscellaneous juvenile offenses (formerly Welfare and Institutions Code violations) has dramatically declined over the decade. For males, the proportion has dropped from nine percent in 1973 to zero in 1982. The female decrease has been even more dramatic, falling from 28 percent in 1977 to less than 1 percent in 1982.

ADMISSION STATUS

The proportion of first commitments in the institutional population has gradually risen over the past 10 years. For male wards the percentage has increased from 63 percent in 1973 to 84 percent in 1982. For female wards, the increase has been from 66 percent in 1973 to 92 percent in 1982.

ETHNIC GROUP

In 1973 the percentage of White male wards in institutions was 40 percent; it has since dropped to 26 percent in 1982. In contrast, there has been an upward trend in the proportion of minority wards in institutions. Blacks comprised some 36 percent in 1973 and rose to 40 percent in 1982. The Spanish-surnamed ethnic group rose gradually over the years from 22 percent to 31 percent.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH AUTHORITY WARDS, MALES IN INSTITUTIONS
TOTAL a/
JUNE 30 EACH YEAR, 1973 - 1982
(Showing percents of totals)

FULL BOARD STATUS

The percentage of wards in institutions with Full Board designations has increased over the 10-year period almost parallel to the increase in the proportion of wards with violent type offenses. On June 30, 1982, males in institutions on Full Board status represented 64 percent of the male population.

AGE

The average age for males in institutions started the decade at 19.0 years and then rose to a high of 19.1 in 1974. Since 1976, it has varied in direct relationship to the ratio of juvenile and criminal commitments in the 18.6 to 18.8 age range. The age for females rose from 18.3 years in 1973 to 18.7 years in 1977, but has since declined to 18.1 years.

MALES IN INSTITUTIONS	JUNE 30									
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Total Institution Population	3376	3705	3730	3696	3198	3503	4064	4323	4781	4825
Court										
Juvenile.....	51.5	51.0	49.9	51.2	52.8	55.6	56.2	55.7	52.2	58.4
Criminal.....	48.5	49.0	50.1	48.8	47.2	44.4	43.8	44.3	47.8	41.6
Area or County										
Southern California area..	63.1	62.3	65.1	63.7	60.6	60.6	62.2	65.4	64.9	67.8
Los Angeles County.....	38.7	37.4	37.7	38.3	38.2	38.2	40.2	44.6	45.4	49.9
9 other counties.....	24.4	24.9	27.4	25.4	22.4	22.4	22.0	20.8	19.5	17.9
San Francisco Bay area....	19.1	19.8	18.3	19.8	21.4	21.1	19.7	17.5	19.0	17.4
Sacramento Valley area....	7.0	7.1	6.3	6.7	6.7	5.7	6.0	5.8	6.0	5.1
San Joaquin Valley area...	7.6	7.4	6.4	6.7	8.1	8.5	8.4	7.6	6.8	6.5
22 other counties.....	3.3	4.0	3.9	3.1	3.2	4.1	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.2
Commitment Offense										
Violent type offenses b/..	38.8	43.0	50.1	53.0	56.4	54.6	54.2	57.4	59.7	62.8
Property type offenses b/.	33.3	34.1	33.7	35.2	35.9	39.5	41.1	37.5	35.2	32.5
Narcotic & drug offenses..	8.2	6.2	5.5	2.8	2.2	2.0	1.6	1.7	2.0	1.5
Misc. Juv. Offenses.....	9.4	7.7	5.4	3.9	2.5	0.7	0.4	0.1	-	-
Other offenses.....	10.3	9.0	5.3	5.1	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.3	3.1	3.2
Admission Status										
1st Commitment.....	62.8	68.0	71.2	77.5	78.1	78.0	79.7	82.1	84.2	84.1
1st Return.....	21.9	18.2	17.8	15.0	16.3	17.3	16.1	14.8	13.4	13.2
2nd Return.....	8.5	8.4	7.0	5.0	3.8	3.5	3.5	2.7	2.0	2.2
3rd Return or more.....	6.8	5.4	4.0	2.5	1.8	1.2	0.7	0.4	0.4	.5
Ethnic Group										
White.....	40.1	41.1	38.4	36.7	36.0	36.2	33.3	32.0	29.4	25.8
Spanish-speaking/surname..	22.0	20.0	21.8	24.6	26.1	28.1	29.5	30.6	29.8	31.4
Black.....	35.5	36.3	37.2	36.2	35.3	33.3	34.7	35.1	38.6	40.3
Other.....	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.5
Full Board Status										
On Full Board.....	32.3	35.8	38.7	35.3	48.2	57.2	54.4	58.9	60.6	64.0
Not on Full Board.....	67.7	64.2	61.3	64.7	51.8	42.8	45.6	41.1	39.4	36.0
Age in years.....	19.0	19.1	19.0	18.8	18.7	18.6	18.6	18.7	18.8	18.8

a/ Includes all operating institutions during time shown (CYA, CDC, and Federal Inst.).
b/ Offenses included changed in 1975. See introduction.

END