

Incarceration Trends in ILLINOIS

Incarceration in Local Jails and State Prisons



REGIONAL RANK
7 of 7 in total incarceration

Total people...

...locked up in Illinois

169%

INCREASE

24,292 people

65,320 people

1983

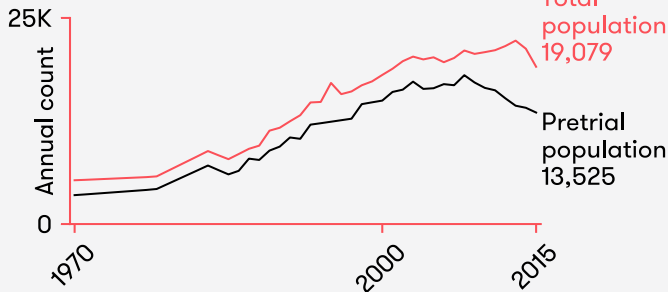
2015

Since 1970, the rate of incarceration in America has expanded more than fourfold, and the United States leads the world in locking people up. Many places in America have begun to reduce their use of prisons and jails, but progress has been uneven. Although the number of people sent to state prisons and county jails from urban areas has decreased, that number has continued to rise in many rural places. Racial disparities in incarceration remain strikingly wide. Women constitute a rising number of those behind bars.

This fact sheet provides at-a-glance information about how many people are locked up in both state prisons and county jails and shows where the state stands on a variety of metrics, so that policymakers and the public can better determine where to target reforms.

STATE TOTALS

JAILS



% change in jail population

SINCE 1970

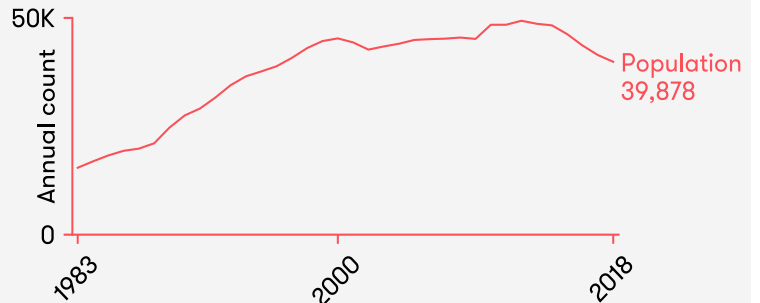
SINCE 2000

259% ↑

5% ↑

Since 1970, the total jail population has increased 259%. In 2015, pretrial detainees constituted 71% of the total jail population in Illinois.

PRISONS



% change in prison population

SINCE 1983

SINCE 2000

158% ↑

-12% ↓

Since 1983, the prison custody population has increased 158%. In 2018, there were 39,878 people in the Illinois prison system.

RACE

more on pg 2 →

JAILS

2015

15% of state pop. | 49% of jail pop.



PRISONS

2017

15% of state pop. | 56% of prison pop.



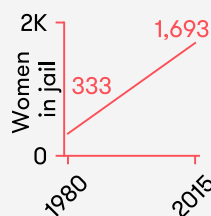
In Illinois, Black people constituted 15% of state residents, but 49% of people in jail and 56% of people in prison.

GENDER

more on pg 2 →

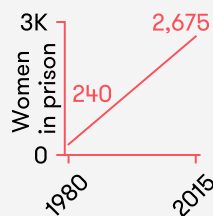
JAILS

407% ↑



PRISONS

1,015% ↑



Since 1980, the number of women in jail has increased 407%, and the number of women in prison has increased 1,015%.

GEOGRAPHY

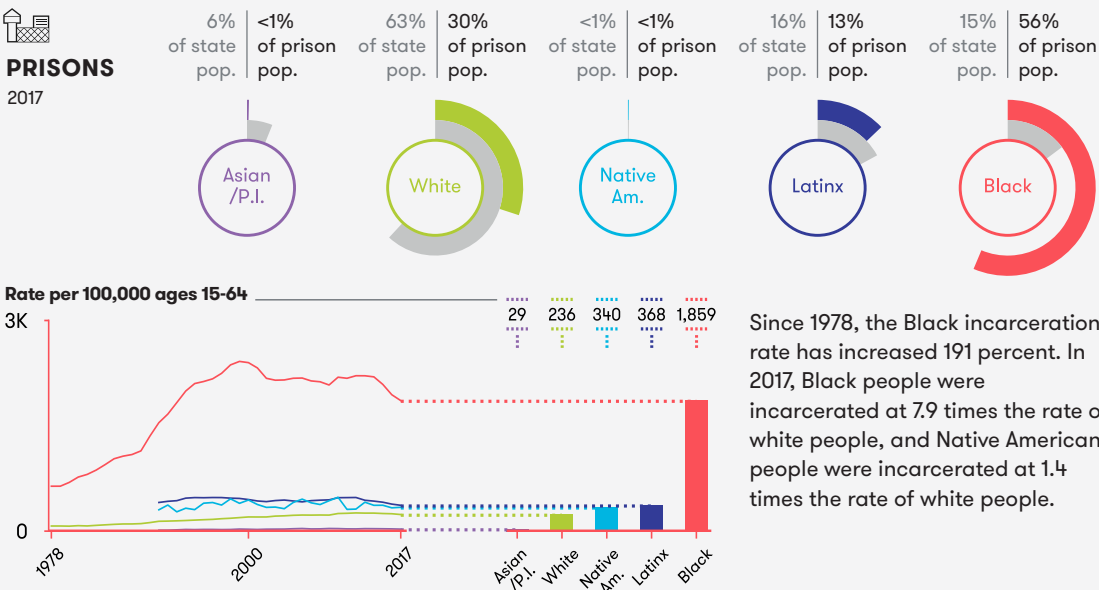
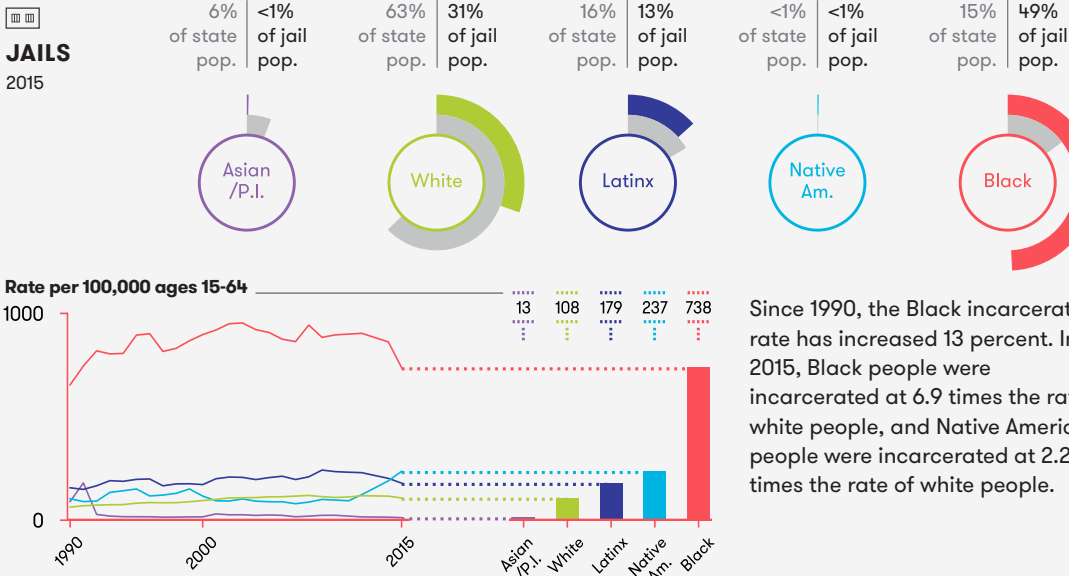
more on pg 3 →

Top admission rates (rate per 100K)

2015		2013	
COUNTY	JAILS	COUNTY	PRISONS
Alexander	35,346	Hardin	838
Pulaski	31,877	Macon	801
Union	31,564	Marion	765
Kankakee	16,659	Union	724
Piatt	14,106	Montgomery	622

Incarceration is not only an urban phenomenon. In fact, on a per capita basis, the most rural places in the state often lock up the most people in jail and send the most people to prison.

RACE AND ETHNICITY



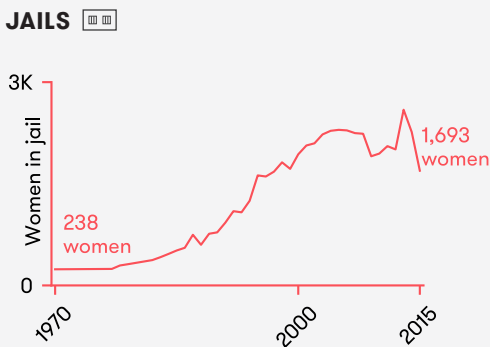
NATIONAL CONTEXT

The overrepresentation of Black Americans in the justice system is well documented. Black men constitute about 13 percent of the male population, but about 35 percent of those incarcerated. One in five Black people born in their lifetime, compared to one in 10 Latinx people and one in 29 white people.

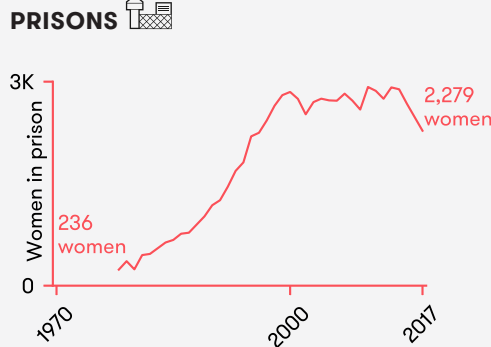
Discriminatory criminal justice policies and practices at all stages of the justice process have unjustifiably disadvantaged Black people, including through disparity in the enforcement of seemingly race-neutral laws. Studies have found that Black people are more likely to be stopped by the police, detained pretrial, charged with more serious crimes, and sentenced more harshly than white people—even when controlling for things like offense severity.

Nationally, Latinx people are also overrepresented in prisons and jails, yet common data misclassification leads to distorted, lower estimates of Latinx incarceration rates and distorted, higher estimates of white incarceration rates. Smaller and inconsistent data reporting make it difficult to measure the effects of racism for incarcerated people of other racial groups.

GENDER



The number of women in Illinois' jails has increased more than sevenfold, from 238 in 1970 to 1,693 in 2015.



The number of women in Illinois' prisons has increased more than ninefold, from 236 in 1970 to 2,279 in 2017.

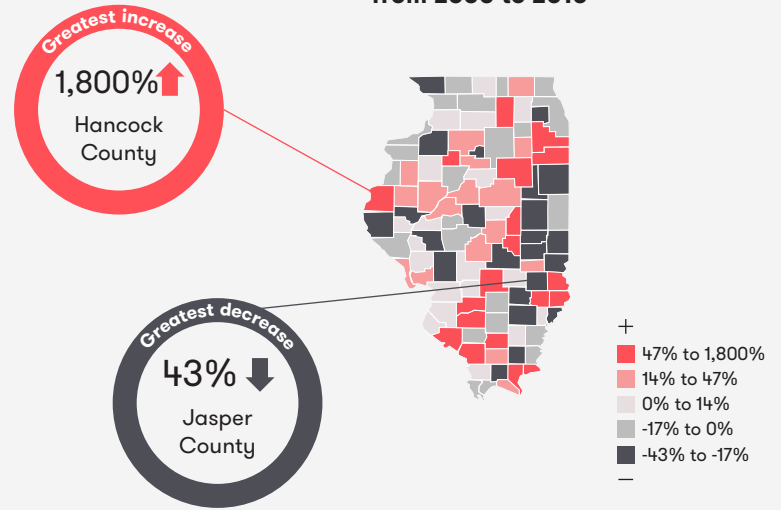
NATIONAL CONTEXT

Although men's jail admissions have declined by 26 percent since 2008, women's admissions have increased both as a total number and as a proportion of all jail admissions. Women now make up almost one out of every four jail admissions, up from fewer than one in 10 in 1983. Since 1970, the number of women in U.S. jails has increased 14-fold—from fewer than 8,000 to nearly 110,000 in 2013—and women in jail now account for approximately half of all women behind bars in the country.

GEOGRAPHY

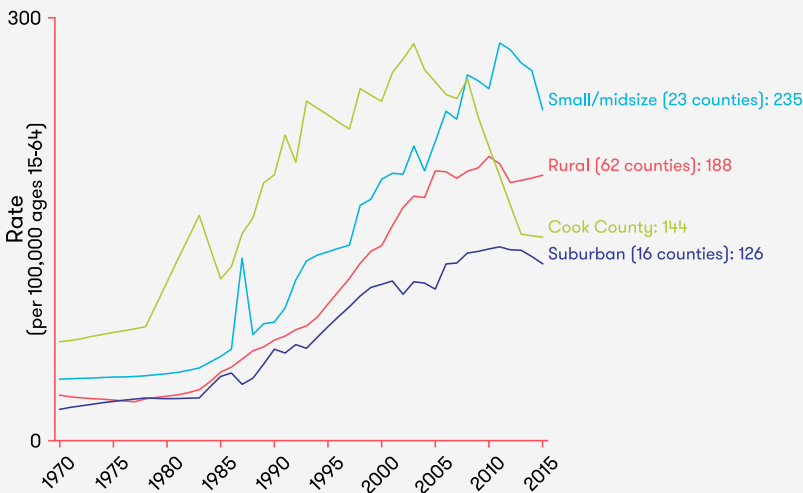
Statewide trends alone do not tell the whole story of incarceration: there is wide variation in the use of incarceration across the state. Today, the highest rates of prison admissions are in rural counties, and pretrial detention continues to increase in smaller counties even as it is on the decline in larger counties. It is critical to examine incarceration trends in every corner of the state, because although the largest counties may have the most people in jails—the highest rates of incarceration are in smaller cities and rural counties.

% change in jail population from 2005 to 2015



Comparing the jail populations for 2005 and 2015, counties shaded dark gray had fewer people in jail and those shaded dark red had more people in jail.

JAILS Pretrial population



Since 2000, the state's use of pretrial detention has taken different trajectories in different types of counties. The pretrial incarceration rate has increased 36% in the state's 62 rural counties, 27% in the state's 23 small/medium counties, and 13% in the state's 16 suburban counties. It has decreased 40% in the state's one urban county.

Vera's analysis of the urban-rural continuum changes the six categories defined by the National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties to four. A county is labeled "urban" if it is one of the core counties of a metropolitan area with 1 million or more people and is labeled "suburban" if it is within the surrounding metropolitan area. Vera turns the remaining four categories into two by combining small and medium metropolitan areas ("small and midsize metro") and micropolitan and noncore areas ("rural").

JAIL ADMISSIONS

(TOP 10 OF 102 COUNTIES)

COUNTY	Rate (per 100K)	COUNTY	Annual count
Alexander	35,346	Cook	92,795
Pulaski	31,877	Winnebago	13,506
Union	31,564	Will	12,599
Kankakee	16,659	Kankakee	12,094
Piatt	14,106	DuPage	10,479
Vermilion	13,798	Sangamon	9,962
Henderson	11,418	Peoria	9,558
Knox	10,556	Lake	8,708
Jefferson	10,363	St. Clair	8,395
Boone	10,338	McLean	7,717

PRISON ADMISSIONS

(TOP 10 OF 102 COUNTIES)

COUNTY	Rate (per 100K)	COUNTY	Annual count
Hardin	838	Cook	14,289
Macon	801	Will	1,118
Marion	765	Winnebago	1,048
Union	724	DuPage	803
Montgomery	622	Lake	780
Saline	607	Kane	606
Schuyler	580	Madison	600
Alexander	577	Peoria	594
Winnebago	551	Macon	567
Adams	534	St. Clair	558

JAILS



Jail admissions

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Iowa	6,216	-11%
2	Wisconsin	5,352	-18%
3	Missouri	5,315	-11%
4	Indiana	5,247	-24%
5	Ohio	5,029	-15%
6	Michigan	4,680	-21%
7	Illinois	3,808	-17%



Jail pretrial population

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Indiana	272	8%
2	Missouri	226	16%
3	Wisconsin	158	1%
4	Iowa	158	5%
5	Illinois	157	-19%
6	Ohio	146	-4%
7	Michigan	126	-4%

Jail sentenced population

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Wisconsin	181	-0.2%
2	Michigan	119	-0.2%
3	Indiana	114	-0.3%
4	Ohio	91	-0.2%
5	Illinois	64	0.5%
6	Missouri	60	-0.2%
7	Iowa	54	0.2%

PRISONS



Prison admissions

Rank	State	Rate (2016)	Rate change ('06-'16)
1	Missouri	465	-7%
2	Ohio	300	-28%
3	Illinois	299	-36%
4	Iowa	298	-11%
5	Indiana	297	-29%
6	Michigan	192	-12%
7	Wisconsin	175	-24%

Prison population

Rank	State	Rate (2018)	Rate change ('08-'18)
1	Missouri	768	0.2%
2	Ohio	666	-1%
3	Wisconsin	637	3%
4	Indiana	620	-6%
5	Michigan	594	-18%
6	Illinois	472	-10%
7	Iowa	469	5%

Data

This fact sheet uses data from four U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) data series and is supplemented with data obtained directly from state governments for the more recent years for which BJS data is not yet available, when available. The Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jails, and National Corrections Reporting Program provides data through 2016; the National Prisoner Statistics program provides data through 2017, and 2018 data is sourced from state agencies. Rates are per 100,000 residents aged 15 to 64. See *Data and Methods for Vera's State Fact Sheets*: www.vera.org/incarceration-trends-fact-sheets-data-and-methods.pdf for complete details. County-level data is available at trends.vera.org.

Acknowledgments

This series would not be possible without the excellent work of researchers at the Bureau of Justice Statistics—E. Ann Carson, Todd Minton, and Zhen Zeng—who maintain the Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jails, National Corrections Reporting Program, and National Prisoner Statistics program. This report was designed by Paragini Amin and created by Christian Henrichson, Eital Schattner-Elmaleh, Jacob Kang-Brown, Oliver Hinds and James Wallace-Lee. This report was made possible by the support of Arnold Ventures. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Arnold Ventures.

Credits

© Vera Institute of Justice December 2019. All rights reserved.

An electronic version of this report is posted on Vera's website at www.vera.org/state-incarceration-trends. The Vera Institute of Justice is a justice reform change agent. Vera produces ideas, analysis, and research that inspire change in the systems people rely upon for safety and justice, and works in close partnership with government and civic leaders to implement it. Vera is currently pursuing core priorities of ending the misuse of jails, transforming conditions of confinement, and ensuring that justice systems more effectively serve America's increasingly diverse communities.

For more information

For more information, visit www.vera.org. For more information about this fact sheet, contact Jacob Kang-Brown, senior research associate, at jkangbrown@vera.org.