

Report: The Incarceration Rate of Louisiana is Over 5 Times Higher than Saudi Arabia

The United States' Incarceration Crisis: Louisiana's Rate Dwarfs Even Saudi Arabia's



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85



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Louisiana's staggering incarceration rate of 1,094 per 100,000 people stands as a stark indictment of the American criminal justice system. **This rate is more than five times higher than Saudi Arabia's 207 per 100,000, a country often criticized for its harsh justice system.**

While the United States as a whole has the world's sixth-highest incarceration rate at 531 per 100,000, Louisiana's rate is more than double the national average. This means that Louisiana locks up a higher percentage of its population than any democratic country on Earth.

Here are some specific examples of controversies within the Louisiana prison system:

1. Angola Prison Rodeo: The Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) hosts a controversial prison rodeo where inmates participate in dangerous events for public entertainment. Critics argue this exploits prisoners and puts them at unnecessary risk of injury.

2. David Wade Correctional Center lawsuit (2018): A class-action lawsuit was filed against this prison for allegedly subjecting mentally ill prisoners to extreme isolation, inadequate care, and abuse.
3. Orleans Parish Prison consent decree (2013): The U.S. Department of Justice intervened due to unconstitutional conditions, including violence, sexual assault, and inadequate mental health care. This led to a consent decree for reforms.
4. Jena 6 case (2006): This controversial case highlighted racial disparities in the juvenile justice system when six Black teenagers were initially charged with attempted murder for a schoolyard fight with a white student.
5. Angola 3 case: Three inmates (Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox, and Robert King) were held in solitary confinement for decades (Wallace and Woodfox for over 40 years each) at Angola, sparking international outcry over the use of prolonged solitary confinement.
6. Work release program scandal (2017): An investigation revealed widespread abuse in Livingston Parish's work release program, including inmates using drugs and leaving facilities unsupervised.
7. Elayn Hunt Correctional Center COVID-19 outbreak (2020): This prison faced criticism for its handling of a major COVID-19 outbreak, which affected a large portion of the inmate population.
8. Louisiana State Penitentiary healthcare lawsuit (2015): A class-action lawsuit was filed over inadequate medical care at Angola, citing cases of inmates suffering and dying from treatable conditions.

9. Jefferson Parish Correctional Center suicide rate (2013): This facility faced scrutiny after a spike in inmate suicides, raising questions about mental health care and supervision.

10. Iberia Parish Sheriff's Office abuse scandal (2016): Several deputies were convicted of civil rights violations for abusing inmates, including beatings and improper use of dogs.

The disparity becomes even more alarming when compared to other developed nations. Germany, for instance, incarcerates only 67 people per 100,000, while Japan's rate is a mere 36 per 100,000. Even Russia, known for its tough stance on crime, has a lower rate than Louisiana at 300 per 100,000.

Top Private Prisons in The United States:

CoreCivic (formerly Corrections Corporation of America)

- Operates 65 correctional facilities
- Total capacity of more than 80,000 beds

The GEO Group

- Operates 57 facilities
- Total capacity of 49,000 offender beds

Louisiana's over-reliance on incarceration is not only a human rights concern but also a significant economic burden. The state spends more than \$625 million each year on corrections. **Shockingly, 40% of Louisiana's prisoners were sentenced for non-violent drug or property offenses, suggesting a punitive approach rather than one focused on rehabilitation and public safety.**

Several corporations in the United States have been reported to use prison labor

Walmart: Utilizes prison labor for manufacturing products and for supply chain operations.

McDonald's: Uses prison labor to produce uniforms and other items.

Victoria's Secret: Has used prison labor for manufacturing lingerie.

AT&T: Employs prison labor for call center operations.

Starbucks: Uses prison labor for packaging products.

Microsoft: Utilizes prison labor for refurbishing and recycling electronic equipment.

Boeing: Engages prison labor for manufacturing parts.

Nordstrom: Uses prison labor for product manufacturing.

Target: Employs prison labor for manufacturing and packaging.

Whole Foods: Uses prison labor for packaging products.

BP: Utilizes prison labor for various operations.

Caterpillar: Engages prison labor for manufacturing parts.

Chevron: Uses prison labor for various operations.

Eddie Bauer: Employs prison labor for manufacturing products.

Kmart: Uses prison labor for manufacturing and packaging.

The situation in Louisiana is exacerbated by its unique system of housing state prisoners in local jails. More than half of the people serving state sentences are held in parish jails, which often lack adequate healthcare and rehabilitation programs. **This practice has led to higher rates of suicides, drug overdoses, and violent deaths in these facilities compared to state-run prisons.**

United States: As of 2021, the U.S. had approximately 1.8 million people incarcerated in various facilities, including state and federal prisons, local jails, juvenile correctional facilities, and immigration detention centers.

A Tale of Two Justice Systems: The United States vs. Saudi Arabia

The United States and Saudi Arabia — two bastions of justice, each with their own unique flair for handling those pesky lawbreakers.

Let's start with the good ol' U.S. of A., where the motto seems to be "Go big or go home." **With an incarceration rate of 531 per 100,000 people**, the United States proudly holds the title of the world's largest prison population. Louisiana, as mentioned before, takes this to heart with an **incarceration rate of 1,094 per 100,000** — more than five times higher than Saudi Arabia's 207 per 100,000. The state that gave us jazz and jambalaya also gives us a prison population that would make even the most authoritarian regimes blush.

In the U.S., we have a veritable smorgasbord of crimes to choose from. Drug offenses? Check. Violent crimes? Check. White-collar crimes? Check. Immigration offenses? Double check.

Saudi Arabia executed 196 people in 2022, the highest number in 30 years.

The United States executed 18 people in 2022.

Both Countries Executions are increasing in recent years

It's a buffet of bad behavior, and the American justice system is more than happy to serve up a heaping helping of incarceration. And let's not forget the private prison industry, where companies like CoreCivic and The GEO Group turn a tidy profit from the misery of others. **It's capitalism at its finest, folks.**

The Kingdom of Perks and Punishments

Now, let's jet over to Saudi Arabia, where the justice system is a curious blend of medieval punishments and modern perks. Here, the crimes are a bit more...shall we say, eclectic. Political dissent? That's a one-way ticket to prison. Religious offenses? Better pack your bags. Moral crimes like adultery or homosexuality? **Don't even think about it.** And let's not forget the ever-popular terrorism-related offenses, which can land you in one of the kingdom's high-security prisons.

But wait, there's more! Saudi prisons are known for their unique approach to rehabilitation. At the al-Hair high-security prison, inmates are showered with perks like conjugal visits, family welfare programs, and even cash gifts for good behavior. **It's almost like a twisted version of "The Price is Right," where the prize is a semblance of normalcy in an otherwise draconian system.** Of course, this doesn't mean the kingdom is a paradise for prisoners. **Reports of torture, overcrowding, and inadequate medical care are rampant, but hey, at least they get fresh linens and tea.**

A Match Made in Hypocrisy

The irony, of course, is that the United States and Saudi Arabia are best buds when it comes to matters of state. The U.S. government has deep ties with the Kingdom's penal system, offering training and consultation to help Saudi Arabia maintain its repressive capabilities. It's a beautiful symbiotic relationship where both nations can pat each other on the back while ignoring their own glaring human rights abuses.