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State Rates of Incarceration by Race

The Sentencing Project
2004

STATE RATES OF INCARCERATION BY RACE

In 1997, The Sentencing Project published a policy report examining racial disparities in imprisonment among the states. That report, *Intended and Unintended Consequences: State Racial Disparities in Imprisonment*, revealed that African Americans were more than seven times as likely to be imprisoned as whites, based on 1994 data. Variations among the states were quite broad, ranging from a black/white disparity of 3.43 in Idaho to 22.77 in Minnesota.

The following table provides an updated analysis of racial disparities in the use of incarceration. The table provides combined jail and prison incarceration rates for Whites and Blacks for 2001, with states ranked by the Black/White disparity ratio.

This table is not entirely comparable with the previous analysis for two reasons. This report includes data from state prisons as well as local jails, whereas the report released in 1997 only used state prison data. Additionally, the previous report was based on Bureau of Justice Statistics data on race of prisoners, but not ethnicity. Therefore, Hispanic prisoners were included in either the White or Black categories. The table in this report is based on data that treats Hispanics separately. In general, since most Hispanics are categorized as White by race, the White rates of incarceration may be lower in the current table than those in the previous report, and the resulting Black/White ratio higher.

Prison & Jail Incarceration Rates, 2001

Rate of Incarceration per 100,000 Population

State	White	Black	Ratio
District of Columbia	52	1504	28.92
New Jersey	161	2117	13.15
Connecticut	190	2427	12.77
Minnesota	139	1755	12.63
Iowa	284	3302	11.63
Wisconsin	350	4058	11.59
Pennsylvania	244	2570	10.53
New York	173	1638	9.47
New Hampshire	286	2649	9.26
Nebraska	229	1973	8.62
Rhode Island	198	1672	8.44
Vermont	218	1794	8.23
New Mexico	344	2666	7.75
Massachusetts	206	1562	7.58
Illinois	251	1889	7.53
Kansas	345	2469	7.16
Ohio	324	2279	7.03
North Dakota	189	1321	6.99
Colorado	394	2751	6.98
Maryland	248	1686	6.80
Delaware	427	2799	6.56
Utah	372	2341	6.29
Virginia	361	2268	6.28
Michigan	369	2247	6.09
North Carolina	265	1612	6.08
National	366	2209	6.04
Oregon	458	2763	6.03
Louisiana	379	2251	5.94
California	470	2757	5.87
West Virginia	294	1708	5.81
Washington	374	2141	5.72
Indiana	391	2236	5.72
Wyoming	443	2477	5.59
Kentucky	429	2392	5.58
South Dakota	385	2022	5.25
Arizona	544	2849	5.24
Texas	640	3287	5.14
Montana	417	2118	5.08
Tennessee	392	1991	5.08
Missouri	430	2160	5.02
South Carolina	349	1740	4.99
Florida	536	2591	4.83
Oklahoma	644	2980	4.63
Maine	201	926	4.61
Alabama	417	1877	4.50
Arkansas	393	1759	4.48
Nevada	646	2769	4.29
Georgia	519	2149	4.14
Mississippi	399	1645	4.12
Alaska	464	1864	4.02
Idaho	551	1573	2.85
Hawaii	455	609	1.34

*Incarceration rates based on data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2001*, April 2002.