



▶ Drugs & Crime Data

June 1995, NCJ-153519

Fact Sheet: Drug Data Summary

As part of ongoing research, the ONDCP Drugs & Crime Clearinghouse has prepared this fact sheet to summarize current drug-related law enforcement, court, and corrections statistics as well as drug use, drug production, and drug control spending information.

Law Enforcement

Drug enforcement operations

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) 1990 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey of State and local law enforcement agencies found that 77% of the Nation's local police and sheriffs' departments and 69% of State police departments had primary responsibility for drug law enforcement in their jurisdictions.

Among those agencies with primary drug enforcement responsibilities, many operate special drug enforcement units or participate in multiagency drug enforcement task forces.

Special drug unit operation and multiagency task force participation of agencies with primary drug enforcement responsibility:

| Type of agency | Operation of special drug unit | Participation in multiagency task force |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| State police departments | 85% | 91% |
| All local agencies | 28 | 55 |
| Police departments | 25 | 51 |
| Sheriffs' departments | 39 | 68 |

Arrests

In 1993, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported an estimated 1,126,300 State and local arrests for drug law violations in the United States. The highest number of arrests during the past decade for drug offenses occurred in 1989.

Estimated arrests for drug offenses:

| Year | Total arrests | Sale/manufacturing | Possession | Percent of all arrests |
|------|---------------|--------------------|------------|------------------------|
| 1984 | 708,400 | 155,848 | 552,552 | 6.1 |
| 1985 | 811,400 | 192,302 | 619,098 | 6.8 |
| 1986 | 824,100 | 206,849 | 617,251 | 6.6 |
| 1987 | 937,400 | 241,849 | 695,551 | 7.4 |
| 1988 | 1,155,200 | 316,525 | 838,675 | 8.4 |
| 1989 | 1,361,700 | 441,191 | 920,509 | 9.5 |
| 1990 | 1,089,500 | 344,282 | 745,218 | 7.7 |
| 1991 | 1,010,000 | 337,340 | 672,660 | 7.1 |
| 1992 | 1,066,400 | 338,049 | 728,351 | 7.6 |
| 1993 | 1,126,300 | 334,511 | 791,789 | 8.0 |

In 1984, drug arrests were 6.1% of the total of all arrests reported to the FBI; by 1993, drug arrests had risen to 8.0% of all arrests.

Drug seizures

Many Federal agencies are involved in removal of illicit drugs from the market. The Federal-wide Drug Seizure System (FDSS) reflects the combined drug seizure efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the FBI, and the U.S. Customs Service within the jurisdiction of the United States, as well as maritime seizures by the U.S. Coast Guard. FDSS eliminates duplicate reporting of a seizure involving more than one Federal agency. The following statistics indicate the total amount of drugs seized in fiscal years 1990 through 1994 by the Federal agencies participating in FDSS:

Seizures in pounds

| Drug | FY 1991 | FY 1992 | FY 1993 | FY 1994 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Heroin | 3,030 | 2,551 | 3,514 | 2,824 |
| Cocaine | 246,324 | 303,260 | 244,302 | 282,086 |
| Marijuana | 499,070 | 783,475 | 772,307 | 778,715 |
| Hashish | 178,211 | 4,048 | 26,080 | 1,616 |

Asset seizures

In fiscal 1994, the DEA made 13,631 domestic seizures of nondrug property, valued at approximately \$647 million:

| Type of asset | Number of seizures | Value |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Total | 13,631 | \$646,787,850 |
| Currency | 6,581 | 314,425,592 |
| Other financial instruments | 449 | 46,654,253 |
| Real property | 907 | 171,745,045 |
| Vehicles | 3,744 | 38,665,356 |
| Vessels | 146 | 18,354,846 |
| Aircraft | 37 | 10,109,200 |
| Other conveyance | 196 | 1,816,928 |
| Other | 1,571 | 45,016,630 |

Law enforcement officers killed

Of 70 Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers killed in 1993, the FBI reported that 3 died during drug-related investigations or activities.

Courts and corrections

Federal offenders

According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, of the 49,717 defendants convicted in Federal courts between August 1993 and September 1994, 17,604 (35%) defendants were convicted of Federal drug offenses. Of these defendants—

- 15,591 pleaded guilty
- 17 pleaded no contest
- 1,947 were convicted in a jury trial
- 49 were convicted in a bench trial.

Of the 17,604 defendants convicted for drug offenses in the Federal courts—

- 15,623 were sentenced to imprisonment (including 238 defendants receiving sentences of life)
- the average sentence length was 84 months
- 1,908 were sentenced to an average 34 months' probation
- 64 were fined and 9 received other sentences, including probation of 4 days or less, no sentence, suspended sentences, and supervisory sentences.

According to the BJS Federal Justice Statistics Program, the average incarceration sentence length imposed on all Federal offenders increased from 44 months in 1980 to 62 months in 1992, while the average sentence imposed on drug offenders increased from 47 months to 82 months during that time.

U.S. district court average sentence length imposed:

| Most serious offense of conviction | Months | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1992* |
| All offenses | 44.3 | 50.7 | 57.2 | 62.2 |
| Violent offenses | 125.4 | 135.4 | 89.2 | 88.5 |
| Property offenses | 29.4 | 33.0 | 22.0 | 19.9 |
| Drug offenses | 47.1 | 58.2 | 80.9 | 82.2 |
| Public-order offenses | 24.5 | 32.7 | 28.3 | 35.5 |

*1992 data are preliminary.

In 1992, Federal offenders who were released from prison for the first time on a sentence imposed in a U.S. district court had served an average of 24 months, which amounted to 38% of the court-imposed sentence. Prisoners sentenced for drug offenses served an average time of 33 months and served 40% of the court-imposed sentence.

Offenders in State courts

According to the BJS National Judicial Reporting Program (NJRP), 170,800 persons were convicted of drug trafficking in 1992. That number is more than twice the number convicted in 1986, the year the survey was first conducted. The NJRP also reported 109,400 convictions for drug possession in 1992. Nine out of 10 convictions in 1992 for drug offenses resulted from a guilty plea.

Average sentence lengths for felony drug offense sentences imposed by State courts, 1992:

| Most serious conviction offense | Total | Maximum sentence length for felons sentenced to | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|---|--------|-----------|
| | | Incarceration Prison | Jail | Probation |
| All drug offenses | 43 mos. | 67 mos. | 6 mos. | 48 mos. |
| Possession | 32 | 55 | 4 | 45 |
| Trafficking | 50 | 72 | 8 | 51 |

Seven out of 10 persons convicted of drug offenses in 1992 were sentenced to incarceration: 28% to jail and 42% to prison. Of felons sent to State prison for drug offenses, the average sentence length was 67 months, of which the estimated time to be served was 21 months.

Corrections

Drug offenders have accounted for an increasing percentage of the population in State and Federal correctional facilities. Drug offenders constituted an estimated 22% of the State prison population in 1991, up from 6% of the population in 1979. In Federal correctional facilities, drug offenders accounted for 61% of the population in 1994, up from 16% in 1970, 25% in 1980, and 52% in 1990.

State and Federal correctional authorities reported data to the BJS 1990 Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities on drug testing practices in their facilities. About 87% of correctional facilities tested some inmates for illegal drug use between July 1, 1989, and June 30, 1990.

Criteria used for drug testing inmates:

| Facility conducts urine tests on inmates | All facilities | Federal confinement | State confinement |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total* | 86.7% | 100.0% | 82.5% |
| Systematically on everyone at least once | 20.0 | 31.3 | 12.3 |
| Randomly on samples | 62.7 | 96.3 | 56.5 |
| On indication of possible drug use | 75.8 | 93.8 | 74.1 |
| Other criteria | 17.3 | 23.8 | 18.4 |

*Detail adds to more than totals because some facilities tested on more than one basis.

Drug use

Drug use among arrestees and offenders

The National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program tests urine samples voluntarily collected from selected adult male arrestees in 23 cities and adult female arrestees in 20 cities. In 1993, the DUF program found that the percentage of male arrestees

testing positive for an illicit drug at the time of arrest ranged from 54% in Omaha and San Jose to 81% in Chicago. Female arrestees testing positive ranged from 42% in San Antonio to 83% in Manhattan.

The 1991 BJS Survey of State Prison Inmates reported that 49% of State prison inmates committed their offense under the influence of drugs or alcohol; 17% reported committing their offense to get money to buy drugs.

1991 State prison inmate drug use at the time of offense:

| Current offense | Under the influence of | | | To get money for drugs |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | Drugs only | Alcohol only | Both | |
| All offenses | 17% | 18% | 14% | 17% |
| Violent offenses | 12 | 21 | 16 | 12 |
| Property offenses | 21 | 18 | 14 | 26 |
| Drug offenses | 26 | 8 | 10 | 22 |
| Public-order offenses | 10 | 31 | 9 | 5 |

The 1989 BJS Survey of Inmates in Local Jails reported that 77.7% of inmates had used a drug at some point in their lives. More than half of the inmates reported being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the offense resulting in their incarceration. Overall, 13% of convicted jail inmates said they committed their offense for money to buy drugs.

1989 local jail inmate drug use at the time of offense:

| Most serious offense | Under the influence of | | | To get money for drugs |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | Drugs only | Alcohol only | Both | |
| All offenses | 15.4% | 29.2% | 12.1% | 13.3% |
| Violent offenses | 8.8 | 30.7 | 16.1 | 11.5 |
| Property offenses | 18.2 | 17.9 | 12.8 | 24.4 |
| Drug offenses | 28.6 | 7.3 | 12.3 | 14.0 |
| Public-order offenses | 6.4 | 54.1 | 9.6 | 3.3 |

The BJS 1987 Survey of Youth in Custody in long-term, State-operated juvenile institutions reported on juveniles under 18 who indicated whether they were under the influence of either drugs, alcohol, or both at the time of their offense.

1987 youth in custody drug use at the time of offense:

| <u>Most serious offense</u> | <u>Drugs only</u> | <u>Alcohol only</u> | <u>Drugs and alcohol</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| All offenses | 15.7% | 8.5% | 23.4% |
| Violent offenses | 12.1 | 8.2 | 24.2 |
| Property offenses | 16.8 | 9.7 | 23.1 |
| Drug offenses | 34.4 | 0.0 | 24.9 |
| Public-order offenses | 15.9 | 7.2 | 20.6 |
| Juvenile status offenses | 15.3 | 16.5 | 17.6 |

Drug use in the general population

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 1993 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 77 million (37.2%) of Americans aged 12 and older reported some use of an illicit drug at least once during their lifetime, 11.8% reported use during the past year, and 5.6% reported use in the month before the survey was conducted.

1993 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse past drug use:

| <u>Respondent age</u> | <u>Ever used</u> | <u>Past year</u> | <u>Past month</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 12-17 | 17.9% | 13.6% | 6.6% |
| 18-25 | 50.9 | 26.6 | 13.5 |
| 26-34 | 61.1 | 17.4 | 8.5 |
| 35 and over | 29.9 | 6.3 | 2.8 |

For those age 25 and under, an estimated 1.6 million reported using cocaine (including crack), and 8.6 million reported using marijuana at least once within the past year.

For those age 26 and over, 2.9 million reported using cocaine (including crack), and 10 million reported using marijuana at least once within the past year.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) 1994 High School Senior Survey, 45.6% of high school seniors reported use of an illicit drug at least once in their lives, 35.8% reported use of an illicit drug within the past year, and 21.9% reported use of a drug within the past month.

1994 High School Senior Survey past drug use:

| <u>Drug</u> | <u>Ever used</u> | <u>Past year</u> | <u>Past month</u> |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Marijuana | 38.2% | 30.7% | 19.0% |
| Cocaine | 5.9 | 3.6 | 1.5 |
| Crack | 3.0 | 1.9 | 0.8 |
| Stimulants | 15.7 | 9.4 | 4.0 |
| LSD | 10.5 | 6.9 | 2.6 |
| PCP | 2.8 | 1.6 | 0.7 |
| Heroin | 1.2 | 0.6 | 0.3 |

Emergency room and medical examiner statistics

In 1993, the SAMHSA Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) reported an estimated 466,900 admissions that involved drug abuse in hospital emergency rooms nationwide.

A total of 8,541 drug abuse deaths were reported in 1993 by 145 medical examiners in 43 metropolitan areas. Drug abuse deaths usually involve drug overdoses, but they also include deaths in which drug usage was a contributory factor.

Drug availability

Price and purity

Based on field investigations and laboratory analysis of DEA drug buys and seizures, the national ranges for the price and purity of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana for the first half of 1994 were reported as follows:

| <u>Drug Type</u> | <u>Price</u> | <u>Purity</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Cocaine | | |
| kilogram | \$10,500-40,000 | 83% |
| ounce | 300-2,500 | 73 |
| gram | 20-200 | 65 |
| Heroin^a | | |
| kilogram | \$50,000-\$250,000 | 77-86% |
| ounce | 1,000-13,000 | 59 |
| gram ^b | 50-600 | 42-55 |
| Marijuana^c | | |
| pound | \$285-\$3,500 | 5.07% ^d |
| ounce | 40-450 | |

^aIncludes Mexican, Southeast Asian, and Southwest Asian heroin.

^bPrice per gram for powder heroin ranged from \$70-\$500; price per gram for black tar heroin ranged from \$50-\$500.

^cCommercial grade; includes kilobrick, loose plant material, and buds.

^dIndicates THC potency.

Production

According to the U.S. Department of State's 1995 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, Burma was the world's largest producer of opium, Peru led worldwide cultivation of coca leaf, and Mexico led in marijuana cultivation.

Worldwide potential net drug production 1991–1994 (in metric tons):

| | <u>1991</u> | <u>1992</u> | <u>1993</u> | <u>1994</u> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Opium | | | | |
| Total | 3,492 | 3,389 | 3,745 | 3,409 |
| Afghanistan | 570 | 640 | 685 | 950 |
| India | — | — | 66 | 82 |
| Pakistan | 180 | 175 | 140 | 160 |
| Total SW Asia | 750 | 815 | 891 | 1,192 |
| Burma | 2,350 | 2,280 | 2,575 | 2,030 |
| China | — | — | — | 25 |
| Laos | 265 | 230 | 180 | 85 |
| Thailand | 35 | 24 | 42 | 17 |
| Total SE Asia | 2,650 | 2,534 | 2,797 | 2,157 |
| Other countries | 92 | 40 | 57 | 60 |
| Coca Leaf | | | | |
| Total | 330,740 | 333,900 | 271,700 | 290,900 |
| Bolivia | 78,000 | 80,300 | 84,400 | 89,800 |
| Colombia | 30,000 | 29,600 | 31,700 | 35,800 |
| Peru | 222,700 | 223,900 | 155,500 | 165,300 |
| Ecuador | 40 | 100 | 100 | — |
| Marijuana | | | | |
| Total | 13,615 | 13,208 | 14,407 | 13,386 |
| Mexico | 7,775 | 7,795 | 6,280 | 5,540 |
| Colombia | 1,650 | 1,650 | 4,125 | 4,138 |
| Other countries | 4,190 | 3,763 | 4,002 | 3,708 |

Federal drug control spending by function (in millions):

| | <u>FY</u> <u>1981</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1989</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1990</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1991</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1992</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1993</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1994</u> <u>actual</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1995</u> <u>estimate</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1996</u> <u>requested</u> |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Total | 1,531.8 | 6,663.7 | 9,758.9 | 10,957.6 | 11,910.1 | 12,177.6 | 12,184.4 | 13,264.9 | 14,550.4 |
| Drug treatment | 513.8 | 1,148.2 | 1,638.9 | 1,877.3 | 2,204.7 | 2,251.6 | 2,398.7 | 2,646.6 | 2,826.6 |
| Education, community action, and the workplace | 86.4 | 725.4 | 1,238.0 | 1,479.2 | 1,538.7 | 1,556.4 | 1,597.4 | 1,847.6 | 1,974.9 |
| Criminal justice system | 415.6 | 2,761.4 | 4,237.5 | 4,385.6 | 4,942.9 | 5,685.1 | 5,735.3 | 6,313.3 | 7,166.7 |
| International | 66.8 | 304.0 | 500.1 | 633.4 | 660.4 | 523.4 | 329.4 | 309.9 | 399.1 |
| Interdiction | 349.7 | 1,440.7 | 1,751.9 | 2,027.9 | 1,960.2 | 1,511.1 | 1,311.6 | 1,293.3 | 1,278.4 |
| Research | 76.5 | 230.6 | 327.7 | 450.1 | 504.5 | 498.1 | 520.3 | 538.2 | 570.7 |
| Intelligence | 23.1 | 53.4 | 64.9 | 104.1 | 98.6 | 150.9 | 291.7 | 316.0 | 334.0 |

Drug control budget

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Federal spending on drug control programs has increased from \$1.5 billion in fiscal 1981 to \$13.3 billion in fiscal 1995.

ONDCP also reported that State and local governments spent \$15.9 billion on drug control activities during fiscal 1991, a 13% increase over the \$14.1 billion spent during fiscal 1990.

State and local spending for drug control, fiscal years 1990 and 1991 (in millions):

| | <u>FY</u> <u>1990</u> | <u>FY</u> <u>1991</u> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total drug control | \$14,075 | \$15,907 |
| Justice | \$11,525 | \$12,619 |
| Police protection | 4,035 | 4,223 |
| Judicial and legal services | 1,346 | 1,449 |
| Corrections | 6,045 | 6,827 |
| Other | 100 | 120 |
| Health and hospitals | 2,184 | 2,784 |
| Education | 366 | 503 |

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