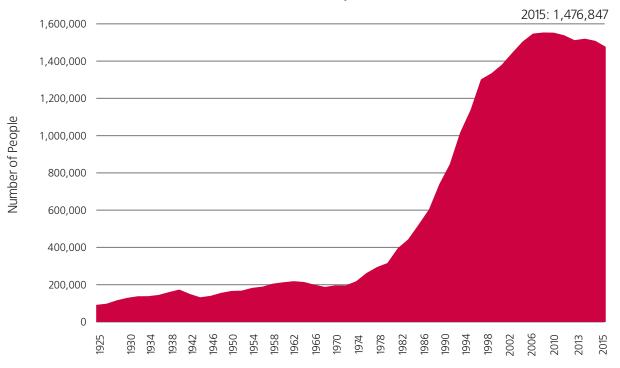


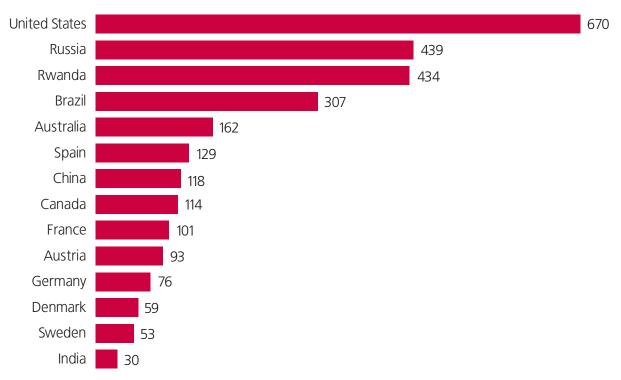
# **Trends in U.S. Corrections**

#### U.S. State and Federal Prison Population, 1925-2015



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoners Series.

### International Rates of Incarceration per 100,000



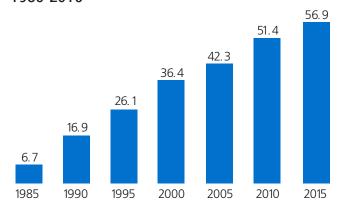
Source: Walmsley, R. (2016). World Prison Brief. London: Institute for Criminal Policy Research. Available online: http://www.prisonstudies.org/world-prison-brief



# **MASS INCARCERATION**

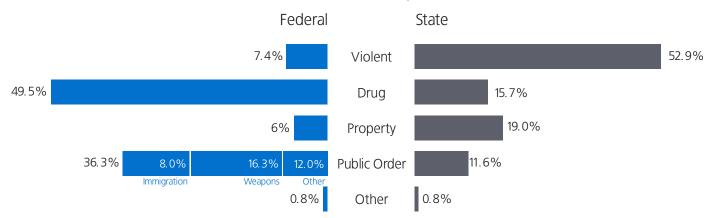
The United States is the world's leader in incarceration with 2.2 million people currently in the nation's prisons and jails — a 500% increase over the last forty years. Changes in sentencing law and policy, not changes in crime rates, explain most of this increase. These trends have resulted in prison 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, 1985-2015



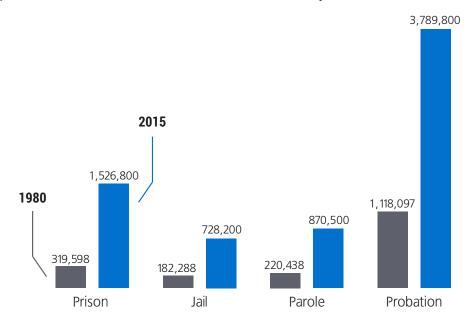
**Source**: National Association of State Budget Officers (1985-2015). *State Expenditure Report Series*. Washington, DC: National Association of State Budget Officers.

### State & Federal Prison Population by Offense, 2015



Source: Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). Prisoners in 2015. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

### Population Under Control of the U.S. Corrections System, 1980 and 2015

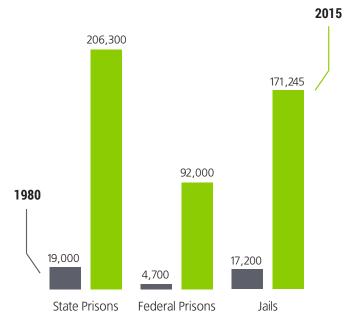


Sources: Kaeble, D. and Glaze, N. (2016). Correctional Populations in the United States, 2015. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; Corrections: Key Facts at a Glance. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



# Number of People in Prisons and Jails for Drug Offenses, 1980 and 2015

1980: 40,900 individuals 2015: 469,545 individuals



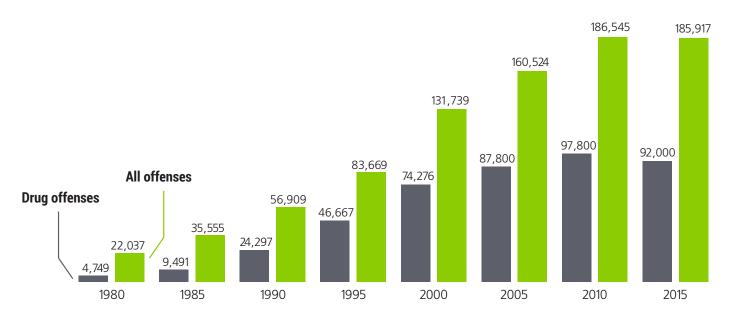
Sources: Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). *Prisoners in 2015*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; James, D.J. (2004). *Profile of Jail Inmates, 2002*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; Mauer, M. and King, R. (2007). *A 25-Year Quagmire: The War on Drugs and its Impact on American Society*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project; Minton, T.D. and Zeng, Z. (2016). *Jail Inmates in 2015*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

#### **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 469,545 in 2015. 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 just under half the prison population. At the state level, the number of people in prison for drug offenses has increased ten-fold since 1980. Most of these people are not high-level actors in the drug trade, and most have no prior criminal record for a violent offense.

### Number of People in Federal Prisons for Drug Offenses, 1980-2015



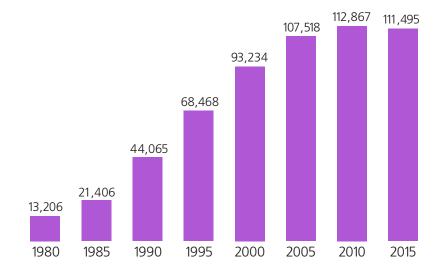
Sources: Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics Online; Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). Prisoners in 2015. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



#### **WOMEN**

The number of women in prison has been increasing at a rate 50 percent higher than 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, 1980-2015



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), 2015

Women (National = 64)

Wolfieli (National = 04)	
State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Oklahoma	151
Kentucky	115
Idaho	112
Arizona	105
Missouri	105
LOWEST	
Rhode Island	11
Massachusetts	14
Maine	19
New Jersey	20
New York	23

Overall (National = 458)

State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Louisiana	776
Oklahoma	715
Alabama	611
Mississippi	609
Arizona	596
LOWEST	
Maine	132
Massachusetts	179
Minnesota	196
Rhode Island	204
Vermont	206

Men (National = 863)

State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Louisiana	1,498
Oklahoma	1,290
Mississippi	1,172
Alabama	1,159
Arkansas	1,109
LOWEST	
Maine	249
Massachusetts	355
Minnesota	366
Vermont	391
Utah	393

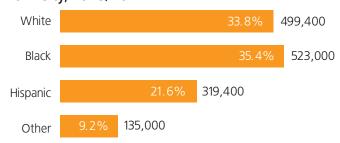
Source: Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). Prisoners in 2015. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



### **RACIAL DISPARITIES**

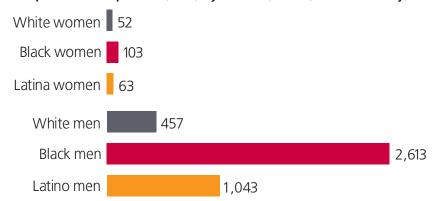
More than 60% of the people in prison today are people of color. Black men are nearly six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men and Hispanic men are 2.3 times as likely. For black men in their thirties, 1 in every 10 is in prison or jail on any given day.

# People in State and Federal Prisons, by Race and Ethnicity, 2013/2014



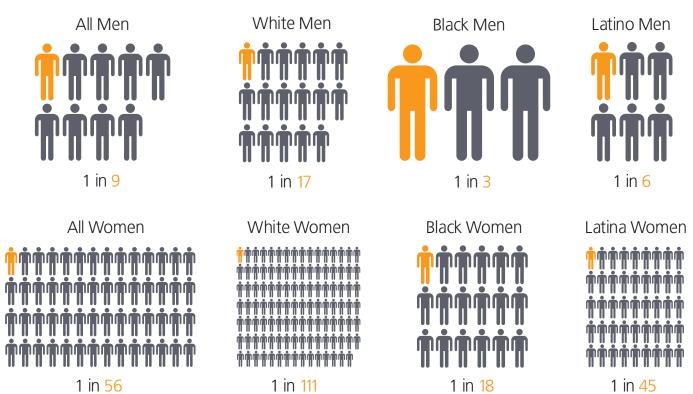
Source: Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). *Prisoners in 2015*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

#### Rate of Imprisonment per 100,000, by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity, 2015



Source: Carson, E.A. and Anderson, E. (2016). Prisoners in 2015. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

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



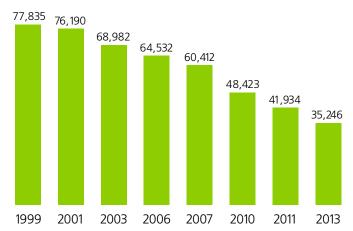
Source: Bonczar, T. (2003). Prevalence of Imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974-2001. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



#### **YOUTH**

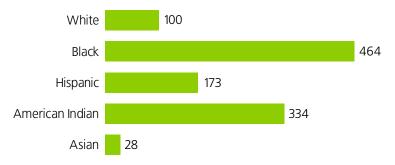
Since 1999, commitment to secure juvenile facilities for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent has been steadily declining from a high point of 77,835 in 1999 to 35,246 in 2013. Still, troubling problems remain. Youth of color enter the system much more frequently than white youth and are more likely to be sentenced to harsher terms of punishment. In addition, thousands of young people are transferred to the adult system each year, and many are sent to adult prisons and jails to serve their sentences.

# Number of Youth Committed to Juvenile Facilities, 1999-2013



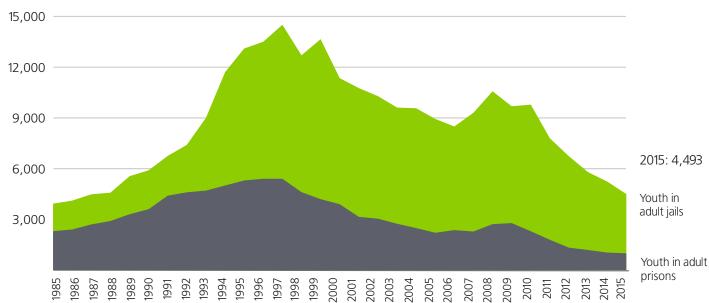
**Source**: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2015). *Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement*. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

# Rate of Youth in Residential Placement per 100,000, by Race and Ethnicity, 2013



Source: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2015). Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

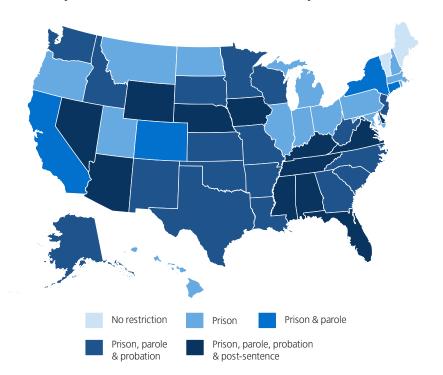
## Number of Youth Held in Jails and State Prisons, 1985-2015



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 *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

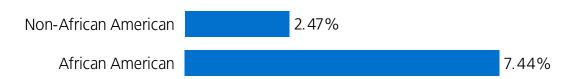


Source: Chung, J. (2016). Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

# 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. Today, 6.1 million Americans are 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.

### Disenfranchised Population by Incarceration Status, 2016



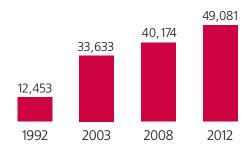
Source: Uggen, C., Larson, R., & Shannon, S. (2016). 6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felon Disenfranchisement, 2016. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.



#### **LIFE SENTENCES**

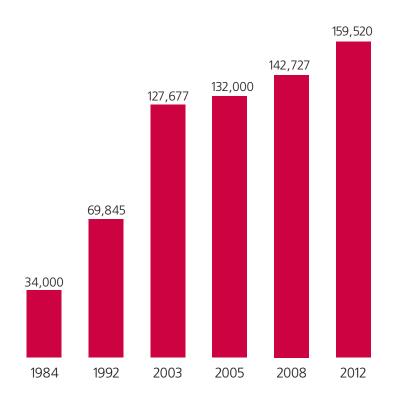
The number of people serving life sentences continues to grow even while serious, violent crime has been declining for the past 20 years and little public safety benefit has been demonstrated to correlate with increasingly lengthy sentences. The lifer population has more than quadrupled since 1984. One 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, 1992-2012



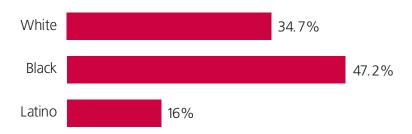
**Source:** Nellis, A. (2013). *Life Goes On: The Historic Rise in Life Sentences in America*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

#### Number of People Serving Life Sentences, 1984-2012



**Source:** Nellis, A. (2013). *Life Goes On: The Historic Rise in Life Sentences in America*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

## People Serving Life Sentences, by Race and Ethnicity, 2012



**Source**: Nellis, A. (2013). *Life Goes On: The Historic Rise in Life Sentences in America*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.



1705 DeSales Street NW, 8th Floor Washington, D.C. 20036 sentencingproject.org

This fact sheet was updated March 2017.

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.