

ICPSR 25423

**Court Workforce Racial Diversity
and Racial Justice in Criminal Case
Outcomes in the United States,
2000-2005**

Description

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Political and Social Research
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Bibliographic Description

ICPSR Study No.: 25423

Title: Court Workforce Racial Diversity and Racial Justice in Criminal Case Outcomes in the United States, 2000-2005

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Scope of Study

Summary: The purpose of this study was to determine whether workgroup racial composition is related to sentence outcomes generally, and racial differences in sentencing in particular, across federal districts. This collection contains information on federal court district characteristics. Data include information about the social context, court context, and diversity of the courtroom workgroup for 90 federal judicial districts provided by 50 judicial district context variables.

Subject Term(s): case processing, court cases, court system, courtroom proceedings, courts, district courts, federal courts, judicial decisions, justice, labor force, race, race relations, sentencing

Smallest Geographic Unit: federal criminal court district

Geographic Coverage: United States

Time Period: • 2000 - 2005

- Date(s) of Collection: • 2007
- Unit of Observation: federal criminal court district
- Universe: All federal judicial districts in the United States between 2000 and 2005.
- Data Type: aggregate data
census/enumeration data
- Data Collection Notes: Individual level variables, including the individual defendant case decisions that were obtained through the Monitoring Federal Criminal Sentencing (MFCS) data acquired from the United States Sentencing Commission, are not available as part of this collection.

Methodology

- Purpose of the Study: Race and criminal sentencing research typically considers only the race of the criminal offender, crime victim, and general population to assess whether and how race influences sentencing and outcomes. Invisible in most accounts are the racial identities and group relations of court workers whose decisions ultimately shape case outcomes, and thus the race relations of sentencing. The purpose of this study was to determine whether workgroup racial composition is related to sentence outcomes generally, and racial differences in sentencing in particular, across federal districts.
- Study Design: This collection contains information on federal court district characteristics. Data include information about the social context, court context, and diversity of the courtroom workgroup for 90 federal judicial districts. Information on the social context of the judicial district was compiled using information from the 2000 Census and the 2000 Uniform Crime Reports (available through the FedStats system). Information specific to the court context including data on case processing, court workload information, demographics of each district, arrest data for each district, caseload, criminal case processing time, and proportion of district caseload for different types of crimes was obtained through the Federal Court Management Statistics and the Judicial Business of the United States Courts for 2000 and 2001, which are compiled annually by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Information on the racial demographics of federal court workgroups was collected by the principal investigators. Publicly available data on judge demographics and background was found at the Federal Judicial Center's Biographical Directory of Federal Judges, information on the demographics of federal prosecutors was provided from FedStats, and data on the demographics

of federal probation officers and defenders was provided by the Administrative Offices of the United States Trial Courts.

Sample: The sample is comprised of 90 of the 94 judicial districts in the federal court system. Four districts (Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, and North Mariana Island) were eliminated due to insufficient data available and concern about variation in territorial governance over judicial processes.

Weight: none

Sources of Information: Data sources include the 2000 Census, the 2000 Uniform Crime Reports, the Federal Court Management Statistics and the Judicial Business of the United States Courts for 2000 and 2001, which are compiled annually by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Federal Judicial Center's Biographical Directory of Federal Judges, FedStats, and the Administrative Offices of the United States Trial Courts.

Mode of Data Collection: record abstracts

Description of Variables: The dataset contains 50 judicial district context variables. More specifically, variables include district, population, proportion male/female judges in district, proportion White/Black/Hispanic judges in district, proportion male/female probation officers in district, proportion White/Black/Hispanic probation officers in district, proportion male/female prosecutors in district, proportion White/Black/Hispanic prosecutors in district, proportion male/female defenders in district, proportion White/Black/Hispanic defenders in district, proportion district population White/Black/Hispanic, departure rate for district, proportion district under 18 years of age, proportion of district over 65 years of age, proportion of district unemployed, proportion of district below poverty level, average filing time for district, violent offense rate for district, average felony finding per judge, proportion C felony finding, proportion F felony finding, proportion Black defendant for district. Other variables include Black workgroup (judge and prosecutors only), Black judge index, Black probation index, Black prosecutor index, Black defender index, Black workgroup index-original (judge + prosecutor), proportion of judges in district appointed by democratic/republican presidents, indicator that district is in southern region, female workgroup, full Black workgroup (judge, prosecutor, probation, and defender), and full workgroup index (judge, prosecutor, probation, defender).

Response Rates: not applicable

Presence of Common Scales: none

Extent of Processing: Standardized missing values.

Checked for undocumented or out-of-range codes.

Access and Availability

Note: A list of the data formats available for this study can be found in the [summary of holdings](#). Detailed file-level information (such as record length, case count, and variable count) is listed in the [file manifest](#).

Original ICPSR Release: 2009-06-25

Dataset(s):

- DS1: Court Workforce Racial Diversity and Racial Justice in Criminal Case Outcomes in the United States, 2000-2005

Publications

Final Reports and Other Publication Resources: A list of publications related to, or based on, this data collection can be accessed from the study's download page on the NACJD Web site or through the ICPSR Bibliography of Data-Related Literature at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/ICPSR/citations/index.html>. The list of citations includes links to abstracts and publications in Portable Document Format (PDF) files or text files when available.

Final reports and other publications describing research conducted on a variety of criminal justice topics are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). NCJRS was established in 1972 by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), an agency of the U.S. Department of Justice, to provide research findings to criminal justice professionals and researchers. NCJRS operates specialized clearinghouses that are staffed by information specialists who supply a range of reference, referral, and distribution services. Publications can be obtained from NCJRS at NIJ/NCJRS, Box 6000, Rockville, MD, 20849-6000, 800-851-3420 or 301-519-5500. TTY Service for the Hearing Impaired is 877-712-9279 (toll-free) or 301-947-8374 (local). The URL for the NCJRS Web site is:

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/>

NIJ Data Resources Program

About the DRP: The National Institute of Justice Data Resources Program (DRP) makes datasets from NIJ-funded research and evaluation projects available to the research community and sponsors research and training activities devoted to secondary data analysis. Datasets are archived by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan.

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The NACJD maintains a World Wide Web site with instructions for transferring files and sending messages. Criminal justice data funded by the Department of Justice are available via the Internet at this site at no charge to the user. NACJD may be contacted at NACJD/ICPSR, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI, 48106-1248, 800-999-0960. The URL for the NACJD Web site is:

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/>