

An estimated 4.65 million adults—or about 1 in 53 adults—were on probation, parole, or some other form of post-prison supervision at yearend 2015. This was a decrease of about 62,300 offenders from yearend 2014 and the lowest number of adults under community supervision since 2000.

## Community supervision definitions

Probation is a court-ordered period of correctional supervision in the community and is generally used as an alternative to incarceration. Parole is a period of conditional supervised release in the community following a prison term. Probationers accounted for the majority (81%) of adults under community supervision, and the probation population was more than four times the parole population.

## Recent probation and parole changes

A decrease in the probation population (down by about 78,700 offenders) contributed to all of the decline in the adult community corrections population from 2014 to 2015. The decline was slightly offset by an increase in the parole population, which grew from about 857,700 to 870,500 during that period.

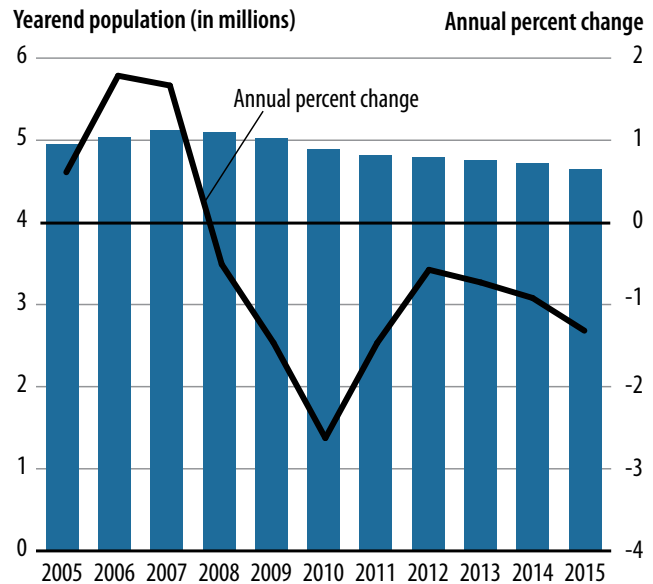
Entries onto and exits off of probation declined by more than 4% from 2014 (4.19 million) to 2015 (4.01 million). Probation entries declined by about 5% during this period, down from 2.07 million to 1.97 million. Probation exits declined by about 4% from 2014 (2.13 million) to 2015 (2.04 million). Entries to parole increased by 14,100 from 2014 to 2015, and exits from parole rose by 10,900.

## Long-term community supervision trends

Since 2005, the rate of exits from probation has remained consistent, ranging from 52 to 55 per 100 probationers. The completion rate (turnover due to completing the term of supervision either through a full-term completion or early discharge) was 33 exits per 100 during 2015, which was similar to the rate observed in 2005 (32 per 100) and down slightly from rates that had been consistent since 2009 (35 to 36 per 100).

With the exception of 2009 and 2013, each year from 2005 to 2015 saw an increase in the number of individuals supervised on parole. The parole exit rate increased from 33 exits per 100 parolees in 2014 to 54 exits per 100 in 2015. The rate had remained between 35 and 32 exits per 100 parolees since 2008. In 2015, the rate of reincarceration was 14 exits per 100. The rate remained unchanged from 2013 to 2014 but declined from 25 per 100 in 2005.

**Adults under community supervision on December 31 and annual percent change, 2005–2015**



Note: Estimates are based on most recent data and may differ from previously published statistics.  
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Probation Survey and Annual Parole Survey, 2005–2015.

## Characteristics of probationers and parolees

While the majority of probationers were male, the percentage of females on probation increased from 2005 (23%) to 2015 (25%). In both 2015 and 2005, more than half (55%) of probationers were non-Hispanic white, 30% were non-Hispanic black, and 13% were Hispanic or Latino. During that same period, probationers supervised for a felony offense increased from 50% in 2005 to 57% in 2015.

The majority (87%) of parolees were male in 2015, which was similar to percentages observed in both 2014 and 2005 (88% each). In 2015, 44% of parolees were white, 38% were black, and 16% were Hispanic or Latino. The number of parolees being supervised for a drug offense decreased from 37% in 2005 to 31% in 2015. The percentage of parolees being supervised for a violent crime increased from 26% to 32% during that period.

The full report (*Probation and Parole in the United States, 2015*, NCJ 250230), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at [www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov).

