



INTERNATIONAL PRISON NEWS DIGEST

48th Edition – November - December 2018

Welcome to the 48th edition of the International Prison News Digest, our selection of news items from around the world on prison and the use of imprisonment. The Digest is produced bi-monthly and this issue covers the period from 1 November to 31 December 2018.

We aim in the Digest to cover all regions of the world and include new developments in policy and practice, as well as information from official and intergovernmental bodies. News items are grouped regionally. By clicking on the hyperlinks, you can access the news articles in their original form.

Content is sourced solely from English language news stories. Readers wishing to notify us of important news items in other languages are welcome to send us articles with a short summary of key content and we will consider them for inclusion in the next edition. Please note that ICPR is not responsible for the accuracy of external content.

Information on global prison systems can be found on [World Prison Brief](#)

AFRICA

Nigeria: The Prison Service says it is partnering with the Institute of Chartered Mediation and Conciliations to increase awareness on mediation as a means of resolving conflicts with the aim of reducing the number of prisoners. [The Eagle Online, 6 November 2018](#)

South Africa: State patients unable to stand trial because of mental illnesses do not belong in prison, according to the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services. [IOL, 26 November 2018](#)

South Africa: Offenders who have been handed sentences of less than two years will serve their time doing community service in a bid to curb overcrowding in prisons. [IOL, 7 December 2018](#)

South Africa: A prisoner who secured a court victory compelling Correctional Services to release a dying prisoner on parole is now taking on prison authorities for allegedly inflating canteen prices. [IOL, 13 December 2018](#)

South Africa: The Correctional Services Department has fired more than 100 officials for smuggling contraband into prisons and colluding with prisoners. [Eyewitness News, 27 December 2018](#)

AMERICAS

Canada: Five years after Ontario vowed to curtail its use of solitary confinement, average prisoner stays in segregation cells have grown longer. [The Globe and Mail, 5 November 2018](#)

Canada: Canada's auditor general says hundreds of federal prisoners are having their parole delayed because the Correctional Service doesn't have halfway houses for them to live in. [The Province, 20 November 2018](#)

Guyana: The Guyana government is allocating millions to building a new prison, expanding another and starting reconstruction of another. [The Daily Herald, 27 November 2018](#)

United States: Half of US adults have an immediate family member who has been in jail or prison. [CNN Politics, 8 December 2018](#)

ASIA

Cambodia: A penal department official has raised concerns regarding the spread of communicable diseases and the degradation of mental health among prisoners in overcrowded prisons. [Khmer Times, 15 November 2018](#)

India: The Punjab and Haryana High Court has abolished the practice of keeping death row prisoners in solitary confinement in Haryana jails. [The Indian Express, 8 December 2018](#)

Myanmar: Reducing chronic overcrowding in Myanmar's prisons is an essential first step to reforming the criminal justice system, according to a report by a civil society group. [Frontier Myanmar, 19 December 2018](#)

Singapore: Prisoners are being offered the chance to study for a diploma for the first time. [The Straits Times, 19 November 2018](#)

Tajikistan: At least 50 prisoners were killed in a prison riot in Tajikistan. [Big News Network, 13 November 2018](#)

EUROPE

Europe: The Council of Europe has published two reports reflecting, firstly, the trends in European prisons from 2005 to 2015 and, secondly, the evolution of foreign offenders in prison and under probation from 2009 to 2015. [Council of Europe, 4 December 2018](#)

Ireland: A rapist who successfully challenged whether a law stopping payment of the State's old age pension to prisoners was constitutional is entitled to €10,000 in damages. [Independent.ie, 29 November 2018](#)

Ireland: The number of sex offenders who are being released from prison without having undergone the State's main treatment programme has increased. [RTE, 2 December 2018](#)

Ireland: Hundreds of men and women are being forced to sleep on prison floors every month. [The Irish Times, 5 December 2018](#)

Portugal: Portuguese prison guards are striking to demand salary hikes and bonus payments for late shifts. [Federal News Network, 6 December 2018](#)

Russia: Eight prisoners in Russia's Far Eastern Sakha-Yakutia region have launched a hunger strike to protest conditions at the prison where they are being held. [Radio Free Europe, 7 December 2018](#)

Russia: The number of people incarcerated in Russia has reached a historic low. [The Moscow Times, 14 December 2018](#)

Russia: The head of a Russian women's prison has been fired after inspectors discovered a regime of forced labour that saw prisoners work for up to 18 hours a day. [The Globe Post, 24 December 2018](#)

UNITED KINGDOM

England and Wales: The government is failing in its duty of care towards prisoners, as going to jail has become a "sentence to poorer health or healthcare. [Independent, 1 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: Women are giving birth in prison cells without access to proper medical care. [The Guardian, 13 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: Prisoners are to be allowed to make Skype video calls to their relatives - in a bid to stop the flood of mobile phones into jails. [Mirror, 17 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: The number of suicides among prisoners this year has already exceeded 2017's death toll. [The Guardian, 19 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: Britain's jails are failing to get a grip on record levels of violence, suicides, self-harm and drug-taking, the chief inspector of prisons has warned. [The Telegraph, 22 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: The prisons inspectorate is developing a new type of review to determine whether failing jails are making progress towards improving conditions. [Civil Service World, 21 November 2018](#)

England and Wales: Ministers have been urged to halt the planned rollout of pepper spray to prison officers after an analysis found it may have been used in breach of official guidance in almost two thirds of recorded incidents during a pilot scheme. [The Guardian, 15 December 2018](#)

Scotland: The number of prisoners let out of Scottish jails on a home release tag has fallen by 75% after a man committed a "brutal" murder while on the run. [BBC News, 20 November 2018](#)

Scotland: Prisoners serving sentences of less than a year are set to be given the right to vote in Scottish Parliament and council elections, under plans outlined by ministers. [iNews, 14 December 2018](#)

Scotland: Short prison sentences of 12 months or less in Scotland will be ended next year, the justice secretary has said. [The Scotsman, 22 December 2018](#)

UK: The UK has the highest number of prisoners serving life sentences in Europe, according to a report by Professor Dirk Van Zyl Smit and Dr Catherine Appleton of the University of Nottingham. [News and Star, 10 December 2018](#)

OCEANIA

Australia: Prisoners in Tasmania slept on mouldy mattresses, were not routinely issued enough sets of clothes to keep clean and slept in cells that were so damp that paint peeled off the walls. [The Guardian, 30 November 2018](#)

New Zealand: Less than a third of the country's prisons provide intensive Māori-focused rehabilitation. [RNZ, 19 November 2018](#)