

Illinois profile



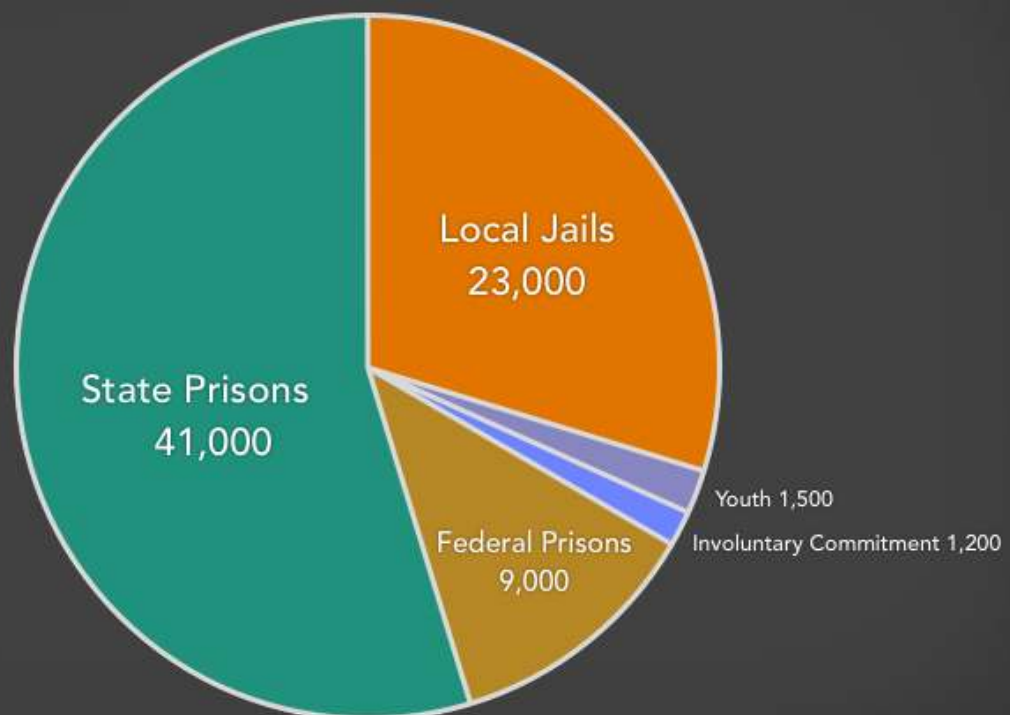
Illinois has an incarceration rate of **497 per 100,000 people** (including prisons, jails, immigration detention, and juvenile justice facilities), meaning that it locks up a higher percentage of its people than almost any democracy on earth. Read on to learn more about who is incarcerated in Illinois and why.

[Jump to COVID-19 data.](#)

76,000 people from Illinois are behind bars

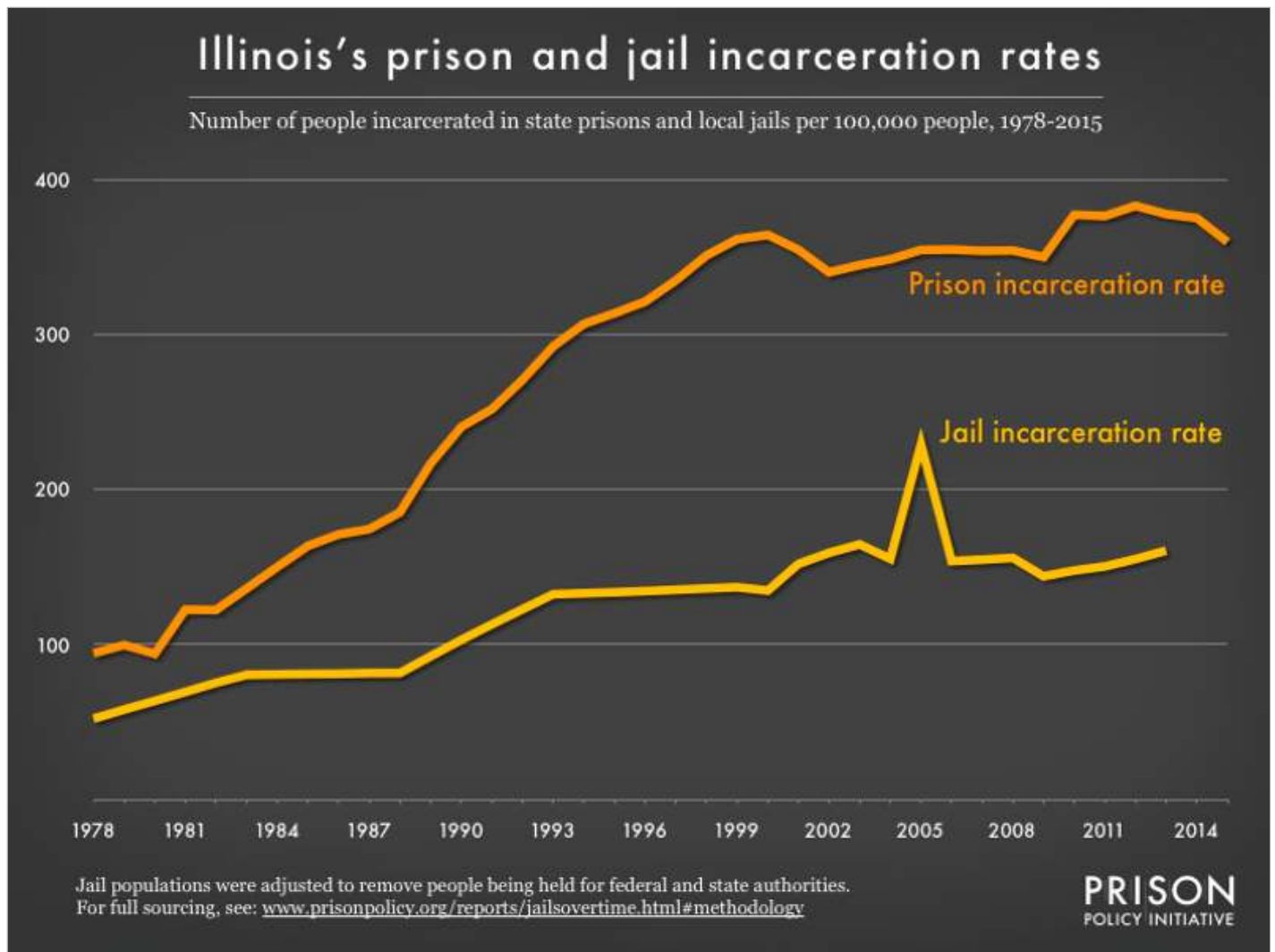
How many Illinois residents are locked up and where?

76,000 of Illinois's residents are locked up in various kinds of facilities



Additionally, the number of people impacted by **county and city jails** in Illinois is much larger than the graph above would suggest, because people cycle through local jails **relatively quickly**. Each year, **at least 173,000 different people** are booked into local jails in Illinois.

Rates of imprisonment have grown dramatically in the last 40 years

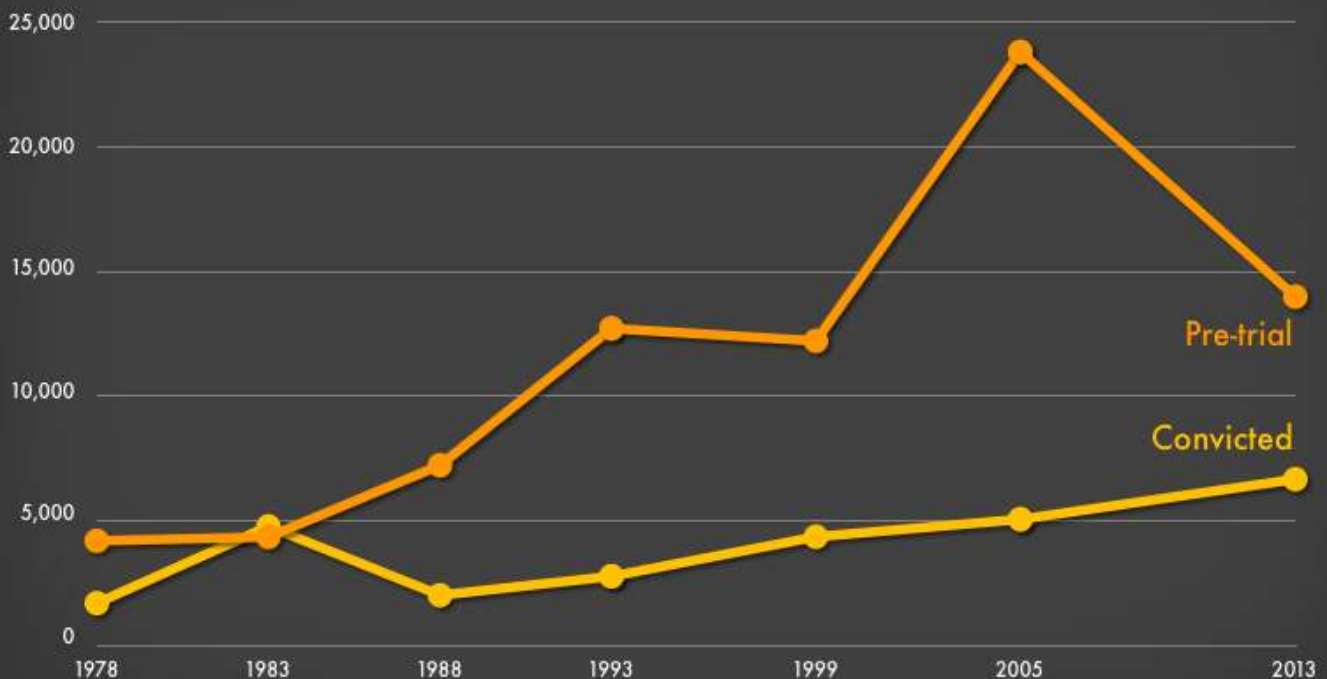


Also see these Illinois graphs:

- **total numbers** rather than rates.
- Women's prisons: [Incarceration Rates](#) | [Total Population](#)
- Men's prisons: [Incarceration Rates](#) | [Total Population](#)

Pre-trial policies have driven recent jail growth in Illinois

Number of people incarcerated in local jails by conviction status, 1978-2013



Jail populations were adjusted to remove people being held for federal and state authorities. Our Bureau of Justice Statistics data sources are described at www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/jailsovertime.html#methodology

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Today, Illinois's incarceration rates stand out internationally

INCARCERATION RATES

COMPARING ILLINOIS
AND FOUNDING NATO COUNTRIES



Incarceration rates per 100,000 population

Source: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2021.html>

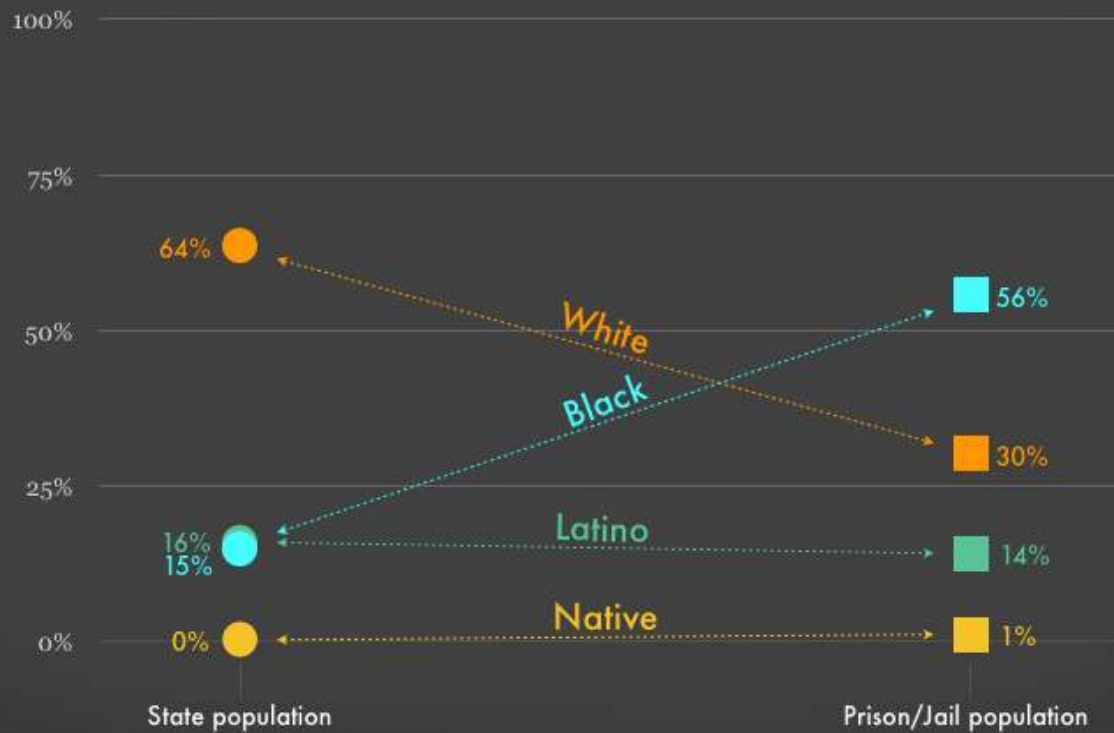
In the U.S., incarceration extends beyond prisons and local jails to include other systems of confinement. The U.S. and state incarceration rates in this graph include people held by these other parts of the justice system, so they may be slightly higher than the commonly reported incarceration rates that only include prisons and jails. Details on the data are available in [States of Incarceration: The Global Context](#). We also have a version of this graph focusing on the [incarceration of women](#).

People of color are overrepresented in prisons and jails



Racial and ethnic disparities in prisons and jails in Illinois

Whites are underrepresented in the incarcerated population while Blacks and American Indians are overrepresented.



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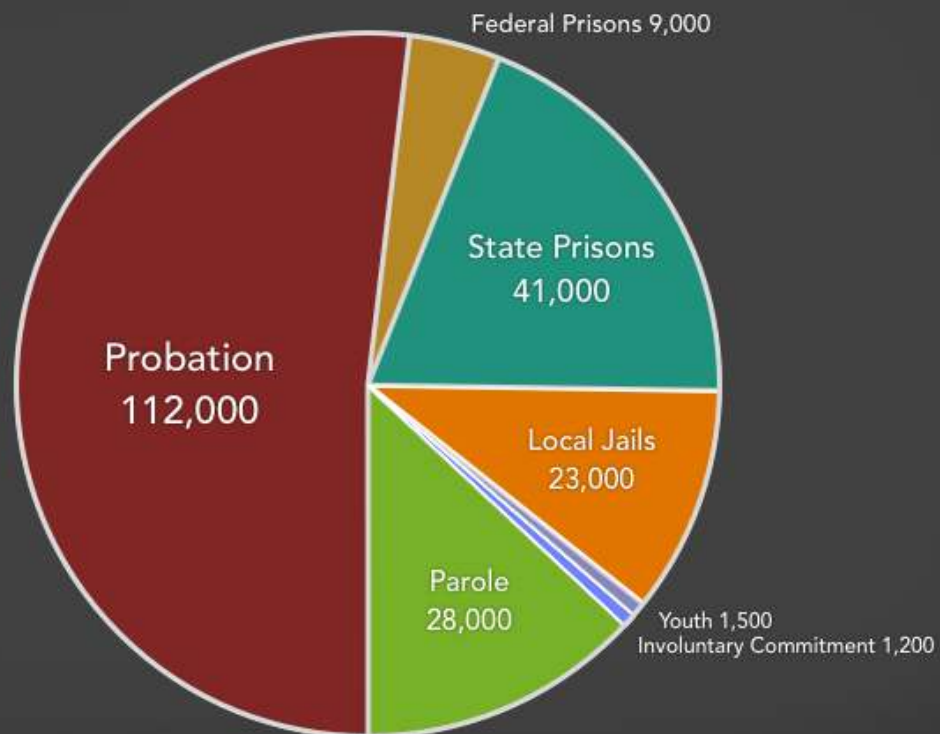
Compiled from 2010 Census, Summary File 1.

See also our detailed graphs about [Whites](#) and [Blacks](#) in Illinois prisons and jails.

Illinois's criminal justice system is more than just its prisons and jails

How many people are in Illinois's criminal justice system?

216,000 Illinois residents are behind bars or under criminal justice supervision.



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Sources and data notes: See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/correctionalcontrol2018.html>

Data on COVID-19 in Illinois jails and prisons

We **gave Illinois a "D" grade** in September 2021 for its response to the coronavirus in prisons, noting that:

- We estimate that prisons and jails led to an additional 47,298 COVID-19 cases in Illinois in the summer of 2020 alone.
- Illinois failed to utilize one of the most obvious, and easiest, tools for reducing the prison population — **stopping prison admissions for technical violations** of probation and parole (which are not crimes).

For more detail, see our report *States of Emergency*. Or check out these other resources:

- Our **Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic** page tracks criminal justice policy responses to the coronavirus all 50 states
- As of late April 2021, **only 36% of corrections staff** in Illinois prisons had gotten the COVID-19 vaccine

- [How many COVID-19 cases in Illinois communities](#) can be linked to outbreaks in correctional facilities? (data from our report *Mass Incarceration, COVID-19, and Community Spread*)
- As of August 2020, Illinois prisons were [not even requiring staff to wear masks at work](#)
- State prison and jail population data for [February 2022](#). (Previous data is available for [October 2021](#), [June 2021](#), [February 2021](#), [December 2020](#), [September 2020](#), [August 2020](#), and [May 2020](#).) Data availability varies by state.

Our other articles about Illinois

- In some Illinois prisons, incarcerated people are [forced to drink and breathe contaminants](#)
- Illinois is [one of just a handful of states](#) that do not charge incarcerated people copays for medical care.
- People in Illinois prisons must pay for hygiene items and other basics — and those without cash have to meet [strict "indigence" criteria](#) to get financial assistance
- Fees for [sending money](#) to a loved one in an Illinois prison are unreasonably high
- [How much do incarcerated people in Illinois earn for their work in prison?](#)
- [The Company Store: A deeper look at prison commissaries in Illinois](#)
- [New data: Low incomes - but high fees - for people on probation in Illinois](#)
- [We graded the parole release systems of all 50 states - Illinois gets an F-](#)
- [Illinois has some of the highest jail phone rates in the country](#)
- [Who's helping the 36,065 women released from Illinois correctional facilities each year?](#)
- In February 2021, [Illinois passed a law ending prison gerrymandering](#).
- [Importing Constituents: Prisoners and Political Clout in Illinois](#)

Other resources

- [Research on Illinois](#) in our Research Library

Stay Informed

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username@email.com

Get the latest updates:

- ☒ Prison Policy Initiative newsletter (?)
- ☒ Research Library (?)
- ☐ Prison gerrymandering (?)

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Recommended Reading:

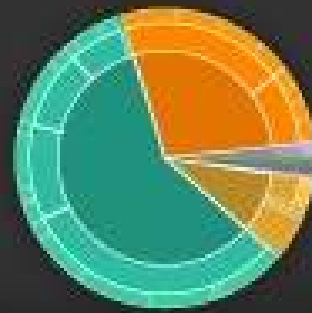
BEYOND THE COUNT



Dive deep into the lives and experiences of people in prison

MASS INCARCERATION:

The Whole Pie



The "whole pie": Where people are locked up and why

STATES OF INCARCERATION:

The Global Context



Incarceration rates for 50 states and 170 countries

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

of Mass Incarceration



Who profits and who pays in the U.S. criminal justice system?

Events

- **May 12, 2022:**

Research Director Wendy Sawyer and Advocacy Director Naila Awan take part in a webinar hosted by the Pretrial Justice Institute highlighting our recently released [Advocacy Toolkit](#) and how it can be used to combat jail expansion. They'll discuss ways to access data and resources to support local campaigns. [Register for the event here.](#)

Not near you?

[Invite us](#) to your city, college or organization.