

Introduction

This twelfth edition of the World Prison Population List gives details of the number of prisoners held in 223 prison systems in independent countries and dependent territories. It shows the differences in the levels of imprisonment across the world and makes possible an estimate of the world prison population total. The figures include both pre-trial detainees/remand prisoners and those who have been convicted and sentenced. The information is the latest available at the end of September 2018.

The data are presented in two parts. Part one, tables 1-5, sets out prison population totals, rates and trends for each individual country. Part two, tables 6-8, provides data on prison population totals, rates and trends by continent, and shows that in recent years a number of countries have recorded substantial changes in prison population levels (some increases and some decreases).

The World Prison Population List, like the World Female Imprisonment List (the fourth edition of which was published in November 2017) and the World Pre-trial/Remand Imprisonment List (third edition published in February 2017), complements the information held on the World Prison Brief. This is an online database available at www.prisonstudies.org, and is updated monthly. The Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck, University of London (www.icpr.org.uk), hosts and maintains the World Prison Brief database and publishes the Prison Lists¹.

The World Prison Population List is compiled from a variety of sources. In almost all cases the original source is the national prison administration of the country concerned, or else the Ministry responsible for the prison administration. Most of the figures are recent and efforts are continually made to update them and to obtain information on the number of prisoners in the countries on which figures are not currently available (Eritrea, Somalia and North Korea) or are incomplete. We welcome the assistance of readers in notifying us of the latest figures. Care has been taken to ensure that the List is as accurate as possible but we cannot guarantee the reliability of every figure and readers are also invited to draw attention to any errors they notice and, if possible, to supply corrections.

It is hoped that this edition of the World Prison Population List will be useful for policy makers, prison administrators, academic criminologists, non-governmental organisations, other criminal justice experts and everyone who is interested in the extent of imprisonment. The information may prompt fresh thought about the size of prison populations, given the high costs and disputed efficacy of imprisonment and the fact that prison overcrowding is widespread.

¹ The first five editions of the World Prison Population List (1999-2004) were published by the Research and Statistics Directorate of the United Kingdom Home Office and the next five (2005-13) by the International Centre for Prison Studies.

Key points

- ▶ This report shows that more than 10.74 million people are held in penal institutions throughout the world, either as pre-trial detainees/remand prisoners or having been convicted and sentenced. Figures for Eritrea, Somalia and the Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea are not available and those for China and Guinea Bissau are incomplete (see footnote to Table 3 concerning China). Also missing are prisoners held under authorities not recognised internationally and those pre-trial prisoners who are held in police facilities and not included in published national prison population totals. The full total is therefore higher than 10.74 million and is likely to be well over 11 million.
- ▶ There are more than 2.1 million prisoners in the United States of America, 1.65 million in China (plus unknown numbers in pre-trial detention and other forms of detention), 690,000 in Brazil, 583,000 in the Russian Federation, 420,000 in India, 364,000 in Thailand, 249,000 in Indonesia, 233,000 in Turkey, 230,000 in Iran, 204,000 in Mexico and 188,000 in the Philippines.
- ▶ The countries with the highest prison population rate – that is, the number of prisoners per 100,000 of the national population – are the United States (655 per 100,000), followed by El Salvador (604), Turkmenistan (552), U.S. Virgin Islands (542), Thailand (526), Cuba (510), Maldives (499), Northern Mariana Islands – U.S.A. (482), British Virgin Islands (470), Rwanda (464), Bahamas (438), Seychelles (437), Grenada (435), St Vincent and the Grenadines (426), Guam – U.S.A. (404) and Russian Federation (402).
- ▶ However, more than half of all countries and territories (53%) have rates below 150 per 100,000.
- ▶ The world prison population rate, based on United Nations estimates of national population levels, is 145 per 100,000.
- ▶ Prison population rates vary considerably between different regions of the world, and between different parts of the same continent. For example:
 - in Africa the median rate for western African countries is 53 whereas for southern African countries it is 244;
 - in the Americas the median rate for south American countries is 233 whereas for central American countries it is 316;
 - in Asia the median rate for countries in southern Asia (mainly the Indian sub-continent) is 88 whereas for central Asian countries it is 160.5;
 - in Europe the median rate for western European countries is 81 whereas for the countries spanning Europe and Asia (e.g. the Russian Federation and Turkey) it is 268;
 - in Oceania the median rate is 182.5.
- ▶ Since about the year 2000 the world prison population total has grown by 24%, which is about the same as the estimated increase in the world's general population over the same period. There are considerable differences between the continents, and variation within continents. The total prison population in Oceania has increased by 86%, that in the Americas by 41%, that in Asia by 38% and that in Africa by 29%; in Europe, by contrast, the total prison population has decreased by 22%. The European figure reflects large falls in prison populations in Russia (45%) and also in central and eastern Europe; the prison population in Europe other than Russia has increased by 3%. Particularly large rises have been recorded in south America (175%) and south-eastern Asia (122%).
- ▶ Over the three years since the previous edition of the World Prison Population List was published there has been little overall change in world prison population levels. The known prison population of the world has grown by 386,500 (3.7%) but the national populations have grown by almost as much (3.0%). Thus, the prison population level per head of population has risen by less than 1%. However, the global figure masks substantial changes – both upwards and downwards – in some countries. There have been large rises per head of population in Cambodia (68%), Nicaragua (61%), Egypt (53%), Philippines (48%), Indonesia (45%), Ecuador (37%), Jordan and Turkey (both 31%). There have been large falls per head of population in Mexico (23%), Romania (22%), Kazakhstan (21%), Ukraine (19%), Japan (15%), Vietnam (11%) and the Russian Federation (10%).

Part 1: Prison population totals, rates and trends per country

Table 1

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Northern Africa							
Algeria	c. 60,000	9.17	41.20m	c. 146	2000 2005 2010 2015	33,992 43,797 58,000 62,150	108 131 161 155
Egypt	c. 106,000	8.16	91.35m	c. 116	2001 2006 2011	56,587 64,378 c. 66,000	84 87 c. 83
Libya	6,187	4.14	6.24m	99	2004 2010	9,763 13,242	178 220
Morocco	82,512	2.18	35.50m	232	2000 2005 2010 2015	54,288 50,933 64,877 74,039	187 167 201 214
Sudan	c. 21,000	7.17	40.57m	c. 52	2002 2009 2013	12,809 19,144 19,101	44 57 52
Tunisia	20,755	10.17	11.49m	181	2004 2009 2013	c. 26,000 26,319 25,000	c. 261 250 226
Western Africa							
Benin	7,890	12.17	11.59m	68	2000 2006 2010 2014	4,961 5,834 6,908 7,067	71 69 73 67
Burkina Faso	7,670	31.12.16	18.90m	41	2000 2005 2010 2014	2,204 3,315 5,198 6,827	19 24 33 38
Cape Verde	1,542	31.8.17	518,000	298	1999 2010 2013	755 1,226 1,428	172 251 285
Cote d'Ivoire	16,127	12.17	24.58m	66	2002 2008 2015	10,355 11,143 12,147	62 61 52
Gambia	1,121	11.14	1.93m	58	1999 2002 2009	478 450 780	40 34 47
Ghana	15,063	30.9.18	29.44m	51	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,507 12,371 13,507 14,355	51 58 56 53
Guinea (Rep. of)	c. 3,200	2.17	12.85m	c. 25	2002 2008 2014	3,070 2,780 c. 2,500	34 27 c. 21
Guinea Bissau	196*	18.2.17	1.92m	10*	not available		
Liberia	2,211	26.7.17	4.73m	47	2007 2011 2015	1,022 1,601 2,203	29 39 49
Mali	5,209	.14	15.77m	33	2002 2009	4,040 6,700	38 49
Mauritania	1,920	1.16	4.13m	46	2001 2005 2010 2014	1,413 c. 815 1,700 1,768	50 c. 26 47 44
Niger	10,383	31.12.15	19.65m	53	2002 2006 2010	c. 6,000 7,381 5,337	c. 51 53 33
Nigeria	73,631	16.7.18	199.27m	37	2000 2005 2010 2015	44,450 39,006 46,586 57,313	36 28 29 32
Senegal	12,500	3.18	16.39m	76	2000 2005 2010 2014	4,894 6,417 7,300 8,630	51 59 59 58

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Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Sierra Leone	4,519	11.9.18	7.75m	58	2004 2010 2015	c. 1,400 2,237 3,488	c. 26 34 48
Togo	4,859	1.10.17	7.57m	64	2003 2010 2015	3,200 4,116 4,427	61 65 62
Central Africa							
Angola	24,000	4.16	25.70m	93	2001 2005 2009 2013	4,000 c. 8,300 16,183 21,634	26 c. 46 78 92
Cameroon	29,341	31.12.16	24.22m	121	2002 2005 2009 2013	20,000 22,734 23,368 25,914	119 127 115 115
Central African Republic	764	.15	4.80m	16	2005 2010	c. 1,000 1,320	c. 25 c. 29
Chad	8,000	5.15	13.57m	59	2000 2005 2010	2,385 3,416 4,775	29 34 41
Congo (Republic of)	c. 1,240	8.9.14	4.58m	c. 27	2005 2009	1,550 2,410	44 60
Dem. Rep. of Congo	c. 20,550	.15	71.25m	c. 29	2004 2010	c. 30,000 c. 22,000	c. 58 c. 35
Equatorial Guinea	c. 500	.15	799,000	c. 63	not available		
Gabon	3,373	31.12.15	1.77m	191	2006 2013	c. 2,750 c. 3,500	c. 195 c. 210
Sao Tome e Principe	251	10.17	214,000	117	2002 2006 2010 2014	130 160 305 201	90 101 171 101
South Sudan	6,504	28.9.15	12.45m	52	2011	c. 8,000	c. 77
Eastern Africa							
Burundi	10,093	10.17	12.05m	84	2001 2005 2010 2015	9,013 7,167 9,481 8,689	130 90 100 77
Comoros	191	11.17	813,000	23	2009 2013	c. 150 206	c. 22 28
Djibouti	c. 600	.16	913,000	c. 66	2000 2009 2013	c. 200 525 550	c. 27 64 63
Ethiopia	113,727	2013-14	89.56m	127	2000-01 2005-06 2010-11	62,597 72,211 104,467	94 96 124
Kenya	54,000	9.18	49.95m	108	2000 2005 2010 2015	40,010 50,000 49,757 54,631	129 141 122 119
Madagascar	20,954	7.17	25.64m	82	1999 2005 2010 2015	20,109 20,294 18,647 20,595	131 109 89 85
Malawi	14,795	18.9.17	18.42m	80	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,728 9,656 11,672 12,129	69 75 78 70
Mauritius	2,499	13.8.18	1.285m	194	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,635 2,547 2,449 2,072	137 209 196 163
Mozambique	18,185	31.12.17	29.94m	61	1999 2004 2010 2015	8,812 c. 10,000 15,303 15,203	49 c. 48 62 54

Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Rwanda	61,000**	8.17	13.14m	464**	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 115,000** c. 67,000** 55,000** 54,279**	c. 1,369** c. 702** 507** 434**
Seychelles	423	4.4.18	96,865	437	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 166 162 415 752	c. 205 196 462 805
Tanzania	31,382	12.15	54.24m	58	2000 2005 2011	45,611 46,416 38,353	135 118 81
Uganda	54,059	10.17	41.99m	129	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 21,700 26,126 30,312 45,092	c. 92 93 91 115
Zambia	25,000	5.17	17.17m	146	2000 2005 2010 2015	11,999 14,207 16,666 18,560	116 124 128 115
Zimbabwe	19,521	1.5.17	16.27m	120	2000 2005 2010 2015	20,567 18,033 13,361 18,857	164 138 96 122
Mayotte (France)	308	1.9.18	260,750	118	2003 2008 2013	163 198 188	98 103 82
Reunion (France)	1,148	1.9.18	884,000	130	2001 2006 2011 2015	1,079 962 1,078 1,046	144 120 129 121
Southern Africa							
Botswana	4,343	2.17	2.09m	208	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,742 6,259 c. 5,063 4,108	381 333 c. 256 199
Lesotho	2,073	30.8.14	2.26m	92	2000 2005 2010	2,908 2,712 2,498	147 130 115
Namibia	c. 7,400	.16	2.51m	c. 295	2000 2004 2010	4,883 4,442 4,251	254 218 191
South Africa	158,111	4.7.17	56.50m	280	2000 2005 2010 2015	171,462 187,394 163,312 159,241	394 400 328 292
Swaziland/eSwatini	3,610	3.15	1.28m	282	2000 2005 2011	2,745 2,667 3,764	257 242 311

* The Guinea Bissau total is for three prisons only. Figures for pre-trial prisoners held in police custody are not available.

** The prison population of Rwanda still includes many thousands detained in connection with the genocide of 1994.

Figures are not available for:

Eastern Africa: Eritrea, Somalia.

World Prison Population List (twelfth edition)

Table 2

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Northern America							
Canada	41,145	2015-16	35.94m	114	2000-01 2005-06 2010-11	35,533 35,436 39,916	115 110 117
U.S.A.	2,121,600	31.12.16	323.90m	655	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,937,482 2,195,471 2,270,142 2,166,600	683 739 731 672
Bermuda (UK)	209	1.15	65,500	319	2000 2004 2010	298 364 277	473 569 426
Greenland (Denmark)	126	1.12.16	55,900	225	2000 2005 2010 2014	88 114 171 131	157 200 302 234
Central America							
Belize	1,297	30.6.17	364,000	356	2000 2005 2010 2015	765 1,234 1,420 1,443	320 454 460 410
Costa Rica	19,226	1.10.17	5.14m	374	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,575 9,053 12,110 19,003	193 210 259 380
El Salvador	38,714	13.8.18	6.41m	604	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,754 12,525 24,662 32,645	132 207 399 516
Guatemala	24,386	26.9.18	17.33m	141	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,974 8,247 11,148 19,834	62 65 78 121
Honduras	18,950	21.8.17	8.77m	216	2000 2005 2010 2015	11,500 11,545 11,846 15,914	184 166 154 188
Mexico	204,422	31.3.18	124.43m	164	2000 2005 2010 2015	154,765 205,821 219,027 247,488	156 195 194 205
Nicaragua	17,196	9.17	6.23m	276	2000 2005 2010 2014	6,539 6,382 c. 6,500 10,569	128 117 c. 113 175
Panama	16,183	28.3.18	4.15m	390	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,652 11,571 12,293 16,485	283 344 336 414
Caribbean							
Antigua & Barbuda	305	17.6.18	95,000	321	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 170 194 295 370	c. 218 234 339 401
Bahamas	1,746	12.17	399,000	438	2000 2005 2010 2014	c. 1,400 1,500 1,322 1,396	c. 470 453 367 363
Barbados	874	3.18	291,500	300	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,411 997 910 924	527 365 324 322
Cuba	57,337	5.12	11.25m	510	2003 2006	c. 55,000 c. 60,000	c. 487 c. 531
Dominica	211	7.16	73,000	289	1999 2005 2010	298 282 295	426 397 415

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Table 2 (continued)

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Dominican Republic	26,286	31.8.18	11.03m	238	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,995 12,495 20,743 24,617	173 133 208 232
Grenada	465	9.16	107,000	435	2002 2006 2010 2014	297 334 432 484	291 324 411 457
Haiti	10,512	19.5.17	10.97m	96	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,219 3,670 5,331 11,046	49 39 53 102
Jamaica	3,866	23.11.16	2.81m	138	2003 2007 2011 2015	4,744 4,709 4,457 3,860	178 174 161 138
St Kitts & Nevis	220	6.17	56,000	393	1999 2005 2010 2014	135 209 256 334	300 422 488 607
St Lucia	527	8.17	188,000	280	1999 2005 2010 2015	373 503 526 628	241 303 296 339
St Vincent & the Grenadines	469	20.9.18	110,000	426	1999 2005 2010 2014	405 364 413 412	375 334 379 378
Trinidad & Tobago	3,667	9.12.15	1.36m	270	2000 2005 2010	4,633 3,683 3,766	365 283 283
Anguilla (UK)	55	30.8.18	15,000	367	2004 2007 2010 2015	41 56 58 46	342 431 414 307
Aruba (Neth)	170	23.10.14	103,000	165	2005 2011	231 246	232 241
Cayman Is. (UK)	253	20.6.18	64,400	393	2000 2005 2010 2015	227 190 212 190	565 393 382 320
Curacao (Neth)	377	7.12.16	159,800	236	1999 2006 2010 2014	434 578 541 348	306 412 365 221
Guadeloupe (France)	970	1.9.18	449,000	216	2001 2006 2011 2015	628 718 784 907	147 162 174 202
Martinique (France)	814	1.9.18	385,000	211	2001 2006 2011 2015	608 649 885 940	156 163 225 244
Puerto Rico (USA)	10,475	7.17	3.35m	313	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,691 14,263 10,878 12,074	384 364 294 349
Sint Maarten (Neth)	62	7.18	40,550	153	2002 2006 2011 2014	129 141 138 161	396 362 319 347
Virgin Is. (UK)	134	11.14	28,500	470	1999 2005 2010	43 105 117	215 457 433
Virgin Is. (USA)	577	3.13	106,700	542	2000 2005 2010	518 596 577	475 554 544

Table 2 (continued)

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
South America							
Argentina	81,975	31.12.16	44.06m	186	1999 2005 2010 2015	38,604 63,357 65,095 75,769	105 161 157 174
Bolivia	17,946	4.18	11.53m	156	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,151 6,793 9,406 13,672	95 72 92 123
Brazil	690,722	9.18	213.27m	324	2000 2005 2010 2015	232,755 361,402 496,251 698,618	132 191 249 335
Chile	42,683	31.8.18	18.30m	233	2000 2005 2010 2015	33,050 37,033 54,628 42,954	215 228 320 240
Colombia	118,708	31.8.18	49.53m	240	2000 2005 2010 2015	51,518 66,829 84,444 120,444	128 154 183 249
Ecuador	37,497	28.3.18	16.89m	222	2000 2005 2010 2014	8,029 11,971 11,800 25,902	64 87 79 162
Guyana	2,200	8.18	778,500	283	2001 2005 2010 2015	1,507 1,524 2,160 1,944	205 204 286 253
Paraguay	13,607	10.17	6.84m	199	2000 2005 2010 2015	3,219 6,282 6,197 12,741	60 108 99 191
Peru	87,995	30.6.18	32.55m	270	2000 2005 2010 2015	27,734 33,010 45,464 75,003	107 119 155 239
Suriname	c. 1,000	11.14	547,000	c. 183	2000 2005 2009	786 820 915	168 164 175
Uruguay	11,078	31.8.17	3.45m	321	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,469 6,211 8,700 9,996	135 187 257 291
Venezuela	57,096	.17	32.16m	178	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,196 19,853 40,825 49,664	58 74 140 159
Fr. Guiana/ Guyane (Fr)	726	1.9.18	291,000	249	2001 2005 2010 2015	423 600 715 701	247 293 306 259

Table 3

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Western Asia							
Bahrain	3,485	.17	1.49m	234	2003 2010 2015	437 1,100 c. 3,795	57 89 c. 281
Iraq	45,000	mid-15	35.77m	126	2004 2007 2010	c. 7,000 26,472 39,130	c. 26 91 125
Israel	19,325	19.10.17	8.18m	236	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,421 16,059 20,164 21,072	158 240 270 265
Jordan	15,700	3.18	7.95m	197	2001 2005 2010 2015	5,621 6,378 8,434 11,489	115 120 129 150
Kuwait	6,000	3.18	3.82m	157	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 3,100 c. 3,500 4,179 c. 4,000	c. 162 c. 152 140 c. 112
Lebanon	6,330	8.17	5.03m	126	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,917 6,921 5,060 6,502	154 173 117 128
Oman	1,300	.13	3.63m	36	2000 2002	2,020 1,403	92 61
Qatar	c. 1,150	.13	2.17m	c. 53	2000 2004 2008	570 465 551	96 60 38
Saudi Arabia	61,000	6.17	30.92m	197	2000 2002 2009 2013	23,720 28,612 44,600 47,000	116 131 165 161
Syria	10,599	.04	17.68m	60	2003	11,829	68
United Arab Emirates	9,826	.14	9.45m	104	2001 2006 2012	c. 11,000 11,193 9,824	c. 351 229 107
Yemen	c. 14,000	7.13	26.23m	c. 53	2003 2006 2010	16,252 10,415 12,409	84 49 52
Central Asia							
Kazakhstan	33,989	20.6.18	18.25m	186	2000 2005 2010 2015	78,029 52,608 63,643 47,939	520 342 393 274
Kyrgyzstan	10,574	31.1.18	6.18m	171	2000 2005 2010 2015	20,000 16,662 9,923 9,581	402 327 183 163
Tajikistan	9,317	12.10	7.70m	121	2001 2006	c. 11,000 10,804	c. 175 157
Turkmenistan	30,452	9.17	5.52m	552	2000 2005 2010 2013	c. 22,000 13,462 c. 26,500 30,568	c. 488 283 c. 522 583
Uzbekistan	c. 43,900	.14	29.33m	c. 150	2000 2003 2009	63,900 48,000 c. 42,000	257 188 c. 153
Southern Asia							
Afghanistan	30,000	4.17	34.00m	88	2004 2007 2010 2015	5,262 10,590 18,283 27,527	22 41 65 85
Bangladesh	88,424	13.8.18	166.97m	53	2000 2005 2010 2015	62,669 74,766 69,650 69,719	47 52 46 43
Bhutan	1,119	12.14	772,000	145	2011	1,001	137

Table 3 (continued)

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
India	419,623	31.12.15	1,289.7m	33	2000 2005 2010	272,079 358,368 368,998	26 32 30
Iran	230,000	6.17	80.91m	284	2001 2005 2010 2014	158,000 134,384 204,365 225,624	237 192 275 287
Maldives	1,852	9.17	371,000	499	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,166 983 830 1,513	793 330 255 421
Nepal	18,881	6.17	29.16m	65	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,000 7,135 10,739 17,486	25 28 40 61
Pakistan	83,718	.18	196.51m	43	2000 2005 2010 2015	78,938 89,370 75,586 80,169	56 57 43 43
Sri Lanka	20,598	12.17	21.99m	94	2000 2005 2010 2015	16,412 22,114 26,984 17,996	87 111 130 83
South-Eastern Asia							
Brunei Darussalam	565	mid-15	423,000	134	2000 2005 2010	333 492 379	101 136 96
Cambodia	28,414	15.12.17	16.19m	176	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,502 8,160 14,043 17,522	45 61 97 111
Indonesia	248,765	24.8.18	266.77m	93	2000 2005 2010 2015	53,399 97,671 117,863 176,754	26 44 49 68
Laos	8,201	.16	6.88m	119	2004	4,020	70
Malaysia	55,413	9.17	31.27m	177	2000 2005 2010 2015	27,358 35,644 38,387 51,184	116 138 137 169
Myanmar	79,668	.17	54.84m	145	2001 2004 2009 2013	31,648 c. 60,000 60,053 c. 60,000	64 c. 120 117 c. 113
Philippines	188,278	31.5.18	105.21m	179	2000 2005 2010 2015	79,299 90,492 95,390 135,752	102 105 103 135
Singapore	11,691	31.12.17	5.83m	201	2000 2005 2010 2015	13,791 13,644 12,852 12,394	352 299 250 219
Thailand	364,288	1.9.18	69.20m	526	2000 2005 2010 2015	223,406 162,293 210,855 310,399	354 248 313 452
Timor-Leste	659	4.17	1.29m	51	2003 2009 2013	c. 320 223 429	c. 35 21 36
Vietnam	130,002	10.17	95.17m	137	2005 2010 2015	88,414 108,557 136,245	104 122 146

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Table 3 (continued)

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Eastern Asia							
China	1,649,804*	mid-15	1,397.0m	118*	2000 2005 2010	1,427,407* 1,565,771* 1,656,773*	111* 118* 121*
Japan	51,805	31.7.18	126.52m	41	2000 2005 2010 2015	61,242 79,052 72,975 58,497	48 62 57 46
Korea (Republic of)	55,198	31.12.17	50.80m	109	2000 2005 2010 2015	62,959 52,403 47,471 53,892	136 110 97 107
Mongolia	3,099	mid-17	3.05m	102	2001 2005 2010 2015	6,656 6,998 7,044 5,471	275 277 260 184
Taiwan	62,634	31.7.18	23.65m	265	2000 2005 2010 2015	56,676 60,122 65,311 62,899	254 264 282 268
Hong Kong (China)	8,306	30.6.18	7.43m	112	2000 2005 2010 2015	12,017 11,311 9,988 8,438	180 165 142 115
Macau (China)	1,371	30.6.18	657,800	208	2000 2005 2010 2015	847 897 929 1,280	196 185 172 198

* The China figures are for sentenced prisoners only. Figures for pre-trial detention and other forms of detention are not available; more than 650,000 were so held in 2009 (Supreme People's Procuratorate).

Figures are not available for:

Eastern Asia: Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea

Table 4

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Northern Europe							
Denmark	3,635	1.9.18	5.80m	63	2000 2005 2010 2015	3,382 4,041 3,965 3,422	63 75 71 60
Estonia	2,575	24.9.18	1.32m	195	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,712 4,565 3,555 2,921	343 337 267 222
Finland	2,842	1.9.18	5.52m	51	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,855 3,888 3,291 3,068	55 74 61 56
Iceland	131	1.9.18	355,180	37	2000 2005 2010 2015	78 119 165 146	28 40 52 44
Ireland	3,816	28.9.18	4.88m	78	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,948 3,151 4,290 3,722	77 76 94 79
Latvia	3,765	1.1.18	1.93m	195	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,815 7,646 7,055 4,745	370 340 333 239
Lithuania	6,544	1.9.18	2.78m	235	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,412 8,125 8,655 8,636	410 242 275 296

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Norway	3,373	5.9.18	5.32m	63	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,548 3,124 3,624 3,746	57 68 74 72
Sweden	5,979	1.10.17	10.09m	59	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,326 7,008 6,902 5,920	60 78 74 60
UK: England & Wales	83,014	28.9.18	59.20m	140	2000 2005 2010 2015	64,602 75,979 84,725 85,626	124 142 153 148
UK: Northern Ireland	1,435	28.9.18	1.88m	76	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,068 1,301 1,465 1,661	64 76 81 90
UK: Scotland	7,771	28.9.18	5.45m	143	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,869 6,792 7,806 7,744	116 133 150 144
Faeroes (Denmark)	6	avrg 17	50,225	12	2000 2005 2010 2015	9 10 10 10	20 20 20 19
Guernsey (UK)	109	28.9.18	65,900	165	2000 2005 2010 2015	59 105 75 91	94 164 114 139
Isle of Man (UK)	106	31.8.18	85,000	125	2000 2005 2010 2015	54 60 97 78	70 75 115 93
Jersey (UK)	130	28.9.18	106,500	122	2000 2005 2010 2015	130 172 177 151	150 190 183 148
Southern Europe							
Albania	5,407	8.18	2.87m	188	2001 2005 2010 2015	3,053 4,356 4,750 5,934	99 139 148 205
Andorra	52	5.3.18	75,100	69	2001 2006 2010 2015	48 30 61 52	72 37 78 67
Bosnia & Herzegovina – Federation	1,722	31.12.14	2.35m	73	2000 2005 2010	1,041 1,435 1,714	45 62 75
Bosnia & Herzegovina – Republika Srpska	863	31.12.17	1.30m	66	2001 2005 2010 2015	849 955 1,046 877	61 68 75 67
Croatia	3,190	1.1.18	4.11m	78	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,027 3,022 4,891 3,763	45 68 110 89
Cyprus*	710	1.9.16	852,600	83	2000 2005 2010	312 536 900	45 70 108
Greece	10,409	17.9.18	10.72m	97	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,625 8,722 11,364 11,798	70 79 102 109
Italy	59,135	31.8.18	60.41m	98	2000 2005 2010 2015	53,165 59,523 67,961 52,164	93 101 112 86
Kosovo	1,648	31.12.16	1.74m	95	2000 2005 2010 2015	227 1,199 1,333 1,478	11 58 61 84

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Macedonia (FYROM)	2,931	1.1.18	2.08m	141	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,178 1,844 2,516 3,498	59 90 122 169
Malta	588	31.10.17	442,440	133	2001 2005 2010 2015	257 294 583 569	65 73 141 131
Montenegro	1,123	31.12.16	622,400	180	2000 2005 2010 2015	664 812 1,457 1,131	110 132 235 182
Portugal	13,065	15.9.18	10.28m	127	2000 2005 2010 2015	12,944 12,889 11,613 14,224	126 123 110 138
San Marino*	3	1.1.18	33,400	-	1999 2005 2010 2015	2 1 0 2	- - - -
Serbia	10,807	1.1.18	7.00m	154	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,160 8,078 11,211 10,067	82 109 155 142
Slovenia	1,333	1.9.18	2.07m	64	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,148 1,159 1,304 1,392	58 58 64 68
Spain	59,087	21.9.18	46.76m	126	2000 2005 2010 2015	45,309 60,707 76,701 65,472	113 139 165 141
Gibraltar (UK)	56	12.12.16	33,950	165	2000 2005 2010	18 27 53	67 94 180
Western Europe							
Austria	8,692	1.9.18	8.86m	98	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,862 8,869 8,597 8,743	86 108 102 101
Belgium	10,073	18.9.18	11.46m	88	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,688 9,375 10,561 11,891	85 90 97 106
France*	65,084	1.9.18	65.14m	100	2000 2005 2010 2015	48,049 55,302 61,430 61,714	82 91 98 96
Germany	62,194	31.3.18	82.93m	75	2000 2005 2010 2015	70,252 78,664 69,385 61,737	85 95 85 76
Liechtenstein*	10	1.1.16	37,600	27	1999 2005 2010	24 10 14	74 29 39
Luxembourg	650	1.9.18	609,500	107	2000 2005 2010 2015	394 693 690 668	90 149 136 117
Monaco*	29	1.1.18	38,300	76	2000 2005 2010 2015	18 26 12 28	51 74 34 74
Netherlands	10,464	30.9.17	17.11m	61	2000 2005 2010 2015	13,847 21,826 15,235 10,274	87 134 92 61
Switzerland	6,863	6.9.17	8.48m	81	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,760 6,137 6,181 6,884	80 82 79 83

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Central & Eastern Europe							
Belarus	34,600	1.10.16	9.50m	364	2000 2005 2010 2014	56,590 41,538 39,627 29,776	566 426 418 314
Bulgaria	9,028	10.14	7.21m	125	2000 2005 2010	10,147 10,871 9,896	124 140 131
Czech Republic	21,806	24.9.18	10.63m	205	2000 2005 2010 2015	21,538 18,937 21,900 20,866	210 185 209 198
Hungary	16,947	1.9.18	9.77m	173	2000 2005 2010 2015	15,539 15,720 16,328 17,449	152 156 163 178
Moldova*	7,510	1.4.18	3.55m	212	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,449 9,377 6,535 7,317	260 260 183 206
Poland	73,524	31.8.18	37.98m	194	2000 2005 2010 2015	70,544 82,955 80,728 70,836	184 217 210 186
Romania	21,527	28.9.18	19.43m	111	2000 2005 2010 2015	48,267 36,700 28,244 28,334	215 173 140 143
Slovakia	10,415	1.8.18	5.45m	191	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,941 8,897 10,031 9,913	129 165 186 183
Ukraine*	56,246	1.9.18	35.9m	c. 157	2000 2005 2010 2015	218,800 188,465 147,716 73,431	443 400 323 c. 201
Europe/Asia							
Armenia	3,536	1.1.18	2.97m	119	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,281 2,673 4,807 3,880	236 89 162 130
Azerbaijan	23,320	1.1.18	9.93m	235	2000 2005 2010 2015	23,504 18,656 21,971 24,197	291 221 241 250
Georgia*	9,990	31.8.18	3.73m	268	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,349 9,688 23,684 9,716	190 220 530 261
Russian Federation	582,889	1.9.18	144.9m	402	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,060,404 763,115 864,197 671,649	729 532 609 466
Turkey	232,886	1.1.18	80.89m	288	2000 2005 2010 2015	49,512 55,870 120,814 178,089	73 77 164 226

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* The figures for Cyprus do not include prisoners in the internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). There were 443 prisoners in TRNC in September 2017.

The figures for France are those for Metropolitan France. Those for French departments and territories in Africa, the Americas and Oceania are shown under those continents in tables 1, 2 and 5.

The figures for Georgia do not include prisoners in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which have declared internationally unrecognised independence from Georgia.

By agreement with Austria and Switzerland, some persons imprisoned by Liechtenstein may be held in prisons in those countries.

The figures for Moldova do not include prisoners in the internationally unrecognised territory that has declared independence from Moldova and is known variously as Transdnistria, Transnistria or Pridnestrovie. The territory is reported to have contained 2,840 prisoners in 2014.

By agreement with France, some persons imprisoned by Monaco may be held in French prisons.

The figures for San Marino do not show prison population rates because, by agreement with Italy, most persons imprisoned by San Marino are held in Italian prisons and the number of such prisoners is not available.

The 2015 and 2018 figures for Ukraine do not include prisoners in Crimea and Sebastopol and those areas of Donetsk and Luhansk that are not under the control of the Ukrainian authorities.

Table 5

OCEANIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Oceania							
Australia	42,942	6.18	24.98m	172	2000 2005 2010 2015	21,714 25,353 29,700 36,134	114 126 135 152
Fiji	1,889	9.16	900,000	210	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,185 1,113 1,097 1,591	146 135 127 178
Kiribati	129	mid-16	114,000	113	2000 2005 2010 2014	57 74 90 120	68 80 87 109
Marshall Is.	35	9.14	53,000	66	2003 2006 2010	c. 20 47 43	c. 38 90 83
Federated States of Micronesia	132	31.12.14	104,000	127	2000 2005 2010	91 72 100	85 68 97
Nauru	14	11.14	10,000	140	2003 2005 2010	6 3 20	60 30 200
New Zealand	10,435	30.6.18	4.88m	214	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,720 7,100 8,604 8,821	148 171 198 192
Palau	87	.17	22,000	395	2001 2005 2010 2015	70 97 88 72	368 485 440 343
Papua New Guinea	4,945	10.16	7.83m	63	2000 2005 2010 2014	3,531 4,056 4,268 4,480	65 67 61 61
Samoa	400	12.17	195,600	204	2000 2005 2011 2015	173 247 427 501	99 137 227 258
Solomon Is.	477	mid-17	611,000	78	1999 2005 2010 2015	134 295 268 271	33 63 51 46
Tonga	176	7.14	106,000	166	2000 2005 2010	106 128 159	108 127 152
Tuvalu	11	8.14	10,000	110	2000 2005 2010	6 7 8	67 70 80

Table 5 (continued)

OCEANIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Vanuatu	192	9.16	271,000	71	1999 2005 2010 2014	46 138 187 151	25 66 80 58
American Samoa (USA)	193	27.9.17	56,000	345	2000 2005 2010 2015	140 222 188 197	241 376 337 352
Cook Is. (NZ)	48	6.16	21,000	229	2000 2005 2010 2014	23 27 40 37	128 142 200 176
French Polynesia (Fr)	569	1.9.18	286,500	199	2001 2004 2007 2013	275 327 404 427	114 129 155 156
Guam (USA)	667	15.11.17	165,000	404	2000 2005 2010 2015	684 505 559 756	440 320 352 465
New Caledonia (France)	543	1.9.18	280,650	193	2001 2006 2011 2015	329 316 438 448	154 136 171 166
Northern Mariana Is. (USA)	270	6.17	56,000	482	2000 2005 2011 2014	97 149 162 175	141 235 304 319

Sources The figures in the above tables originate almost always from the national prison administrations. Some were obtained indirectly, via the Ministry responsible for prisons, via national statistical offices, via United Nations surveys, via surveys for the annual meetings of the Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators, via the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics (SPACE) and via U.S. State Department human rights reports.

Part 2: Prison population totals, rates and trends by continent

Table 6 World prison population levels – continental totals and rates

	Prison population totals (latest available at 30.9.2018)	National populations (at dates of prison population totals)	Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national populations)
AFRICA	1,162,440	1,200.85m	97
AMERICAS	3,787,059	1,006.42m	376
ASIA	4,164,323	4,302.61m	97
EUROPE	1,565,643	835.09m	187
OCEANIA	64,154	40.95m	157
WORLD	10,743,619	7,385.92m	145

Table 7 World prison population levels – change since about the year 2000*

	Estimated prison population total at about 2000**	Latest available prison population total (at 30.9.2018)	Change in prison population total since about 2000	Change in national populations mid-2000 to mid-2018 (United Nations)
AFRICA	902,500	1,162,440	+28.8%	+ 57.5%
without Rwanda	787,500	1,101,440	+39.9%	
AMERICAS	2,690,300	3,787,059	+40.8%	+ 21.1%
without U.S.A.	752,818	1,665,459	+121.2%	
ASIA	3,023,500	4,164,323	+37.7%	+ 21.8%
without China & India	1,324,014	2,094,896	+58.2%	
EUROPE	2,013,600	1,565,643	-22.0%	+ 4.4%
without Russia	953,196	982,754	+ 3.1%	
OCEANIA	34,400	64,154	+86.5%	+ 32.1%
WORLD	8,664,300	10,743,619	+24.0%	+ 24.2%

*Does not include estimates in respect of the number of prisoners in Eritrea, Somalia and North Korea. For China only the numbers of sentenced prisoners are included.

**Some of the figures on which the totals for about the year 2000 are based are estimates and so the continental totals have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Since about the year 2000 the world prison population total has grown by 24%, which is about the same as the estimated increase in the world's general population over the same period. There are considerable differences between the continents, and variation within continents.

The growth in the African prison population is considerably less than the increase in the continent's general population. However, this discrepancy is heavily influenced by the figures for Rwanda. Rwanda's prison population is still inflated by the many thousands detained in connection with the genocide in 1994, but the numbers have almost halved since 2000. Without the figures for Rwanda the prison population in Africa has increased by 40% since 2000.

The change in the prison population in the Americas since 2000 is greatly influenced by the trend in the United States, whose prison population is by far the largest but has grown much less than that of many other countries in the continent. Without the figures for the United States, the prison population in the Americas has increased by 121% since 2000, the increase being 67% in central America and 175% in south America.

Prison population change since 2000 in Asia has varied greatly between the different parts of the continent: the totals in south-eastern Asia and in western Asia (Middle East) rose by 122% and 102% respectively while the total in central Asia fell by 34%. China and India with their high national populations strongly influence the overall Asian prison population level; the Chinese prison population rose by 16% while the Indian prison population rose by 54%. Excluding these two countries the Asian prison population rose by 58%.

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Europe is the only continent that has seen a fall in prisoner numbers since 2000. The scale of the decrease is heavily influenced by the figures for the Russian Federation: Russia's prison population is by far the largest in Europe and has fallen by 45%. Excluding the Russian Federation, the prison population in Europe has risen by 3% since 2000. Russia is not the only part of Europe that has seen a large fall in the prison population: prisoner numbers in central and eastern Europe without Russia have fallen by 45% since 2000. By contrast there has been growth in the other regions of Europe: 7% in western Europe and northern Europe and 27% in southern Europe.

The growth in the prison population of Oceania is higher than in any other continent. It is of course dominated by the figures for Australia, whose prison population has risen by 98% since 2000, and New Zealand whose total has risen by 82%.

Table 8 **World prison population levels –
change since about 2015 (continents and selected countries)**

	Prison population total – latest available at 31.10.2015	Prison population total – latest available at 30.9.2018	Percentage change in prison population total	Prison population rate per 100k of nat'l pop'n 31.10.2015	Prison population rate per 100k of nat'l pop'n 30.9.2018	Percentage change in prison population rate
Cote d'Ivoire	10,850	16,127	+ 49%	52	66	+ 27%
Egypt	62,000	106,000	+ 71%	76	116	+ 53%
Morocco	76,000	82,512	+ 9%	222	232	+ 5%
Nigeria	56,620	73,631	+ 30%	31	37	+ 19%
Rwanda	54,279	61,000	+ 12%	434	464	+ 7%
Uganda	45,092	54,059	+ 20%	115	129	+ 12%
Zambia	18,560	25,000	+ 35%	125	146	+ 17%
AFRICA	1,038,735	1,162,440	+ 12%	94	97	+ 3%
Argentina	69,060	81,975	+ 19%	160	186	+ 16%
Brazil	607,731	690,722	+ 14%	301	324	+ 8%
Ecuador	25,902	37,497	+ 45%	162	222	+ 37%
El Salvador	31,686	38,714	+ 22%	492	604	+ 23%
Mexico	255,138	204,422	- 20%	212	164	- 23%
Nicaragua	10,569	17,196	+ 63%	171	276	+ 61%
Peru	75,379	87,995	+ 17%	242	272	+ 12%
USA	2,217,000	2,121,600	- 4%	698	655	- 6%
AMERICAS	3,780,528	3,787,059	+ 0.02%	387	376	- 3%
Bangladesh	69,719	88,424	+ 27%	43	53	+ 23%
Cambodia	16,497	28,414	+ 72%	105	176	+ 68%
China	1,657,812	1,649,804	- 0.5%	119	118	- 0.8%
Indonesia	161,692	248,765	+ 54%	64	93	+ 45%
Japan	60,486	51,805	- 14%	48	41	- 15%
Jordan	10,089	15,700	+ 56%	150	197	+ 31%
Kazakhstan	41,333	33,989	- 18%	234	186	- 21%
Myanmar	60,000	79,668	+ 33%	113	145	+ 28%
Philippines	120,076	188,278	+ 57%	121	179	+ 48%
Saudi Arabia	47,000	61,000	+ 30%	161	197	+ 22%
Thailand	311,036	364,288	+ 17%	461	526	+ 14%
Vietnam	142,636	130,002	- 9%	154	137	- 11%
ASIA	3,897,797	4,164,323	+ 7%	92	97	+ 5%
Belarus	29,000	34,600	+ 19%	306	364	+ 19%
Italy	52,434	59,135	+ 13%	86	98	+ 14%
Romania	28,383	21,527	- 24%	143	111	- 22%
Russian Fed.	642,470	582,889	- 9%	445	402	- 10%
Turkey	172,562	232,886	+ 35%	220	288	+ 31%
Ukraine	71,046	56,246	- 21%	195	157	- 19%
EUROPE	1,585,348	1,565,643	- 1%	192	187	- 2%
Australia	35,949	42,942	+ 19%	151	172	+ 14%
OCEANIA	54,726	64,154	+ 17%	140	157	+ 12%
WORLD	10,357,134	10,743,619	+ 3.7%	144.4	145.5	+ 0.7%

Table 7 showed the trend in prison population levels since about the year 2000. Table 8 shows the changes since publication of the previous (11th) edition of the World Prison Population List in 2015.

From 2015 to 2018 the known prison population of the world has increased by 386,500 (3.7%). There has been an aggregate increase of 3.0% in the world's general population, based on each country's figure for the dates to which the prison populations apply. Thus, the world prison population rate (prisoners per 100,000 of the general population) has remained quite stable, rising from 144 to 145.

At a national level, however, prison population numbers in many countries have changed significantly and have not stayed in line with national population trends.

Table 8 sets out examples of this. It lists the 34 countries whose prison populations increased or decreased by more than 5,000 over the three-year period. The table shows the percentage change in each country's total prison population, and the percentage change in the prison population rate. It is the latter that is best used for comparison purposes because it takes account of changes in national populations. (The 5,000 cut-off means that there will be some small countries that are not included in the table despite having registered proportionately large changes to their prison population levels.)

In Africa the most substantial changes have been in Egypt, where the prison population rate has risen by 53%, and Cote d'Ivoire (rise of 27%). Other large rises occurred in Nigeria (19%), Zambia (17%) and Uganda (12%).

In the Americas the most substantial changes have been in Nicaragua (rise of 61%) and Ecuador (rise of 37%). Other large rises occurred in El Salvador (23%), Argentina (16%) and Peru (12%). A large fall (of 23%) was recorded in Mexico.

In Asia the most substantial changes have been in Cambodia (rise of 68%), Philippines (rise of 48%) and Indonesia (rise of 45%). Other large rises occurred in Jordan (31%), Myanmar (28%), Bangladesh (23%), Saudi Arabia (22%) and Thailand (14%). Large falls were recorded in Kazakhstan (21%), Japan (15%) and Vietnam (11%).

In Europe the most substantial changes have been rises in Turkey (31%), Belarus (19%) and Italy (14%), and falls in Romania (22%), Ukraine (19%) and the Russian Federation (10%).

Finally, in Oceania the prison population rate in Australia rose by 14%. (In the next largest country in Oceania, New Zealand, the rate rose by 10%.)

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