

Vera Institute of Justice, NY. USA. Report on:

People in Jail and Prison in 2020

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The United States saw an unprecedented drop in total incarceration between 2019 and 2020. Triggered by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and pressure from advocates to reduce incarceration, local jails drove the initial decline, although prisons also made reductions.

From summer to fall 2020, prison populations declined further, but jails began to refill, showing the fragility of decarceration. Jails in rural counties saw the biggest initial drops, but still incarcerate people at double the rate of urban and suburban areas.

Despite the historic drop in the number of people incarcerated, the decrease was neither substantial nor sustained enough to be considered an adequate response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and incarceration in the United States remains a global aberration.

Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) researchers collected data on the number of people in local jails and state and federal prisons at both midyear and fall 2020 to provide timely information on how incarceration is changing in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic

More at: <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/people-in-jail-and-prison-in-2020.pdf>