

The Footprint: Tracking the Size of America's Criminal Justice System

Methodology and Data Sources

The analysis, entitled, [The Footprint: Tracking the Size of America's Criminal Justice System](#), is a series of interactive charts that summarizes trends in crime, arrests, and correctional control (incarceration and community supervision), comparing current levels with their most recent peaks or valleys.

Depending on data availability, analyses reflect national data from the last two to six decades. Reliable data are not available for all analyses during the same periods. Data were collected across various reports, data tools, and databases; source data are provided below. Data were available in both published reports and online data tools for some analyses. Please consult the source for additional details and updates to methodology, which may result in slightly different values between sources. In all cases, trend data were consistent across sources. Racial and ethnic identity data are presented as measured in the primary source, therefore data on all racial and ethnic identity categories are not available for all analyses. Sex data are presented as binary (male/female) based on how sex was measured over time in the primary source. More recent data sometimes include a transgender category in the primary source; these data are not presented in the current analysis due to the limited number of years for which this information is available.

CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION

- **Count and Rate, Reported Crime:**
 - 1960-1978: The Disaster Center. (2019). *United States crime rates 1960-2019*. <https://www.disastercenter.com/crime/uscrime.htm>
 - 1979-2023: Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). *Crime data explorer: Summary reporting system dataset*. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/home>
 - Note: 2021 and 2022 data were revised with the 2024 Summary Reporting System release.

- **Count and Rate, Criminal Victimization:**
 - 1993-2023: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *National crime victimization survey data dashboard (N-DASH)*. <https://ncvs.bjs.ojp.gov/Home>
 - Note: 2006 data are not comparable to other years due to changes in survey methodology.

ARRESTS

- **Adults:**
 - **Count and Rate, Offense Type, Racial and Ethnic Identity, and Sex:**
 - 1980-2020: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (n.d.). *Statistical briefing book: Arrest trends by age, race, and gender*. https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistical-briefing-book/crime/faqs/ucr_trend
- **Juveniles:**
 - **Count and Rate, Offense Type, Racial Identity, and Sex:**
 - 1980-2020: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (n.d.). *Youth arrest rates: Law enforcement and youth crime*. <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistical-briefing-book/crime/faqs/jar#1-0>

PROBATION

- **Count and Rate:**
 - 1980-1993: Snell, T. L. (1995). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 156241). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpop93bk.pdf>
 - 1994-2016: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Probation*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-probation>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2017-2020: Kluckow, R. & Zeng, Z. (2022). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 303184). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus20st.pdf>
 - 2021-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.

- Rates were generated using U.S. population counts drawn from: Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). *Crime data explorer: Summary reporting system dataset*.
<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/downloads>
- **Racial and Ethnic Identity:**
 - 2001-2010: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Probation*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-probation>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2011-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.
- **Sex:**
 - 1994-2016: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Probation*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-probation>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2017-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.

PAROLE

- **Count and Rate:**
 - 1980-1993: Snell, T. L. (1995). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 156241). Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpop93bk.pdf>
 - 1994-2016: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Parole*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-parole>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2017-2020: Kluckow, R. & Zeng, Z. (2022). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 303184). Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/correctional-populations-united-states-2020-statistical-tables>
 - 2021-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.

- Rates were generated using U.S. population counts drawn from: Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). *Crime data explorer: Summary reporting system dataset*.
<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/downloads>
- **Racial and Ethnic Identity:**
 - 2001-2010: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Parole*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-parole>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2011-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.
- **Sex:**
 - 1994-2016: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Parole*. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/corrections-statistical-analysis-tool-csat-parole>
 - Note: This source is no longer accessible online.
 - 2017-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Probation and parole in the United States, YEAR*.

JAILS

- **Count and Rate:**
 - 1960-1978: Cahalan, M. L. (1986). *Historical corrections statistics in the United States, 1850-1984* (NCJ 102529), Table 4-1.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/hcsus5084.pdf>
 - 1980-1982: Snell, T. L. (1995). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 156241). Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpop93bk.pdf>
 - 1983-2020: Prison Policy Initiative. (n.d.). *State prisons, local jails and federal prisons, incarceration rates and counts, 1925-2020*.
<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/data/>
 - 2021-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Jail inmates in YEAR*.
 - Data from 1990-2004 were estimated by multiplying the percentage of each racial group by the total population of adults incarcerated in jails.

- Rates were generated using U.S. Census Intercensal Population Estimates, <https://www.nber.org/research/data/us-census-intercensal-population-estimates>
- **Racial and Ethnic Identity, Sex, and Juveniles:**
 - 1983-1991: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Jail inmates in YEAR*.
 - 1992-1993: Snell, T. L. (1995). *Correctional populations in the United States* (NCJ 156241). Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpop93bk.pdf>
 - 1994-1997: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2000). *Correctional populations in the United States, 1997* (NCJ 177613).
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus9702.pdf>
 - 1998-2006: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Prison and jail inmates at midyear*.
 - 2007-2014: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Jail inmates at midyear, statistical tables*.
 - 2015: Minton, T. D., & Zeng, Z. (2016). *Jail inmates in 2016* (NCJ 250394). Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ji15.pdf>
 - 2016-2021: Zeng, Z. (2022). *Jail inmates in 2021* (NCJ 304888), Table 2. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/ji21st.pdf>
 - 2022: Zeng, Z. (2023). *Jail inmates in 2022* (NCJ 307086), Table 2. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/ji22st.pdf>
- **Conviction Status:**
 - 1982-2022: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports, *Jail inmates in YEAR*.

STATE AND FEDERAL PRISONS

- **Count and Rate:**
 - 1960-1977: National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. (2005). *Historical statistics on prisoners in state and federal institutions, Yearend 1925-1986: United States*. <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR08912.v1>
 - 1978-2019: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Corrections statistical analysis tool (CSAT): Quick Tables*. <https://csat.bjs.ojp.gov/quick-tables>

- 2020-2021: Carson, E. A. (2022). *Prisoners in 2021 – statistical tables* (NCJ 305125), Table 1. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/prisoners-2021-statistical-tables>
- 2022: Carson, E. A. (2023). *Prisoners in 2022 – statistical tables* (NCJ 307149), Table 1. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf>
- **Offense Type:**
 - 1990, 1995-2019: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports. *Prisoners in YEAR*.
 - 1991-1994: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Individual annual reports. *Correctional populations in the United States, YEAR*.
 - 2020-2021: Carson, E. A. (2022). *Prisoners in 2021 – statistical tables* (NCJ 305125), Table 16. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/p21st.pdf>
 - 2022: Carson, E. A. (2023). *Prisoners in 2022 – statistical tables* (NCJ 307149), Table 17 (state) and Table 20 (federal). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf>
 - When updated estimates were provided in subsequent annual reports, the newer data were used.
- **Racial and Ethnic Identity:**
 - 1990-2020: United States Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2021). *National Prisoner Statistics, 1978-2020* (ICPSR 38249). Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.
<https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR38249.v1>
- **Sex:**
 - 1978-2010: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Female prisoners under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, 1978-2010*. Generated using the Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool at www.bjs.gov
 - 1978-2010: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Male prisoners under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, 1978-2010*. Generated using the Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool at www.bjs.gov

- 2011-2021: Carson, E. A. (2022). *Prisoners in 2021 – statistical tables* (NCJ 305125), Table 2, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/p21st.pdf>
- 2022: Carson, E. A. (2023). *Prisoners in 2022 – statistical tables* (NCJ 307149), Table 2. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf>
- **Juveniles:**
 - 2000-2019: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). *Number of inmates under 18 held at year-end, national, 1980-2019*. Generated using the Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool at www.bjs.gov
 - 2020-2021: Carson, E. A. (2022). *Prisoners in 2021 – statistical tables* (NCJ 305125), Table 15. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/p21st.pdf>
 - 2022: Carson, E. A. (2023). *Prisoners in 2022 – statistical tables* (NCJ 307149), Table 15. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf>