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U.S. CORRECTIONAL POPULATION DECLINED FOR THE NINTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

WASHINGTON — The number of adults supervised by the U.S. correctional system dropped for the ninth consecutive year in 2016. The correctional population includes persons supervised in the community on probation or parole and those incarcerated in prisons or local jails. This report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics is the latest official snapshot of the state of the U.S. correctional population.

From 2007 to 2016, the proportion of the adult population under the supervision of U.S. correctional authorities decreased by 18 percent, from 3,210 to 2,640 adults under correctional supervision per 100,000 residents. The number of adults under correctional supervision per 100,000 U.S. adult residents was lower in 2016 (2,640) than at any time since 1993 (2,550). Overall, about 1 in 38 adults were under some form of correctional supervision at year-end 2016.

An estimated 6,613,500 persons were under correctional supervision on December 31, 2016, about 62,700 fewer persons than on January 1. The total correctional population declined 0.9 percent during 2016 due to decreases in both the community supervision population (down 1.1 percent) and the incarcerated population (down 0.5 percent).

The incarcerated population decreased from 2,172,800 in 2015 to 2,162,400 in 2016. All of the decrease in the incarcerated population was due to a decline in the prison population (down 21,200), while the jail population remained relatively stable. The number of persons held in prison or local jail per 100,000 U.S. adult residents (incarceration rate) has declined since 2009 and is currently at its lowest rate (860 per 100,000 in 2016) since 1996 (830 per 100,000).

During 2016, the community supervision population fell from 4,586,900 on January 1 to 4,537,100 at year-end. All of the decrease in the community supervision population in 2016 was due to a decline in the probation population (down 52,500). The parole population increased 0.5 percent in 2016 (up 4,300 persons). More than two-thirds (69 percent) of the correctional population were supervised in the community at year-end 2016, similar to the percentage observed in 2007.

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Correctional Populations in the United States, 2016 (NCJ 251211) was written by BJS statisticians Danielle Kaeble and Mary Cowhig. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2016* (NCJ 251148) was written by Danielle Kaeble. Data are from BJS's National Prisoner Statistics program, Annual Probation and Annual Parole surveys and Annual Survey of Jails. The reports, related documents and additional information about BJS's statistical publications and programs can be found on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.

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