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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Bureau of Justice Statistics
Bulletin

Prisoners in 1989

The number of prisoners under the jurisdiction of Federal or State correctional authorities at yearend 1989 reached a record 710,054. The States and the District of Columbia added 73,223 prisoners during the year; the Federal system, 9,243. The total increase, 82,466 inmates, also set a new record, exceeding the 1982 record increase by more than 38,000. The increase for 1989 brings total growth in the prison population since 1980 to 380,233 — an increase of about 115% in the 9-year period (table 1).

The 1989 growth rate (13.1%) was greater than the percentage increase recorded during 1988 (7.3%), and the number of new prisoners added during 1989 was nearly 40,000 higher than the number added during the preceding year (42,504). The 1989 increase translates into a nationwide need for nearly 1,600 new prison bedspaces per week.

Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year (referred to as "sentenced prisoners") accounted for 96% of the total prison population at the end of 1989, growing by 12.7% 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 grew at a slightly lower rate than sentenced prisoners in the States during the year (10.4% versus 12.7%). Among the 12,003 Federal prisoners with no sentences or sentences of 1 year or less were 1,955 under the jurisdiction of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, an increase of 99 from the number held at the end of 1988 (1,856). The number of Federal prisoners with no sentences or sentences of 1 year or less increased by 4,813 during 1989 (from 7,190 to 12,003) while the number of sentenced prisoners increased by 4,430.

May 1990

This Bulletin presents counts of the Nation's prisoners at the end of 1989. The year was marked by the largest absolute increase in the number of persons confined in State or Federal institutions recorded in the 65-year history of this statistical series. The 1989 increase of more than 82,000 prisoners approximately equals a demand for 1,600 new prison beds per week nationwide.

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, who make it possible for us to gather and report data on the Nation's prisoners.

Joseph M. Bessette
Acting Director

In Kansas and North Dakota, prison populations decreased during 1989. The total decrease for the 2 States was 210 inmates. Total prison population rose most rapidly during 1989 in Rhode Island (30.1%), Colorado (26.9%), South Dakota (25.2%), and Utah (21.3%). Thirty-one States reported total prisoner increases of 10% or more since yearend 1988. California's increase of more than 11,100 prisoners during the year was the largest for any single jurisdiction. At the end of 1989, California institutions confined about 1 in 8 prisoners nationwide. Colorado, for the third year in a row, experienced an annual increase of more than 20% in the number of State prisoners; its yearend 1989 population of 7,318 was 92% higher than the yearend 1986 population of 3,804.

Table 1. Change in the State and Federal prison populations, 1980-89

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	627,588	7.3	90.3
1989	710,054	13.1	115.3

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

Rates of incarceration increase

On December 31, 1989, the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents was 274, also setting a new record. Ten of the seventeen jurisdictions with rates equal to or greater than the rate for the Nation were located in the South, four were in the West, two were in the Midwest, and one was in the Northeast.

Since 1980 the number of sentenced inmates per 100,000 residents has risen more than 97%, from 139 to 274. During this period, per capita incarceration rates have increased the most in the West (a 151% growth from 105 to 264) and in the Northeast (a 148% growth from 87 to 216).

Table 2. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by region and State, yearend 1988 and 1989

	Total			Sentenced to more than 1 year			
	Advance 1989	Final 1988	Percent change, 1988-89	Advance 1989	Final 1988	Percent change, 1988-89	Incarceration rate, 1989*
U.S. total	710,054	627,588	13.1%	679,263	603,720	12.5%	274
Federal	59,171	49,928	18.5	47,168	42,738	10.4	19
State	650,883	577,660	12.7	632,095	560,982	12.7	255
Northeast	114,754	99,180	15.7%	110,181	94,522	16.6%	216
Connecticut	9,301	8,005	16.2	6,309	4,723	33.6	194
Maine	1,455	1,277	13.9	1,432	1,214	18.0	116
Massachusetts	7,524	6,757	11.4	7,268	6,455	12.6	123
New Hampshire	1,166	1,019	14.4	1,166	1,019	14.4	104
New Jersey	19,439	16,936	14.8	19,439	16,936	14.8	251
New York	51,227	44,560	15.0	51,227	44,560	15.0	285
Pennsylvania	21,267	17,900	18.8	21,256	17,883	18.9	176
Rhode Island	2,479	1,906	30.1	1,467	1,179	24.4	147
Vermont	896	820	9.3	617	553	11.6	108
Midwest	136,519	120,382	13.4%	136,221	120,077	13.4%	226
Illinois	24,712	21,081	17.2	24,712	21,081	17.2	211
Indiana	12,341	11,406	8.2	12,220	11,271	8.4	218
Iowa	3,584	3,034	18.1	3,584	3,034	18.1	126
Kansas	5,622	5,817	-3.4	5,622	5,817	-3.4	223
Michigan	31,746	27,612	15.0	31,746	27,612	15.0	342
Minnesota	3,103	2,799	10.9	3,103	2,799	10.9	71
Missouri	13,919	12,176	14.3	13,919	12,176	14.3	269
Nebraska	2,438	2,156	13.1	2,321	2,066	12.3	144
North Dakota	451	466	-3.2	404	414	-2.4	61
Ohio	30,538	26,462	15.4	30,538	26,462	15.4	279
South Dakota	1,277	1,020	25.2	1,277	1,020	25.2	178
Wisconsin	6,788	6,353	6.8	6,775	6,325	7.1	139
South	257,821	233,907	10.2%	249,284	226,735	9.9%	290
Alabama	13,907	12,610	10.3	13,575	12,357	9.9	329
Arkansas	6,409	5,519	16.1	6,306	5,519	14.3	261
Delaware	3,365	3,197	5.3	2,337	2,207	5.9	344
District of Columbia	9,268	8,831	4.9	6,771	6,628	2.2	1,129
Florida	39,999	34,732	15.2	39,966	34,681	15.2	311
Georgia	20,885	18,787	11.2	19,619	18,018	8.9	302
Kentucky	8,289	7,119	16.4	8,289	7,119	16.4	222
Louisiana	17,257	16,242	6.2	17,257	16,242	6.2	395
Maryland	16,514	14,276	15.7	15,378	13,572	13.3	325
Mississippi	7,911	7,384	7.1	7,770	7,251	6.2	294
North Carolina	17,451	17,078	2.2	16,695	16,251	2.7	252
Oklahoma	11,423	10,448	9.3	11,423	10,448	9.3	355
South Carolina	15,720	13,888	13.2	14,808	12,902	14.8	419
Tennessee**	10,621	7,720	--	10,562	7,720	--	213
Texas	40,789	40,437	.9	40,789	40,437	.9	239
Virginia	16,477	14,184	16.2	16,273	13,928	16.8	265
West Virginia	1,536	1,455	5.6	1,536	1,455	5.6	83
West	141,789	124,191	14.2%	136,409	119,648	14.0%	264
Alaska	2,744	2,588	6.0	1,908	1,862	2.5	363
Arizona	13,251	12,095	9.6	12,726	11,578	9.9	354
California	87,297	76,171	14.6	84,338	73,780	14.3	286
Colorado	7,318	5,765	26.9	7,318	5,765	26.9	220
Hawaii	2,470	2,300	7.4	1,606	1,510	6.4	143
Idaho	1,850	1,581	17.0	1,850	1,581	17.0	181
Montana	1,362	1,272	7.1	1,362	1,272	7.1	169
Nevada	5,387	4,881	10.4	5,387	4,881	10.4	473
New Mexico	3,034	2,825	7.4	2,861	2,723	5.1	186
Oregon	6,744	5,991	12.6	6,744	5,991	12.6	237
Utah	2,378	1,961	21.3	2,355	1,944	21.1	137
Washington	6,928	5,816	19.1	6,928	5,816	19.1	144
Wyoming	1,026	945	8.6	1,026	945	8.6	217

Note: Explanatory notes for each jurisdiction are reported in the appendix. Prisoner counts for 1988 may differ from those reported in previous publications. Counts for 1989 are subject to revision as updated figures become available.

--Not applicable.

*The number of prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year per 100,000 resident population.

**Data for 1989 include prisoners sentenced to State prison but held in local jails; 1989 data are not comparable to counts from prior years.

The per capita number of sentenced prisoners in the Midwest climbed 107% (from 109 to 226), and the rate in the South rose 54% (from 188 to 290). The number of sentenced Federal prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents has increased 111% (from 9 to 19) over the same period.

Prison populations in Northeastern States grow the fastest

During 1989 the percentage increase in the number of sentenced prisoners was highest in the Northeastern States, with a gain of 16.6%. This marks the first time since 1984 that a region other than the West has had the largest percentage growth in the sentenced prison population. The number of sentenced prisoners grew by 14.0% in the West, 13.4% in the Midwest, and 9.9% in the Southern States. The sentenced Federal prison population grew by 10.4%. Since 1980 sentenced prison populations in Western States have increased nearly 203%, compared to growth of about 155% in the Northeast, 111% in the Midwest, and about 75% in the South (table 3). Over the same period the number of sentenced Federal prisoners rose by almost 129%. Overall, the number of sentenced prisoners nationwide has increased by 115% since 1980, from 315,974 to 679,263.

Since 1980, 30 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal prison system have more than doubled the number of sentenced prisoners. Alaska, California, New Hampshire, and New Jersey have experienced a threefold increase. In 1980 these 4 States housed 29,725 sentenced prisoners or 9.4% of the Nation's sentenced prisoners; in 1989 they housed 106,851 or 15.7% of the sentenced inmates nationwide.

Table 3. Percent change in sentenced prison population from 1980 to 1989, by region and State

Region	Percent increase									
	0-49%		50%-79%		80%-99%		100%-149%		150% or more	
Northeast					Vermont	80.4	Rhode Island	140.1	New Hampshire	257.7
							New York	136.7	New Jersey	249.4
							Massachusetts	130.7	Pennsylvania	162.0
							Connecticut	129.4		
							Maine	113.4		
Midwest	Iowa	44.6	Wisconsin	70.2	Indiana	94.6	Missouri	143.1	Ohio	162.0
			Nebraska	65.5			Illinois	130.4		
			Minnesota	55.1			Kansas	125.4		
							North Dakota	118.4		
							Michigan	109.9		
							South Dakota	109.7		
South	Texas	36.5	Georgia	64.6	S. Carolina	99.4	Dist. of Col.	149.0		
	W. Virginia	22.2	Tennessee	50.4	Maryland	98.9	Oklahoma	138.2		
	N. Carolina	15.5			Florida	97.7	Kentucky	131.0		
					Louisiana	94.1	Arkansas	116.6		
					Virginia	89.6	Delaware	115.0		
							Alabama	113.2		
							Mississippi	103.0		
West			Washington	57.5	Wyoming	92.1	New Mexico	138.6	California	262.5
					Montana	84.6	Idaho	126.4	Alaska	234.2
					Colorado	80.5	Oregon	112.6	Nevada	192.9
									Arizona	191.9
									Hawaii	157.4
									Utah	153.8
Regional totals			South	74.8			Midwest	111.2	West	202.8
									Northeast	155.3
U.S. summary							States	114.0		
							Federal	128.8		
							Total	115.0		

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

Table 4. The prison situation among the States, yearend 1989

10 States with the largest 1989 prison populations	Number of inmates	10 States with the highest incarceration rates, 1989*	Prisoners per 100,000 residents	10 States with the largest percent increases in prison population: 1988-89*	Percent increase	1980-89*	Percent increase
California	87,297	Nevada	473	Rhode Island	30.1%	California	262.5%
New York	51,227	South Carolina	419	Colorado	26.9	New Hampshire	257.7
Texas	40,789	Louisiana	395	South Dakota	25.2	New Jersey	249.4
Florida	39,999	Alaska	363	Utah	21.3	Alaska	234.2
Michigan	31,746	Oklahoma	355	Washington	19.1	Nevada	192.9
Ohio	30,538	Arizona	354	Pennsylvania	18.8	Arizona	191.9
Illinois	24,712	Delaware	344	Iowa	18.1	Ohio	162.0
Pennsylvania	21,267	Michigan	342	Illinois	17.2	Pennsylvania	[illegible]
Georgia	20,885	Alabama	329	Idaho	17.0	Hawaii	157.4
New Jersey	19,439	Maryland	325	Kentucky	16.4	Utah	153.8

Note: The District of Columbia as a wholly urban jurisdiction is excluded.

*Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year.

California's increase of 61,074 sentenced prisoners since 1980 accounts for 67% of the increase for the West and 18% of the increase among all States over the period. In 1980, 7.9% of the Nation's sentenced State prisoners were in California; in 1989, 13.3%. (For additional State comparisons, see table 4.)

Female prisoner population growth outpaces that of males

Women inmates numbered 40,556, increasing at a faster rate during 1989 (24.4%) than males (12.5%) (table 5). The rate of incarceration for sentenced males (531 per 100,000 males in the resident population), however, was about 18 times higher than for sentenced females (29 per 100,000 females in the resident population).

Table 5. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities, by sex, yearend 1988 and 1989

	Male	Female
Total		
Advance 1989	669,498	40,556
Final 1988	594,996	32,592
Percent change, 1988-89	12.5%	24.4%
Sentenced to more than 1 year		
Advance 1989	642,138	37,125
Final 1988	573,587	30,133
Percent change, 1988-89	12.0%	23.2%
Incarceration rate, 1989*	531	29

*The number of prisoners sentenced to more than 1 year per 100,000 residents of each sex on December 31, 1989.

The female prison population has grown more rapidly than the male population in each year since 1981. The higher growth rates for women over the 1981-89 period have raised the percentage of women in the Nation's prison population from 4.2% in 1981 to 5.7% in 1989 (table 6).

In 1989, 21 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal system had more than 500 female inmates. Among these jurisdictions, 20 had increases of at least 10%, led by the District of Columbia's increase of 54.3% (from 372 in 1988 to 574 in 1989). California's increase during 1988, 1,107 inmates, accounted for 13.9% of the nationwide increase of 7,964.

Table 6. Women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal institutions, yearend 1989

Jurisdiction	Number of women inmates	Percent of all inmates	Percent change in women inmate population, 1987-88
U.S. total	40,556	5.7%	24.4%
Federal	4,435	7.5	36.8
State	36,121	5.5	23.1
States with at least 500 women inmates:			
California	6,000	6.9%	22.6%
Florida	2,551	6.4	26.9
New York	2,465	4.8	40.1
Texas	2,044	5.0	24.0
Ohio	1,995	6.5	26.5
Michigan	1,586	5.0	19.0
Georgia	1,110	5.3	19.5
Illinois	1,019	4.1	13.3
Pennsylvania	944	4.4	23.1
South Carolina	929	5.9	16.3
Oklahoma	900	7.9	23.1
New Jersey	886	4.6	25.9
Alabama	845	6.1	12.4
North Carolina	845	4.8	7.9
Virginia	794	4.8	35.0
Arizona	780	5.9	9.2
Louisiana	742	4.3	10.9
Maryland	728	4.4	41.1
Missouri	717	5.2	13.8
Connecticut	647	7.0	17.6
Indiana	624	6.7	24.3
District of Columbia	574	6.2	54.3

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

At the end of 1989, 20 jurisdictions reported a total of 18,236 prisoners held in local jails or other facilities because of crowding in their prisons (table 7). The number of State prisoners held locally increased by 27.0% over that of yearend 1988. Three States — Louisiana, New Jersey, and Tennessee — accounted for more than half of the prisoners sentenced to prison but incarcerated locally. Because of crowding in State facilities, five States — Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Tennessee — held in local jails more than 10% of the prisoners sentenced to State prison. Overall, 2.6% of the State prison population was confined in local jails on December 31, 1989, because of prison crowding.

Table 7. Number of State prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding, by State, yearend 1988 and 1989

States housing prisoners in local jails	Prisoners held in local jails: Number 1988	Number 1989	As a percent of all prisoners 1988	As a percent of all prisoners 1989
Total	14,314	18,236	2.3%	2.6%
Alabama	471	1,018	3.7	7.3
Arizona[a]	485	117	3.9	.9
Arkansas[b]	340	596	5.8	9.3
Colorado	321	410	5.6	5.6
District of Columbia[c]	360	821	3.9	8.1
Idaho[b]	200	130	11.2	7.0
Indiana[a]	0	525	0	4.1
Kentucky	932	1,411	13.1	17.0
Louisiana	3,877	4,138	24.0	24.0
Maine	21	22	1.6	1.5
Massachusetts[a]	303	377	4.3	4.8
Mississippi	1,042	1,159	14.1	14.7
New Jersey	2,267	3,024	13.4	15.6
Oregon	0	127	0	1.9
South Carolina	434	405	3.1	2.6
Tennessee[b]	2,218	2,733	22.8	25.7
Utah	49	91	2.5	3.8
Vermont[d]	34	34	4.1	3.8
Virginia	960	1,025	6.8	11.5
Wisconsin	0	73	0	1.1

[a]For States not including jail backups in their jurisdiction counts, the percentage of jurisdiction population was calculated on the total number of State inmates in jail and prison.

[b]States that did not count jail backups in their 1988 jurisdiction count but did include these prisoners in their 1989 jurisdiction count.

[c]Includes inmates housed in other States as a result of prison crowding.

[d]Inmates sentenced to State prison but held in local lockups.

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 1989 — 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, 39 supplied rated capacities, 43 provided operational capacities, and 37 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-two jurisdictions reported one capacity measure or gave the same figure for each capacity measure they reported.)

Table 8. Reported Federal and State prison capacities, yearend 1989

Jurisdiction	Rated capacity	Operational capacity	Design capacity	Population* as a percent of: Highest capacity	Population* as a percent of: Lowest capacity
Federal**	32,494	...	...	163%	163%
Northeast					
Connecticut	7,929	8,722	...	107%	117%
Maine	1,049	1,049	1,049	132	132
Massachusetts	...	...	4,494	167	167
New Hampshire	834	1,058	683	110	171
New Jersey	12,742	13,969	11,977	118	137
New York	51,617	51,617	42,472	99	121
Pennsylvania	...	...	13,616	156	156
Rhode Island	1,756	1,804	1,674	137	148
Vermont	597	597	597	144	144
Midwest					
Illinois	22,514	22,514	18,810	110%	131%
Indiana	9,101	...	...	136	136
Iowa	3,003	3,003	3,003	119	119
Kansas	5,285	...	...	102	102
Michigan	24,850	...	...	128	128
Minnesota	3,098	3,113	3,098	100	100
Missouri	15,121	15,121	...	92	92
Nebraska	...	...	1,666	146	146
North Dakota	...	556	556	81	81
Ohio	...	...	19,848	154	154
South Dakota	560	695	560	184	228
Wisconsin	4,889	6,672	4,889	101	137
South					
Alabama	11,662	11,662	11,662	111%	111%
Arkansas	...	5,790	...	100	100
Delaware	2,915	3,138	2,015	107	167
District of Columbia	8,253	9,315	8,253	93	105
Florida	45,293	44,839	31,309	88	128
Georgia	...	20,421	...	102	102
Kentucky	6,646	6,485	...	103	106
Louisiana	13,535	13,535	13,535	97	97
Maryland	...	16,554	11,477	100	144
Mississippi	7,204	7,657	7,091	83	90
North Carolina	18,838	15,097	...	93	116
Oklahoma	...	7,888	...	145	145
South Carolina	14,768	14,768	11,119	104	138
Tennessee	...	8,387	...	94	94
Texas	43,117	40,961	43,117	95	100
Virginia	12,083	12,083	12,083	118	118
West Virginia	1,547	1,640	1,547	94	99
West					
Alaska	2,596	...	...	106%	106%
Arizona	...	13,304	...	100	100
California	48,311	82,115	48,311	106	181
Colorado	4,299	5,590	3,538	124	195
Hawaii	...	2,141	1,577	115	157
Idaho	1,259	1,826	1,259	94	137
Montana	1,030	1,314	1,030	104	132
Nevada	5,382	5,382	4,370	100	123
New Mexico	2,997	3,001	2,997	101	101
Oregon	5,167	5,493	...	120	128
Utah	...	2,464	2,210	93	103
Washington	5,756	6,547	5,756	106	120
Wyoming	788	795	609	129	168

... Data not available.
*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.
**Excludes prisoners housed in contract or other non-Federal facilities.

Most jurisdictions are operating above reported 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 1989, 10 States reported that they were operating below 95% of their highest capacity. Forty-five jurisdictions and the Federal prison system reported operating at 100% or more of their lowest capacity; 39 of these held populations that met or exceeded their highest reported capacities.

Overall at the end of 1989, State prisons were estimated to be operating at 107% 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 capacities on each measure. The Federal system was estimated to be operating at 63% over capacity.[1]

Between 1988 and 1989, State and Federal prison capacities were estimated to have increased by approximately 40,000-60,000 beds (based on the highest and lowest capacities reported in table 8). At the end of 1989, prisons nationwide were estimated to be 10%-29% over their capacities (table 10) based on the following:

	Reported population*	Highest capacity	Lowest capacity
U.S. total	685,083	621,144	531,616
Federal	52,984	32,494	32,494
State	632,099	588,650	499,122

*Reported population excludes prisoners housed in local jails and other facilities where they have been included in the jurisdiction count and female prisoners in four States for which capacity data for women's facilities were not reported. Federal figures exclude populations held in contracted community-based facilities.

[1]The Federal prison system in 1989 abandoned the operational capacity measure reported in prior years. They also utilize a designated capacity for management purposes that establishes an average capacity for facilities within security levels. For 1989, they reported the designated capacity to be 53,958 for Federal institutions. This capacity measure is not equivalent to the three measures gathered from the States.

Table 9. State prison population and capacity, by region, 1989

	Prison population	Highest capacity	Lowest capacity	Population as a percent of: Highest capacity	Lowest capacity
Total	632,099	588,650	499,122	107%	127%
Northeast	111,628	96,926	84,491	115	132
Midwest	136,200	112,424	106,787	121	128
South	243,210	246,732	215,120	99	113
West	141,061	132,568	92,724	106	152

Note: Population counts exclude prisoners sentenced to State prison but held in local jails and female offenders in 4 States for which the capacity of women's facilities was not reported.

Prison population growth may reflect increasing certainty of punishment

There is some evidence that during the period from 1980 to 1988 changes in criminal justice policies have increased from earlier levels a criminal's probability of being incarcerated. 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).

Table 10. Population as a percent of reported capacity for State and Federal prisons, 1987-89

	U.S. total	Federal prisons	State prisons
Population as a percent of capacity*			
Highest			
1987	107%	137%	105%
1988	109	133	107
1989	110	163	107
Lowest			
1987	124%	173%	120%
1988	125	172	123
1989	129	163	127
Net change in capacity, 1987-88			
Highest	62,603	3,382	59,221
Lowest	40,020	3,382	36,638

Note: States were asked to report their rated, operational, and design capacities. Tabulations reflect the highest and lowest of the 3 capacities reported for 1987, 1988, and 1989.
*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.

During the rest of the decade this ratio steadily declined, reaching 23 in 1970, and was relatively stable during the 1970's. Between 1980 and 1988 the ratio increased 104%, from 25 commitments per 1,000 reported crimes to 51.

Table 11. Court commitments to State prisons, relative to offenses and arrests, 1960-88

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	219
1983	39	247
1984	39	246
1985	42	266
1986	43	268
1987	46	301
1988	51	291

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.*, 1978-88 (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.

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 rest of the 1970's, but it increased by 48% between 1980 and 1988, from 196 commitments per 1,000 adult arrests to 291. (See *Methodological note* for more detail on these data.)

Admissions-to-crime ratios for individual States provide an alternative measure of prison use to population-based rates (table 12). 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 magnitude of the crime problem during a year.

Table 12. State prison admissions, relative to selected serious offenses and the adult population, by State, 1980 and 1988

Region and State	Admissions per 1,000 selected serious offenses		Admissions per 100,000 adults	
	1980	1988	1980	1988
U.S. total	25	51	80	144
Northeast	15	40	48	89
Connecticut	37	66	105	146
Maine	28	43	54	57
Massachusetts	8	22	26	47
New Hampshire	14	45	30	51
New Jersey	14	43	49	88
New York	13	42	56	128
Pennsylvania	17	32	33	45
Rhode Island	12	26	35	57
Vermont	32	62	77	102
Midwest	28	50	71	105
Illinois*	32	39	78	101
Indiana	37	66	88	118
Iowa	28	50	50	75
Kansas	26	50	69	104
Michigan	20	42	67	118
Minnesota	12	33	25	53
Missouri	24	54	74	122
Nebraska	35	49	56	69
North Dakota	47	82	36	56
Ohio	45	71	97	143
South Dakota	61	117	71	102
Wisconsin	26	46	46	59
South	38	61	116	187
Alabama	49	57	138	142
Arkansas	50	58	104	122
Delaware	30	84	88	168
District of Columbia	36	77	213	392
Florida*	24	80	109	356
Georgia	49	56	156	178
Kentucky*	47	62	86	97
Louisiana	31	49	100	151
Maryland	30	55	107	145
Mississippi	43	58	97	132
North Carolina	61	87	158	221
Oklahoma	38	82	111	235
South Carolina	47	58	153	174
Tennessee	33	17	89	41
Texas	38	45	129	179
Virginia	36	90	75	133
West Virginia	30	43	38	43
West	17	44	66	130
Alaska	42	132	115	259
Arizona	24	58	97	173
California	15	45	66	144
Colorado	16	38	55	97
Hawaii	9	26	28	54
Idaho	34	67	78	106
Montana	34	45	55	51
Nevada	26	81	136	254
New Mexico	17	30	53	106
Oregon	27	42	83	128
Utah	15	30	39	55
Washington	14	26	46	80
Wyoming	38	67	71	91

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 the resident population age 18 or older.

*The number of reported crimes in 1988 was estimated by the FBI.

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

Between 1980 and 1988 the ratio of court commitments to prison and reported crimes increased 104%, from 25 commitments per 1,000 crimes to 51 (table 13). Over the same period the number of prison commitments per 100,000 adult residents increased 80%, from 80 to 144. The Northeast had the largest percentage increase in the number of commitments relative to reported crime while the West experienced the largest gain in prison commitments relative to population. However, in both 1980 and 1988 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.[2] Since 1980 the number of adult arrests for drug violations has increased by 123%, and the number of arrests for sale or manufacturing of illegal drugs has grown by 180% (table 14).

[2]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.

Table 13. Percent change in State prison admissions, relative to selected serious offenses and the adult population, by region, 1980 and 1988

	Admissions per 100,000 selected serious offenses			Admissions per 100,000 adults		
Region	1980	1988	Percent change, 1980-88	1980	1988	Percent change, 1980-88
U.S. total	25	51	104%	80	144	80%
Northeast	15	40	167	48	89	85
Midwest	28	50	79	71	105	48
South	38	61	61	116	187	61
West	17	44	159	66	130	97

Note: See note on table 11.

Table 14. Adult arrests for drug violations, 1980-88

	Number of adult arrests for drug violations		
Year	Total	Sale or manufacture	Possession
1980	471,165	102,714	368,451
1981	468,056	93,143	374,913
1982	584,850	119,309	465,541
1983	583,474	128,948	454,526
1984	623,719	137,218	486,501
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
Percent change, 1980-88	123.0%	180.3%	107.0%

Source: Estimates derived from *Crime in the U.S.*, 1980-88.

Methodological note

This Bulletin is based on an advance count of prisoners conducted immediately after a calendar year ends. A detailed final count will be published later.

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

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	250,466
1965	74,724	1,669,890	286,685
1970	67,304	2,943,820	395,678
1975	112,803	4,278,380	609,764
1980	130,323	5,139,720	666,063
1981	149,186	5,141,520	697,409
1982	164,648	4,769,490	752,873
1983	173,289	4,387,990	702,662
1984	166,927	4,257,680	677,275
1985	183,131	4,400,740	688,864
1986	203,315	4,729,540	757,797
1987	225,627	4,720,183	749,650
1988	245,310	4,784,298	841,802

Note: The number of court commitments to prison is based on the total number of entries from sentencing courts with sentences greater 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 police agencies. 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 - 65.7%	1983 - 72.1%
1965 - 61.4%	1984 - 73.0%
1970 - 61.5%	1985 - 73.2%
1975 - 60.8%	1986 - 75.4%
1980 - 67.4%	1987 - 75.7%
1981 - 69.1%	1988 - 77.3%
1982 - 71.5%	

Explanatory notes

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

Alaska. In this State, prisons and jails form one integrated system. All National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations.

Arizona. Population counts are based on custody data. Population counts exclude 110 male inmates and 7 female inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

Arkansas. Beginning with the December 31, 1989, count, Arkansas separated inmates by length of sentence and included backups in local jails in the jurisdiction count. These revisions will affect comparisons to prior years' data.

California. Population counts are based on custody data.

Colorado. Population counts for "inmates with a maximum sentence over 1 year" include an undetermined number of "inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less." The sex of 43 inmates in intensive supervision programs was not reported, but these inmates are included in the male population counts.

Connecticut. In this State, prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations.

Delaware. In this State, prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations. Breakdowns by sentence length are estimates.

District of Columbia. Population counts exclude those inmates housed in Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities. Population counts exclude 821 male inmates housed in other States as a result of crowding.

Federal. Population counts for "unsentenced inmates" include 1,939 males and 16 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.

Florida. Population counts are based on custody data.

Georgia. Population counts are based on custody data. In accordance with the policy of Georgia's Department of Corrections (DOC), inmates housed in local jails awaiting pickup are not included in the jurisdiction population until they enter a State prison.

Hawaii. In this State, prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations.

Idaho. Beginning with the December 31, 1989, count, population counts include inmates housed in local jails because of crowding. This revision will affect comparisons to prior years' data.

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.

Kentucky. The counts reported for the number of persons in local jails because of crowding exclude an undetermined number of inmates held in out-of-State jails because of crowding.

Maine. Population counts are as of January 1, 1990. Female capacities are in the male capacity figures reported.

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

Massachusetts. Population counts are based on custody data as of December 29, 1989. Population counts exclude 86 unsentenced females in DOC facilities under county jurisdiction and 365 male and 12 female inmates housed in local jails because

of crowding. Population counts for "inmates with a maximum sentence over 1 year " 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 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.

Nevada. Reported capacity figures exclude space for women at Nevada's Restitution Centers.

New Hampshire. Beginning December 31, 1989, New Hampshire will report female capacity because of the opening of a women's facility in November 1989.

New Jersey. Rated, operational, and design capacities include 512 bedspaces in county facilities.

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

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

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

Oregon. Population counts are as of January 1, 1990. Operational capacity excludes 127 beds rented from the State of Washington. Oregon's counts for jail backups include 74 men, 40 of whom are in Texas, and 53 women, 24 of whom are in local work release centers.

Rhode Island. In this State, prisons and jails form one integrated system. All NPS data include, therefore, both jail and prison populations.

Tennessee. Beginning December 31, 1989, population counts by sentence length are included, and the jurisdiction count includes inmates housed in local jails because of crowding.

Texas. Population counts are based on custody data.

Vermont. Population counts are as of December 14, 1989. In this State, 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.

Washington. Capacity figures exclude space in State work release facilities that housed 552 male and 38 female inmates on December 31, 1989.

West Virginia. The female population counts are based on custody data. The male jurisdiction count excludes an undetermined number of inmates housed in local jails awaiting pickup.

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.

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletins are prepared principally by BJS staff. This Bulletin was written by Lawrence A. Greenfeld, corrections unit chief, and was edited by Thomas Hester. Statistical assistance was provided by Lallis Cotton. Marilyn Marbrook, publications unit chief, administered production, assisted by Betty Sherman, Yvonne Boston, and Jayne Pugh. Collection and processing of these data were conducted under the general supervision of Lawrence A. McGinn and Gertrude Odom of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, assisted by Carol Spivey.

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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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