

# THE AMERICAN BAZAAR

## Report on illegal immigrant criminals have shortcomings, says expert

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A recent report published by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) on incarcerated aliens point towards the flaws in the methods used by the departments to collect and study the data.

According to a statement issued by the [DOJ](#), “More than one-in-five of all persons in Bureau of Prisons custody were foreign-born, and that 94 percent of confirmed aliens in custody were unlawfully present.”

The statement further notes that a total of 58,766 known or suspected aliens are in DOJ custody at the end of FY 2017. Of this total, 37,557 people had been confirmed by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to be aliens (i.e., non-citizens and non-nationals), while 21,209 foreign-born people were still under investigation by ICE to determine alienage.

But, while recognizing the size of illegal immigrants incarcerated by the departments, the report states that it “ does not include data on the foreign-born or alien populations in state prisons and local jails because state and local facilities do not routinely provide DHS or DOJ with comprehensive information about their inmates and detainees.”

This shows that the data published by the departments are not a fair representation of the incarcerated illegal immigrants since it excludes the data about the aliens held in state and local jails that account for approximately 90 percent of the total U.S. incarcerated population.

Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy analyst at Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity noted on a blog post in [cato.org](#) that the report didn’t give a detailed account of nationwide incarcerations by nativity, legal status, or type of crime.

“It sheds little light on nationwide incarcerations by nativity, legal status, or type of crime. On the last point, it is shocking how unrepresentative federal prison is regarding the types of crimes its inmates are convicted of,” said Nowrasteh.

According to him, 30 percent of 67,742 people sentenced to federal prisons in 2016 were immigration offenders and it represented 100 percent of convictions for immigration crimes last year.

At the same time, only 85 persons were convicted of murder out of 17,785 murder convictions in 2016, comprising less than 0.5 percent of all murders.

DHS and HOJ have stated that they are working to develop a methodology for collecting data on incarcerated population in state and local prisons that could be used for studies in the future.

Nowrasteh further notes that the departments should review their methodology for estimating the status of illegal immigrant criminals since a March 2017 study conducted by Cato Institute Immigration Research and Policy Brief found that illegal immigrants are less likely to be held in jails than the native population.