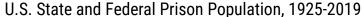
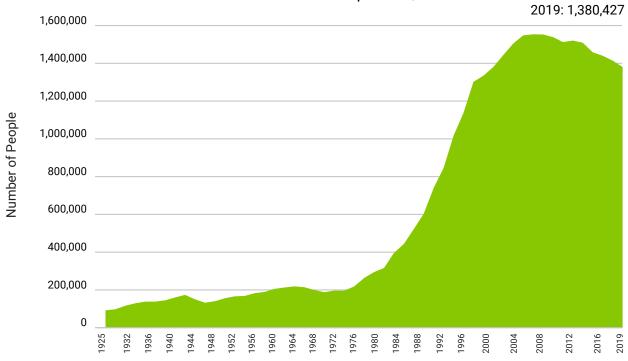


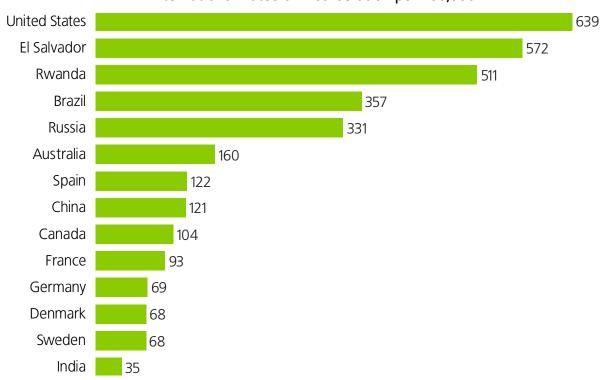
Trends in U.S. Corrections





Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoners Series.

International Rates of Incarceration per 100,000



Data sourced from the World Prison Brief website, compiled and hosted by the Institute of Crime and Justice Policy Research at Birckbeck, University of London.

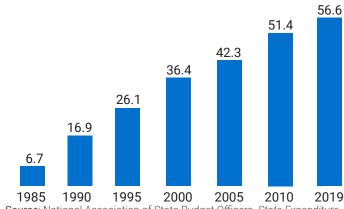
1



MASS INCARCERATION

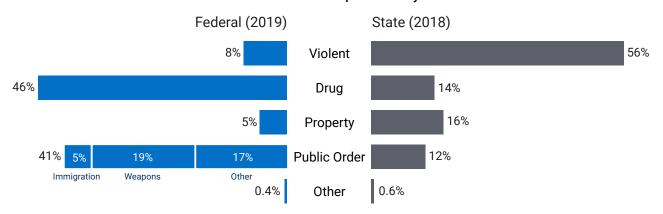
The United States is the world's leader in incarceration with 2 million people currently in the nation's prisons and jails — a 500% increase over the last forty years. Changes in sentencing law and policy, not changes in crime rates, explain most of this increase. These trends have resulted in prison 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, 1985-2019



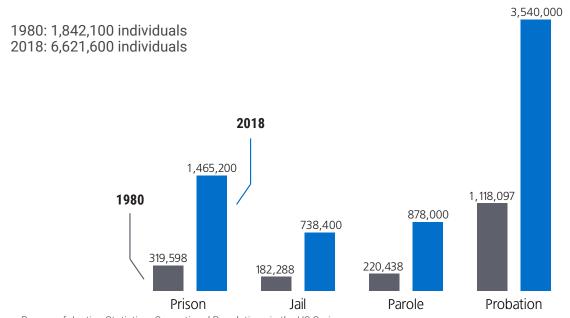
Source: National Association of State Budget Officers. *State Expenditure Report Series*.

State & Federal Prison Population by Offense



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoners Series.

Population Under Control of the U.S. Corrections System, 1980 and 2018

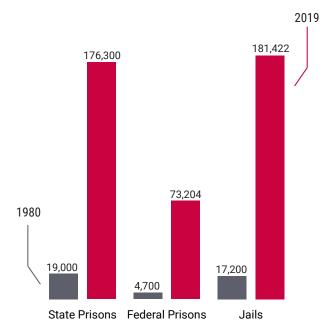


Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Correctional Populations in the US Series.



Number of People in Prisons and Jails for Drug Offenses, 1980 and 2019

1980: 40,900 individuals 2019: 430,926 individuals



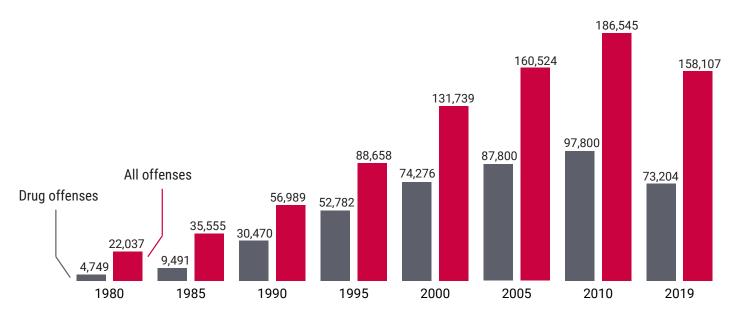
Sources: Carson, E.A. (2021). *Prisoners in 2019*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; James, D.J. (2004). *Profile of Jail Inmates, 2002*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; Zeng, Z. (2020). *Jail Inmates in 2018*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

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 430,926 in 2019. 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, 1980-2019

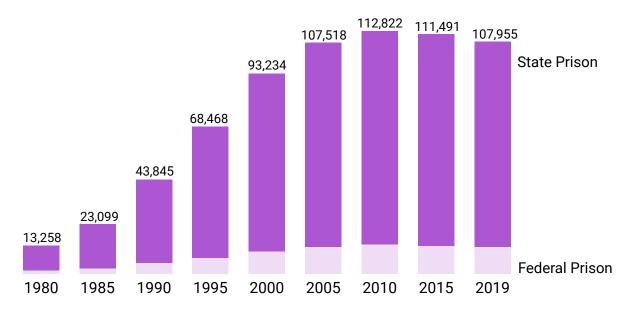


Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoners Series



WOMEN

Number of Women in State and Federal Prisons, 1980-2019



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), 2019

Overall (All States = 371)

Women (All States = 54)

`	
State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Idaho	138
Oklahoma	129
Kentucky	128
South Dakota	127
Wyoming	118
LOWEST	
Massachusetts	10
Rhode Island	11
New Jersey	15
New York	19
Maine	22

State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Louisiana	680
Oklahoma	639
Mississippi	636
Arkansas	586
Arizona	558
LOWEST	
Massachusetts	133
Maine	146
Rhode Island	156
Minnesota	176
Vermont	182

Men (All States = 698)

State	Rate
HIGHEST	
Louisiana	1,320
Oklahoma	1,158
Mississippi	1,224
Arkansas	1,089
Arizona	1,010
LOWEST	
Massachusetts	263
Maine	275
Rhode Island	309
Minnesota	331
Vermont	341

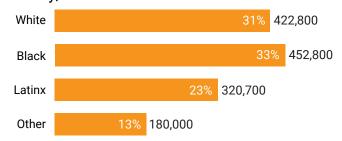
Source: Carson, E.A. (2021). Prisoners in 2019. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



RACIAL DISPARITIES

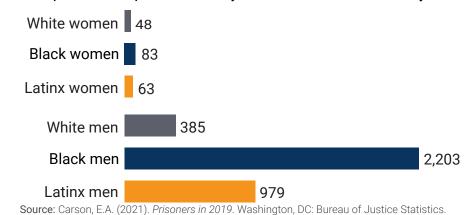
Black men are six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men and Latinx men are 2.5 times as likely. For Black men in their thirties, about 1 in every 12 is in prison or jail on any given day.

People in State and Federal Prisons, by Race and Ethnicity, 2019

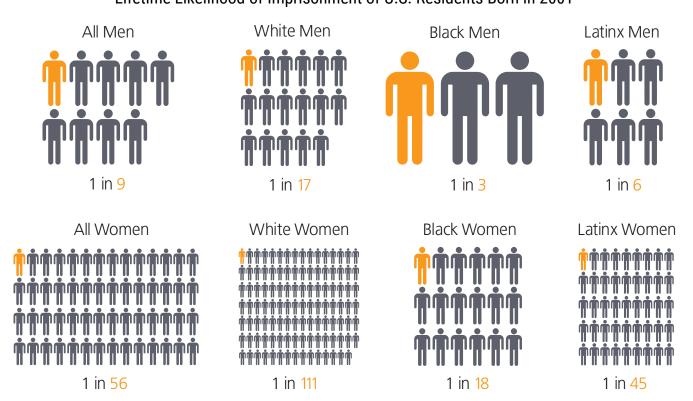


Source: Carson, E.A. (2021). *Prisoners in 2019*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Rate of Imprisonment per 100,000, by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity, 2019



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



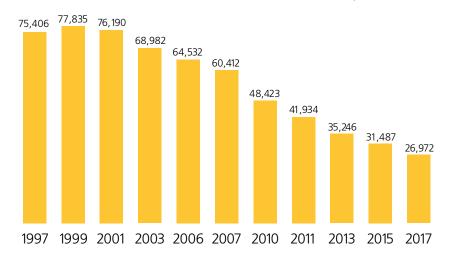
Source: Bonczar, T. (2003). Prevalence of Imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974-2001. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



YOUTH

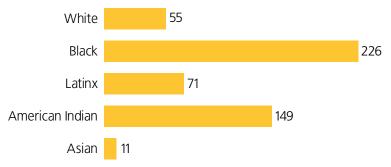
Since 1999, commitment to secure juvenile facilities for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent has been steadily declining from a high point of 77,835 in 1999 to 26,972 in 2017. Still, troubling problems remain. Youth of color enter the system much more frequently than white youth and are more likely 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, 1999-2017



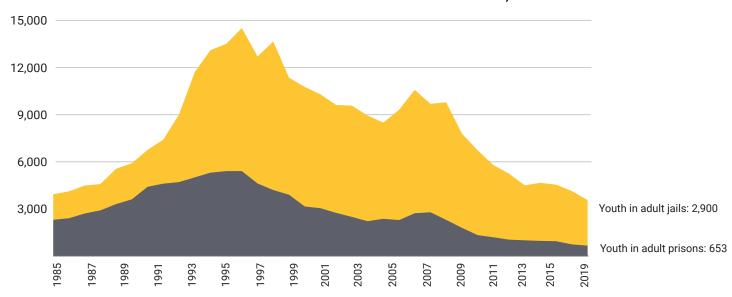
Source: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2019). Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

Rate of Secure Placement of Juveniles per 100,000, by Race and Ethnicity, 2017



Source: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2019). Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement. Available: http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

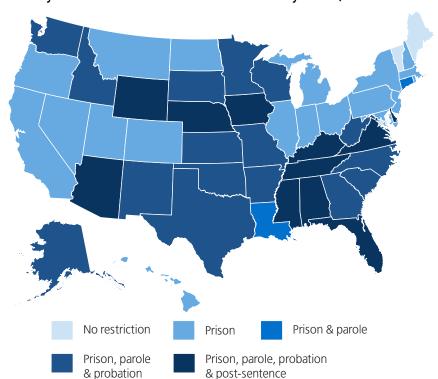
Number of Youth Confined in Jails and State Prisons, 1985-2019



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, 2021

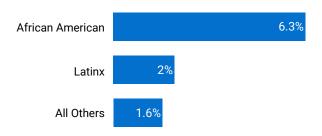


Source: Uggen, C., Larson, R., Shannon, S, & Pulido-Navo, A. (2020). Locked Out 2020: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights Due to a Felony Conviction. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT

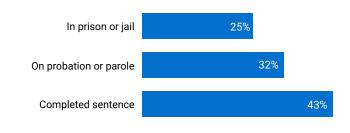
In 48 states, a felony conviction can result in the loss of an individual's voting rights. The period of disenfranchisement varies by state, with some states restoring the vote upon completion of a prison term, and others effectively disenfranchising for life. As a result of the dramatic expansion of the criminal justice system in the last 40 years, felony disenfranchisement has affected the political voice of many communities. As of 2020, 5.2 million Americans were unable to vote due to state felony disenfranchisement policies.

Rate of Disenfranchisement, by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



Source: Uggen, C., Larson, R., Shannon, S, & Pulido-Navo, A. (2020). Locked Out 2020: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights Due to a Felony Conviction. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

Disenfranchised Population by Incarceration Status, 2020



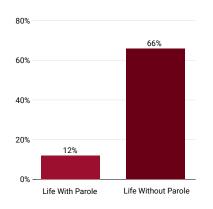
Uggen, C., Larson, R., Shannon, S, & Dildo-Navo, A. (2020). Locked Out 2020: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights Due to a Felony Conviction. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.



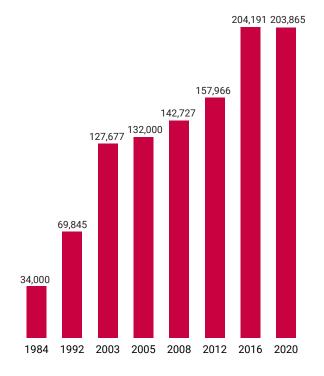
LIFE SENTENCES

The number of people serving life sentences endures 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. This population has nearly quintupled since 1984. One in seven people in prison are serving life with parole, life without parole, or virtual life (50 years or more).

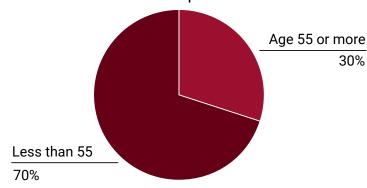
Relative Expansion of Life Without Parole, 2003-2020



Number of People Serving Life Sentences, 1984-2020



Percent of Life Sentenced Population Who Are 55 and Older



Source: Nellis, A. (2021). No End In Sight: America's Enduring Reliance on Life Imprisonment. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.



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

sentencingproject.org

This fact sheet was updated May 2021.

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.