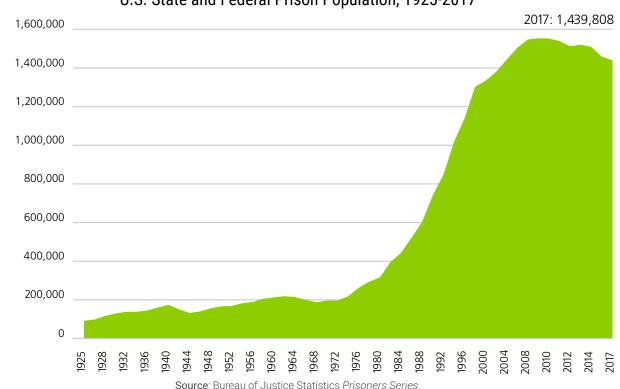


Number of People

Trends in U.S. Corrections



U.S. State and Federal Prison Population, 1925-2017

United States 655 El Salvador 618 Rwanda 464 383 Russia Brazil 333 Australia 172 Spain 127 China 118 Canada 114 France 104 Germany 77 Denmark 63 Sweden 59 India 33

International Rates of Incarceration per 100,000

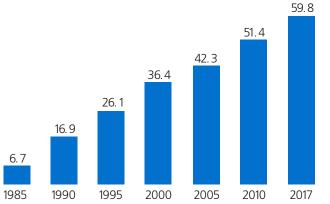
Source: Walmsley, R. (2019). World Prison Brief. London: Institute for Criminal Policy Research. Available online: http://www.prisonstudies.org/world-prison-brief



MASS INCARCERATION

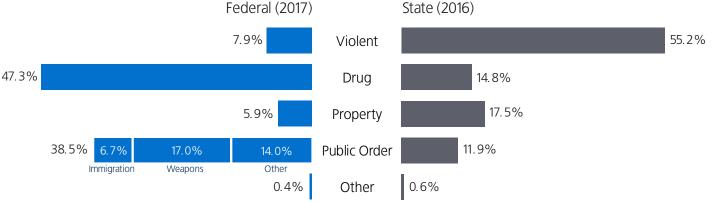
The United States is the world's leader in incarceration with 2.2 million people currently in the nation's prisons and jails — a 500% increase over the last forty years. Changes in sentencing law and policy, not changes in crime rates, explain most of this increase. These trends have resulted in prison overcrowding and fiscal burdens on states to accommodate a rapidly expanding penal system, despite increasing evidence that large-scale incarceration is not an effective means of achieving public safety.

State Expenditures on Corrections in Billions, 1985-2017



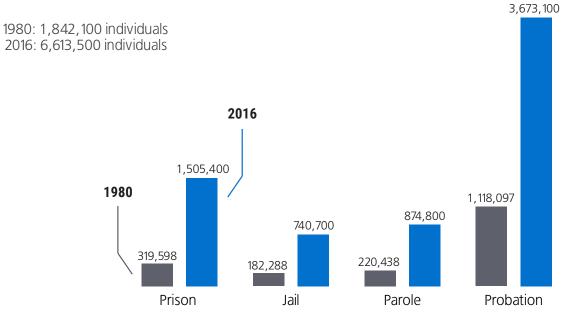
Source: National Association of State Budget Officers (1985-2017). *State Expenditure Report Series.* Washington, DC: National Association of State Budget Officers.

State & Federal Prison Population by Offense



Source: Bronson, J. and Carson E.A. (2019). Prisoners in 2017. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Population Under Control of the U.S. Corrections System, 1980 and 2016



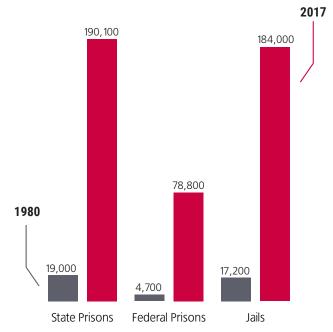
Sources: Kaeble, D. and Cowhig, M. (2018). Correctional Populations in the United States, 2016. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics: Total Correctional Population. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Totals adjust for individuals with multiple correctional statuses to prevent double counting.

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Number of People in Prisons and Jails for Drug Offenses, 1980 and 2017

1980: 40,900 individuals 2017: 452,900 individuals



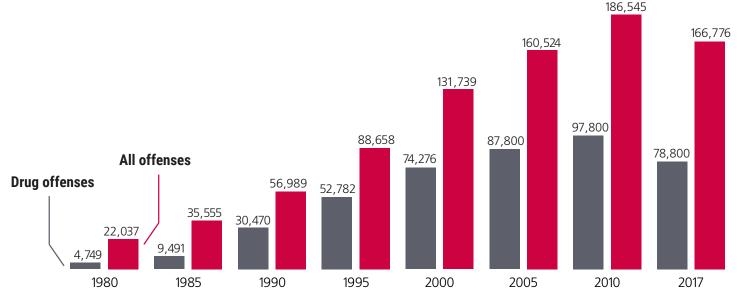
Sources: Bronson, J. and Carson, E.A. (2019). *Prisoners in 2017*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; James, D.J. (2004). *Profile of Jail Inmates, 2002*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; Zeng, Z. (2019). *Jail Inmates in 2017*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

FACT SHEET: TRENDS IN U.S. CORRECTIONS

DRUG POLICY

Sentencing policies of the War on Drugs era resulted in dramatic growth in incarceration for drug offenses. Since its official beginning in the 1980s, the number of Americans incarcerated for drug offenses has skyrocketed from 40,900 in 1980 to 452,900 in 2017. Furthermore, harsh sentencing laws such as mandatory minimums keep many people convicted of drug offenses in prison for longer periods of time: in 1986, people released after serving time for a federal drug offense had spent an average of 22 months in prison. By 2004, people convicted on federal drug offenses were expected to serve almost three times that length: 62 months in prison.

At the federal level, people incarcerated on a drug conviction make up nearly half the prison population. At the state level, the number of people in prison for drug offenses has increased ninefold since 1980, although it has begun declining in recent years. Most are not high-level actors in the drug trade, and most have no prior criminal record for a violent offense.



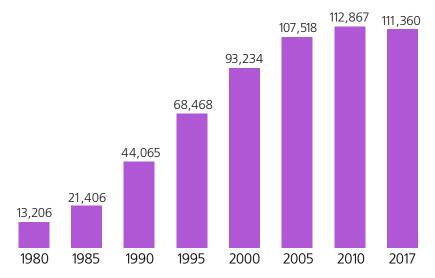
Number of Sentenced People in Federal Prisons for Drug Offenses, 1980-2017

Sources: Prisoners Series. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



The number of women in prison has been increasing at twice the rate of growth for men since 1980. Women in prison often have significant histories of physical and sexual abuse, high rates of HIV, and substance abuse problems. Women's imprisonment in femaleled households leads to children who suffer from their mother's absence and breaks in family ties.

Number of Women in State and Federal Prisons, 1980-2017



Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics *Prisoners Series*; Minor-Harper, S. (1986). State and *Federal Prisoners*, 1925-1985. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Highest and Lowest State Incarceration Rates (per 100,000), 2017

			(00 000)		
		State	Rate		
		HIGHEST			
Women (All States = 57)		Louisiana	719	Men (All States = 733)	
State	Rate	Oklahoma	704	State	Rate
HIGHEST		Mississippi	619	HIGHEST	
Oklahoma	157	Arkansas	598	Louisiana	1,387
Kentucky	133	Arizona	569	Oklahoma	1,262
South Dakota	124	LOWEST		Mississippi	1,189
Idaho	114	Massachusetts	120	Arkansas	1,122
Missouri	109	Maine	134	Arizona	1,039
LOWEST		Rhode Island	170	LOWEST	
Massachusetts	9	Vermont	180	Massachusetts	239
Rhode Island	13	Minnesota	191	Maine	250
New Jersey	17			Vermont	331
New York	22			Rhode Island	337
Maine	22			Minnesota	357

Overall (All States = 390)

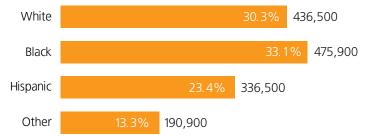
Source: Bronson, J. and Carson, E.A. (2019). Prisoners in 2017. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



RACIAL DISPARITIES

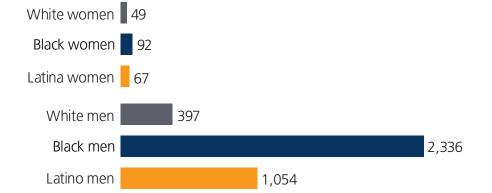
More than 60% of the people in prison today are people of color. Black men are six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men and Hispanic men are 2.7 times as likely. For black men in their thirties, about 1 in every 12 is in prison or jail on any given day.

People in State and Federal Prisons, by Race and Ethnicity, 2017



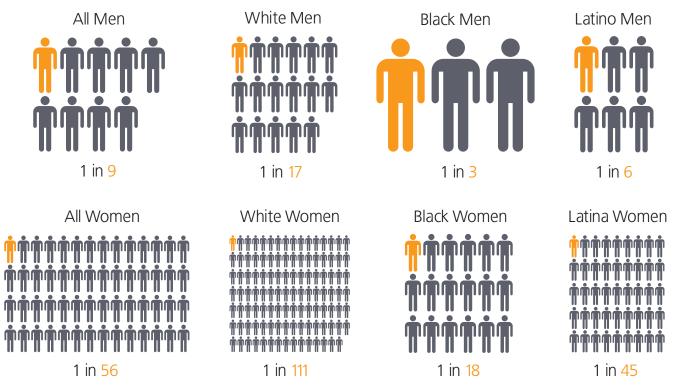
Source: Bronson J. and Carson, E.A. (2019). *Prisoners in 2017*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Rate of Imprisonment per 100,000, by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity, 2017



Source: Bronson J. and Carson, E.A. (2019). Prisoners in 2017. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment of U.S. Residents Born in 2001



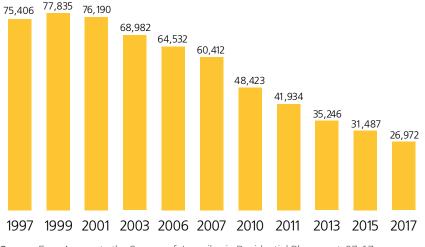
Source: Bonczar, T. (2003). Prevalence of Imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974-2001. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



YOUTH

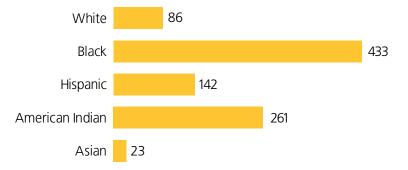
Since 1999, commitment to secure juvenile facilities for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent has been steadily declining from a high point of 77,835 in 1999 to 31,487 in 2015. Still, troubling problems remain. Youth of color enter the system much more frequently than white youth and are more likely to be sentenced to harsher terms of punishment. In addition, young people are transferred to the adult system each year and tried as if they were adults, and many are sent to adult prisons and jails to serve their sentences.

Number of Youth Committed to Juvenile Facilities, 1999-2015

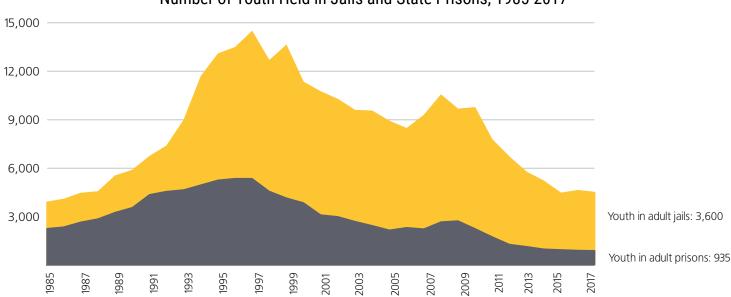


Source: Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement: 97-17. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

Rate of Youth in Residential Placement per 100,000, by Race and Ethnicity, 2015



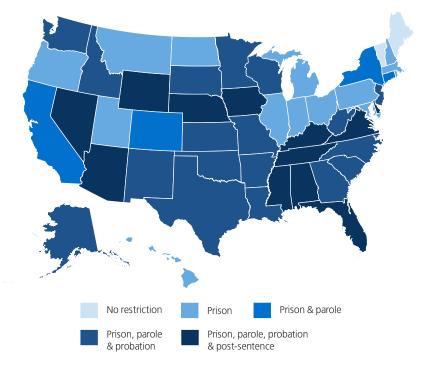
Source: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2016). *Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement*. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.



Number of Youth Held in Jails and State Prisons, 1985-2017

Sources: Austin, J., Johnson, K. D., & Gregoriou, M. (2000). Juveniles in Adult Prisons and Jails: A National Assessment. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance; Bureau of Justice Statistics Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear Series; Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoner Series; Strom, K. J. (2000). Profile of State Prisoners under Age 18, 1985-1997. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Felony Disenfranchisement Restrictions by State, 2016

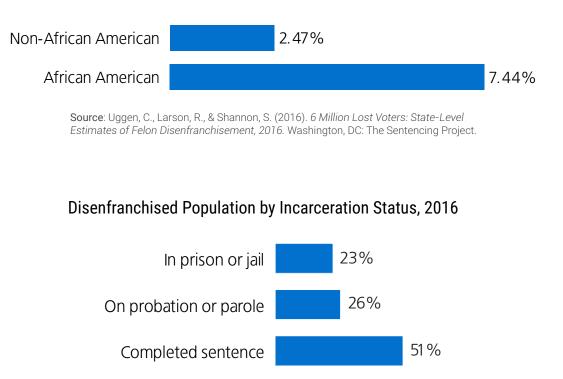


Source: Chung, J. (2016). *Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT

In 48 states, a felony conviction can result in the loss of an individual's voting rights. The period of disenfranchisement varies by state, with some states restoring the vote upon completion of a prison term, and others effectively disenfranchising for life. As a result of the dramatic expansion of the criminal justice system in the last 40 years, felony disenfranchisement has affected the political voice of many communities. As of 2016, 6.1 million Americans were unable to vote due to state felony disenfranchisement policies.

Rate of Disenfranchisement, by Race, 2016

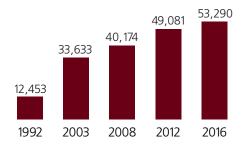


Source: Uggen, C., Larson, R., & Shannon, S. (2016). 6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felon Disenfranchisement, 2016. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

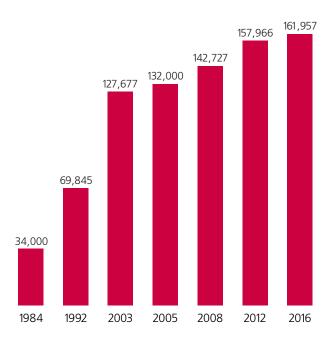


The number of people serving life sentences continues to grow even while serious, violent crime has been declining for the past 20 years and little public safety benefit has been demonstrated to correlate with increasingly lengthy sentences. The lifer population has nearly quintupled since 1984. One in nine people in prison is now serving a life sentence and nearly a third of lifers have been sentenced to life without parole.

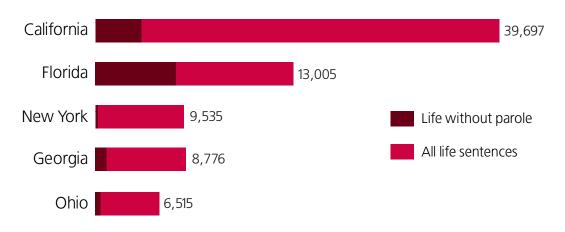
> Number of People Serving Life Without Parole Sentences, 1992-2016



Number of People Serving Life Sentences, 1984-2016



States with the Most People Serving Life Sentences, 2016



Source: Nellis, A. (2016). Still Life: America's Increasing Use of Life and Long-Term Sentences. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.



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This fact sheet was updated June 2019.

The Sentencing Project works for a fair and effective U.S. justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policy, addressing unjust racial disparities and practices, and advocating for alternatives to incarceration.