

Abstract

The thesis *Prison Privatization in the United States: The Limits and Consequences of the Transfer of Public Power into Private Hands* analyzes selected consequences of prison privatization in the United States. Although the prison privatization in the US is considered a modern phenomenon, the private sector was involved in corrections from the very early history of the US. Therefore, the thesis introduces the history and philosophy of private sector involvement in corrections. The thesis then examines the factors that led to the decision to privatize prisons, namely overcrowding of prisons, other political factors, and so-called *PIE-program* that enabled interstate trade with prisoner-made goods. Further, it provides detailed statistics to illustrate the steep rise in the prison population. It also addresses the question of cost-savings and efficiency and it provides examples of specific factors that influence economic performance of private prisons. Important part is dedicated to the growth of prison-industrial complex characterized by the overlapping interests of bureaucracy, politicians and private prison companies that lead to increased pressure to maintain or increase the prison population. In the final chapter, the thesis analyzes the consequences such as increasing tax burden; demographic changes in the population most affected by mass incarceration, and distorted justice.