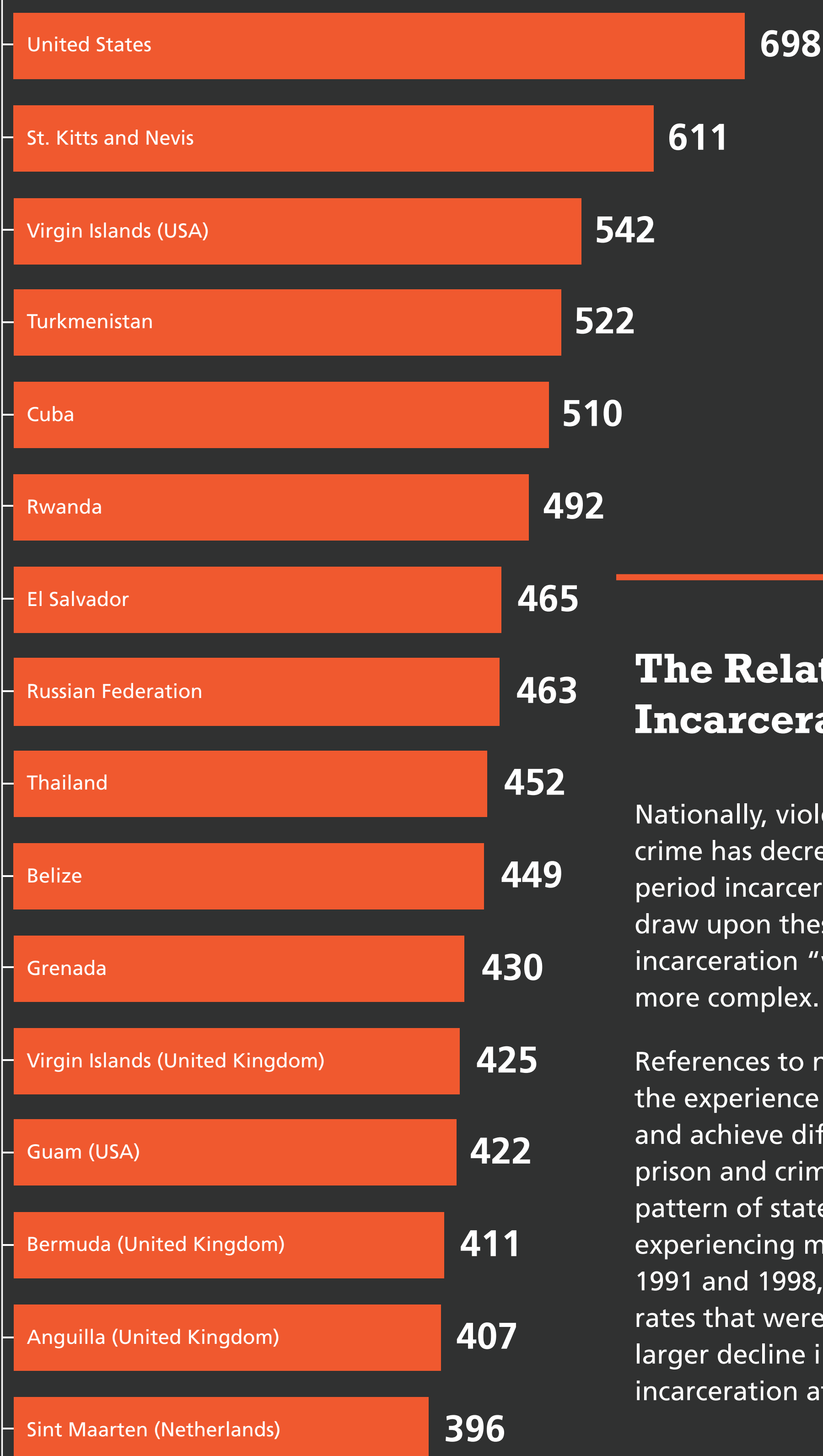


# Incarceration NATION

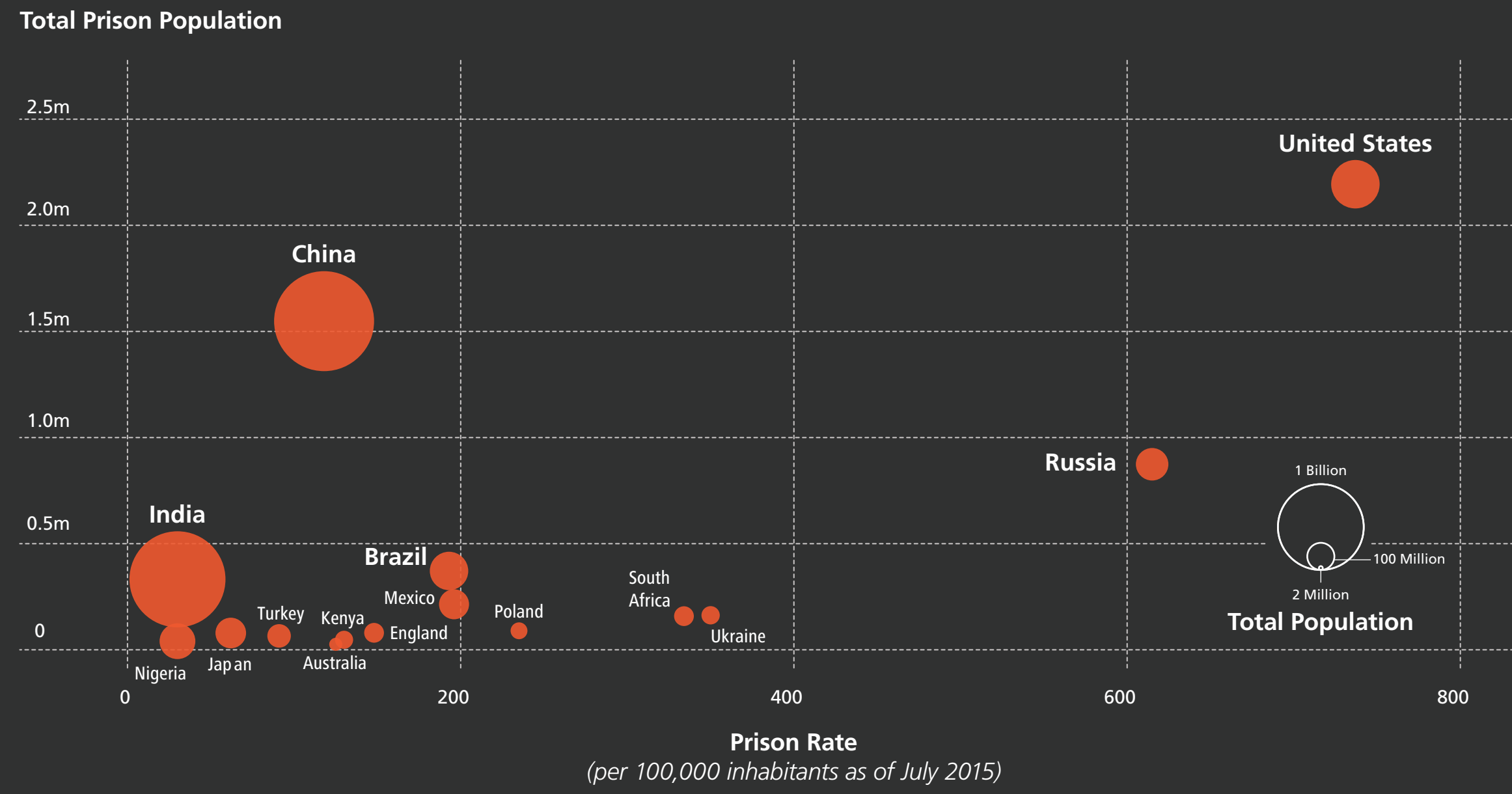
## Being First Isn't Always the Best

For more than a decade, researchers across multiple disciplines have been issuing reports on the widespread societal and economic damage caused by America's now-40-year experiment in locking up vast numbers of its citizens. If there is any remaining disagreement about the destructiveness of this experiment, it mirrors the so-called debate over climate change.

### Countries with the Most Prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants, as of July 2015



### Comparing Prison Populations



#### U.S. Has Highest Rate of Imprisonment in World

With more than one million people behind bars, the United States imprisons a larger share of its population than any other nation. The high incarceration rate results from a crime rate higher than in most other countries and increasingly harsh public attitudes toward lawbreakers.

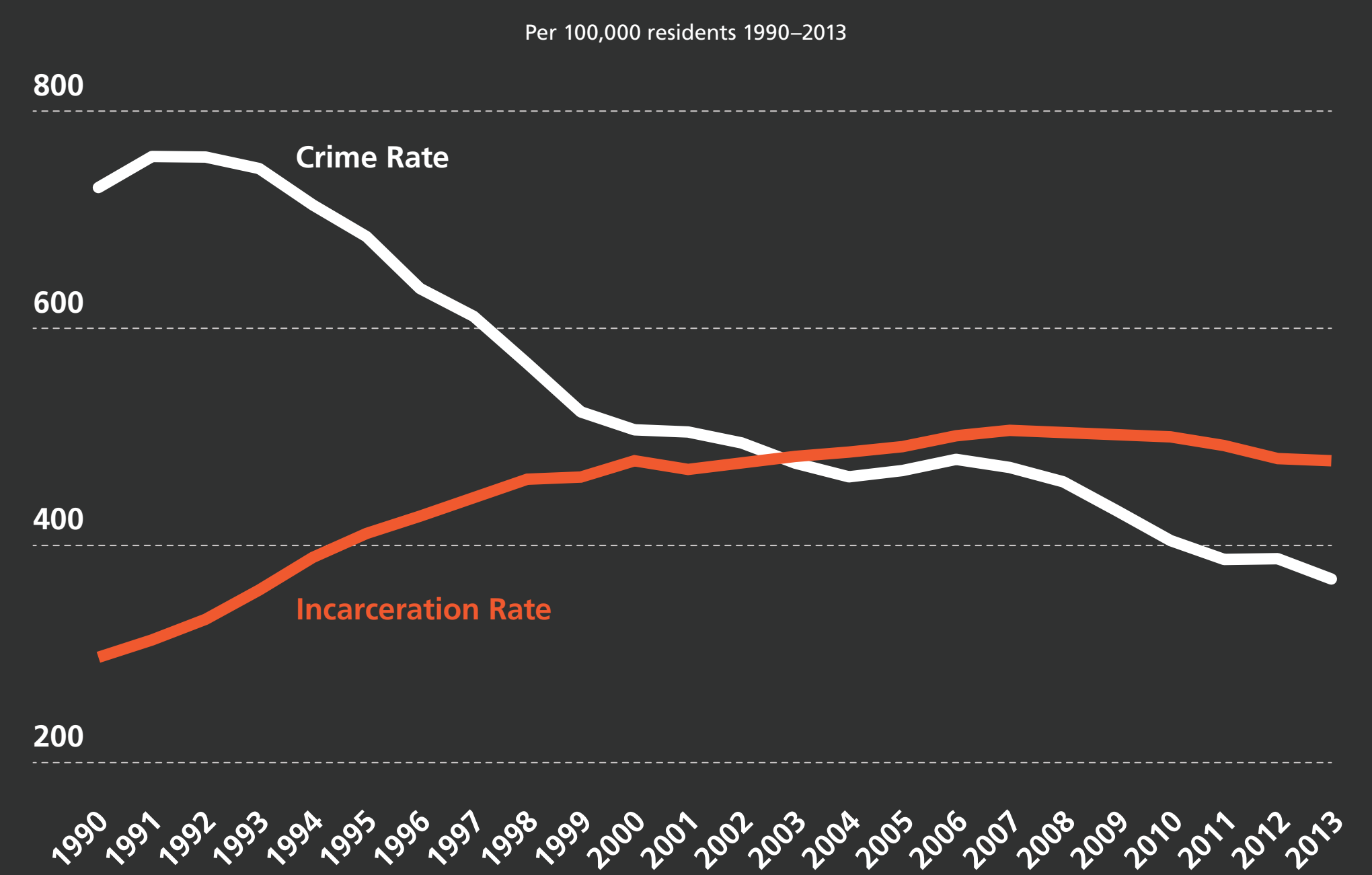
More than one million Americans are in jail or prison, either awaiting trial or serving time. 426 of every 100,000 residents of the United States are incarcerated, at an annual cost of \$16 billion. For black American men, the rate is 3,109 per 100,000.

### The Relationship Between Incarceration and Crime in the U.S.

Nationally, violent crime has declined by 33% and property crime has decreased 23% since 1994. During the same period incarceration rates rose by 24%. Some commentators draw upon these two trends to support the conclusion that incarceration "works" to reduce crime. The reality is far more complex.

References to national data alone obscure the significance of the experience in the states as they utilize different strategies and achieve different results. A recent study that analyzed state prison and crime data revealed that there was no discernible pattern of states with higher rates of increase in incarceration experiencing more significant declines in crime. Between 1991 and 1998, those states that increased incarceration at rates that were less than the national average experienced a larger decline in crime rates than those states that increased incarceration at rates higher than the national average.

### Reported Violent Crime Rate VERSUS Incarceration Rate in the U.S.



## Top 5 Countries with the Most Prisoners, 2015



#### U.S. Prison Population Dwarfs That of Other Nations

The United States has less than 5 percent of the world's population. But it has almost a quarter of the world's prisoners. Indeed, the United States leads the world in producing prisoners, a reflection of a relatively recent and now entirely distinctive American approach to crime and punishment. Americans are locked up for crimes — from writing bad checks to using drugs — that would rarely produce prison sentences in other countries. And in particular they are kept incarcerated far longer than prisoners in other nations.