

Introduction

This thirteenth 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 beginning of October 2021.

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 and 7, provides data on prison population totals, rates and trends by continent. This shows the extent to which prison population levels have grown in the last twenty years, and points to considerable variation between continents and within continents.

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 (fourth edition published in April 2020), complements the information held on the World Prison Brief. This is an online database available at www.prisonstudies.org, and updated monthly. The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck, University of London, hosts and maintains the World Prison Brief database and publishes the Prison Lists.³

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 numbers of prisoners in the countries for which figures are not currently available (Eritrea, Somalia and the Democratic People's Republic of 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 prisons and the use of imprisonment. The information may prompt fresh thought about prison population trends, and reflections on methods and strategies for reducing reliance on custody – given the high costs and disputed efficacy of imprisonment as a form of punishment, and the fact that severe overcrowding is a feature of prison systems across much of the world.

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3 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

- ▶ Prison population levels have been affected by various factors linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. In many countries, prisoner numbers fell in the second quarter of 2020, and in some countries, numbers remain lower than they were at the beginning of 2020.
- ▶ This report shows that more than 10.77 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 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 10.77 million and may well be in excess of 11.5 million.
- ▶ There are more than 2 million prisoners in the United States of America, 1.69 million in China (plus unknown numbers in pre-trial detention and other forms of detention), 811,000 in Brazil, 478,000 in India, 471,000 in the Russian Federation, 309,000 in Thailand, 291,000 in Turkey, 266,000 in Indonesia, 220,000 in Mexico, 189,000 in Iran, and 165,000 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 (629 per 100,000), followed by Rwanda (580), Turkmenistan (576), El Salvador (564), Cuba (510), Palau (478), British Virgin Islands (447), Panama (436), St Kitts & Nevis (423), Grenada (413), Thailand (412), U.S. Virgin Islands (394), Bahamas (392), Uruguay (383) and Brazil (381).
- ▶ By contrast, 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 140 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 44.5, whereas for southern African countries it is 248;
 - in the Americas, the median rate for north American countries is 212.5, whereas for central American countries it is 278;
 - in Asia, the median rate for countries in southern Asia is 85, whereas for the countries of south-eastern Asia it is 171;
 - in Europe, the median rate for western European countries is 73, whereas for the countries spanning Europe and Asia (e.g. the Russian Federation and Turkey) it is 253; and
 - in Oceania the median rate is 166.5.
- ▶ Since about the year 2000, the total number of prisoners worldwide has increased slightly more slowly (24%) than the estimated general population over the same period (28%). There are considerable differences between the continents, and variation within continents in change in total prisoner numbers. The total prison population in Oceania has increased by 82%, that in the Americas by 43%, that in Asia by 38% and that in Africa by 32%; in Europe, by contrast, the total prison population has decreased by 27%. The European figure reflects large falls in prison populations in Russia (56%) and also in central and eastern Europe (49%); the prison population in Europe other than Russia has increased by 5%. Particularly large rises have been recorded in south America (200%) and south-eastern Asia (116%).

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	65,000	.19	42.38m	153	2000 2005 2010 2015	33,992 43,797 58,000 62,150	108 131 161 155
Egypt	c. 120,000	4.21	101.72m	c. 118	2001 2006 2011 2016	56,587 64,378 c. 66,000 c. 106,000	84 87 c. 83 c. 116
Libya	c. 9,100	.17	6.53m	139	2004 2010 2014	9,763 13,242 6,187	178 220 99
Morocco	84,990	31.12.20	36.64m	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	23,484	.21	11.94m	197	2004 2009 2013 2017	c. 26,000 26,319 25,000 20,755	c. 261 250 226 180
Western Africa							
Benin	c. 9,000	.20	12.36m	c. 73	2000 2006 2010 2014	4,961 5,834 6,908 7,067	71 69 73 67
Burkina Faso	7,621	2.4.20	20.72m	37	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,204 3,315 5,198 7,544	19 24 33 41
Cape Verde	1,549	30.9.18	523,000	296	1999 2010 2013 2016	755 1,226 1,428 1,569	172 251 286 306
Cote d'Ivoire	21,430	8.20	26.28m	82	2002 2008 2015	10,355 11,143 12,147	62 61 52
Gambia	543	30.4.21	2.35m	23	1999 2002 2009 2014	478 450 780 1,121	40 34 47 58
Ghana	13,200	24.6.21	31.16m	42	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,507 12,371 13,507 14,355	51 58 56 53
Guinea (Republic of)	3,782	.19	12.77m	30	2002 2007 2010 2015	3,070 2,539 c. 3,800 c. 3,100	34 25 c. 35 c. 25
Guinea Bissau	596	.17	1.93m	31	2014	526	29
Liberia	2,620	6.1.21	5.15m	51	2007 2011 2015	1,022 1,601 2,203	29 39 49
Mali	c. 7,000	11.20	20.45m	c. 34	2002 2009 2014	4,040 6,700 5,209	38 49 33
Mauritania	2,175	.20	4.58m	47	2001 2005 2010 2015	1,413 c. 815 1,700 1,873	50 c. 26 47 46
Niger	9,187	31.12.19	23.76m	39	2002 2006 2010 2015	c. 6,000 7,381 5,337 10,383	c. 51 53 33 53

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Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Nigeria	68,556	26.7.21	211.84m	32	2000	44,450	36
					2005	39,006	28
					2010	46,586	29
					2015	57,313	32
Senegal	11,547	9.19	17.08m	68	2000	4,894	51
					2005	6,417	59
					2010	7,300	59
					2014	8,630	58
Sierra Leone	3,808	8.20	8.07m	47	2004	c. 1,400	c. 26
					2010	2,237	34
					2015	3,488	48
Togo	4,117	13.8.20	8.30m	50	2003	3,200	61
					2010	4,116	64
					2015	4,427	60
Central Africa							
Angola	26,000	.20	29.25m	89	2001	4,000	26
					2005	c. 8,300	c. 46
					2009	16,183	78
					2015	24,165	96
Cameroon	22,430	31.10.20	26.54m	85	2002	20,000	119
					2005	22,734	127
					2009	23,368	115
					2015	28,120	119
Central African Republic	764	.15	4.80m	16	2005	c. 1,000	c. 25
					2010	1,320	c. 29
Chad	c. 8,700	.18	14.85m	c. 59	2000	2,385	29
					2005	3,416	34
					2010	4,775	41
					2015	8,000	59
Congo (Republic of)	1,388	.19	5.17m	27	2005	1,550	44
					2009	2,410	60
					2014	c. 1,240	c. 27
Dem. Republic of Congo	c. 20,550	.15	71.25m	c. 29	2004	c. 30,000	c. 58
					2010	c. 22,000	c. 35
Equatorial Guinea	c. 500	.15	799,000	c. 63	not available		
Gabon	4,476	4.18	1.86m	241	2006	c. 2,750	c. 195
					2013	c. 3,500	c. 210
Sao Tome e Principe	c. 260	.20	227,000	c. 115	2002	130	90
					2006	160	101
					2010	305	171
					2015	178	87
South Sudan	7,000	12.19	13.92m	50	2011	c. 8,000	c. 77
					2015	6,504	52
Eastern Africa							
Burundi	11,675	31.8.21	13.60m	86	2001	9,013	130
					2005	7,167	90
					2010	9,481	100
					2015	8,689	77
Comoros	322	8.20	873,000	37	2009	c. 150	c. 22
					2013	206	28
					2017	191	23
Djibouti	662	.18	939,000	71	2000	c. 200	c. 27
					2009	525	64
					2013	550	63
Ethiopia	110,000	3.20	111.11m	99	2000-01	62,597	94
					2005-06	72,211	96
					2010-11	104,467	124
Kenya	42,596	9.20	52.50m	81	2000	40,010	129
					2005	50,000	141
					2010	48,153	118
					2015	54,631	119
Madagascar	27,600	6.20	27.80m	99	1999	20,109	131
					2005	20,294	109
					2010	18,647	89
					2015	20,595	85
Malawi	14,500	12.20	20.29m	71	2000	7,728	69
					2005	9,656	75
					2010	11,672	78
					2015	12,129	70

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Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Mauritius	2,652	20.9.21	1.29m	205	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,635 2,547 2,449 2,072	137 209 196 163
Mozambique	18,378	10.20	32.20m	57	1999 2004 2010 2015	8,812 c. 10,000 15,303 15,203	49 c. 48 62 54
Rwanda	76,099*	1.21	13.11m	580*	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 115,000* c. 67,000* 55,000* 54,144*	c. 1,369* c. 702* 547* 477*
Seychelles	285	30.6.21	99,200	287	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 166 162 415 752	c. 205 196 462 805
Tanzania	32,438	4.20	61.81m	52	2000 2005 2011 2015	45,611 46,416 38,353 34,404	135 117 81 64
Uganda	65,000	7.8.20	45.90m	142	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 21,700 26,126 30,312 45,527	c. 92 93 91 115
Zambia	22,823	12.19	18.60m	123	2000 2005 2010 2015	11,999 14,207 16,666 18,560	116 124 128 115
Zimbabwe	20,407	3.21	17.75m	115	2000 2005 2010 2015	20,567 18,033 13,361 18,857	164 138 96 122
Mayotte (France)	431	1.7.21	280,000	151	1998 2005 2010 2015	123 107 220 177	88 60 107 73
Reunion (France)	1,183	1.7.21	903,000	131	2001 2006 2011 2015	1,079 962 1,078 1,046	144 120 129 121
Southern Africa							
Botswana	3,882	5.21	2.39m	162	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,742 6,259 c. 5,063 4,108	381 333 c. 256 194
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 2015	4,883 4,442 4,251 3,560	254 218 191 145
South Africa	147,922	24.6.20	59.62m	248	2000 2005 2010 2015	171,462 187,394 163,312 159,241	394 400 328 292
Swaziland/eSwatini	3,796	9.20	1.37m	277	2000 2005 2011 2015	2,745 2,667 3,764 3,610	257 242 311 282

* 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.

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Table 2

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Northern America							
Canada	38,570	2018-19	37.25m	104	2000-01 2005-06 2010-11 2015-16	35,533 35,436 39,916 41,169	115 110 117 114
U.S.A.	2,068,800	.19	329.10m	629	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,937,482 2,195,471 2,270,142 2,166,600	683 739 731 672
Bermuda (UK)	124	.21	62,000	200	2000 2004 2010 2015	326 364 283 209	517 569 435 327
Greenland (Denmark)	126	.19	55,900	225	2000 2005 2010 2015	88 114 171 126	157 200 302 225
Central America							
Belize	1,046	30.6.21	405,000	258	2000 2005 2010 2015	765 1,234 1,420 1,443	310 435 441 396
Costa Rica	15,345	31.8.21	5.15m	298	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,575 9,053 12,110 19,003	193 210 259 392
El Salvador	36,663	22.3.21	6.50m	564	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,754 12,525 24,662 32,645	132 207 399 516
Guatemala	24,942	13.9.21	18.31m	136	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,974 8,247 11,148 19,834	62 65 78 121
Honduras	21,675	2.9.20	9.28m	234	2000 2005 2010 2015	11,500 11,545 11,846 15,914	175 153 141 173
Mexico	220,866	31.7.21	130.39m	169	2000 2005 2010 2015	154,765 205,621 219,027 247,488	156 195 191 202
Nicaragua	20,918	10.18	6.30m	332	2000 2005 2010 2014	6,539 6,382 c. 6,500 10,569	128 117 c. 113 175
Panama	18,942	31.8.21	4.36m	434	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,652 11,571 12,293 16,485	283 344 336 414
Caribbean							
Antigua & Barbuda	210	4.21	97,000	216	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 170 194 295 370	c. 218 234 339 401
Bahamas	1,617	12.20	412,000	392	2000 2005 2010 2014	c. 1,400 1,500 1,322 1,396	c. 470 453 367 363
Barbados	850	31.12.18	287,000	296	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,411 997 910 927	527 365 322 325
Cuba	57,337	5.12	11.25m	510	2003 2006	c. 55,000 c. 60,000	c. 487 c. 531
Dominica	204	5.20	74,000	276	1999 2005 2010 2015	298 282 295 219	426 397 415 300

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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	26,600	9.20	11.13m	239	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,995 12,495 20,743 24,617	173 133 208 232
Grenada	463	8.19	112,000	413	2002 2006 2010 2015	297 334 432 502	291 324 408 456
Haiti	11,500	31.5.21	11.50m	100	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,219 3,670 5,331 11,046	49 39 53 102
Jamaica	3,719	31.8.21	2.85m	130	2003 2007 2011 2015	4,744 4,709 4,457 3,860	178 174 161 138
St Kitts & Nevis	220	6.17	52,000	423	1999 2005 2010 2014	135 209 256 334	300 445 522 655
St Lucia	518	11.12.20	193,000	268	1999 2005 2010 2015	373 503 526 628	241 303 301 351
St Vincent & the Grenadines	410	30.7.20	111,000	369	1999 2005 2010 2014	405 364 413 412	375 334 379 378
Trinidad & Tobago	3,802	4.21	1.38m	276	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,633 3,683 3,766 3,667	365 283 283 270
Anguilla (UK)	55	30.8.18	15,000	367	2004 2007 2010 2015	41 56 58 46	342 431 414 307
Aruba (Netherlands)	170	23.10.14	103,000	165	2005 2011	231 246	232 241
Cayman Is (UK)	205	31.12.20	65,790	312	2000 2005 2010 2015	227 190 212 190	565 393 382 320
Curacao (Netherlands)	377	7.12.16	159,800	236	1999 2006 2010 2014	434 578 541 348	306 412 365 221
Guadeloupe (France)	763	1.7.21	448,000	170	2001 2006 2011 2015	628 718 784 907	147 162 174 202
Martinique (France)	789	1.7.21	385,000	205	2001 2006 2011 2015	608 649 885 940	156 163 225 244
Puerto Rico (USA)	8,884	31.12.19	3.19m	278	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,691 14,263 10,878 12,074	384 364 294 349
Sint Maarten (Netherlands)	77	8.20	43,000	179	2002 2006 2011 2014	129 141 138 161	396 362 319 347
Virgin Islands (UK)	143	3.18	30,000	477	1999 2005 2010 2014	43 105 117 134	215 457 418 462
Virgin Islands (USA)	412	2.20	104,500	394	2000 2005 2010 2013	518 596 577 571	475 554 544 535

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Table 2 (continued)

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
South America							
Argentina	109,405	31.12.19	44.99m	243	1999 2005 2010 2015	38,604 63,357 65,095 75,769	105 161 157 174
Bolivia	18,260	3.20	11.63m	157	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,151 6,793 9,406 13,672	95 72 93 125
Brazil	811,707	31.12.20	212.78m	381	2000 2005 2010 2015	232,755 361,402 496,251 698,618	132 191 249 335
Chile	39,670	31.8.21	18.68m	212	2000 2005 2010 2015	33,050 37,033 54,628 42,954	215 228 320 240
Colombia	97,615	31.8.21	50.64m	193	2000 2005 2010 2015	51,518 66,829 84,444 120,444	128 154 183 249
Ecuador	39,251	1.1.20	17.51m	224	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,029 11,971 11,800 28,379	64 87 79 174
Guyana	1,884	11.20	789,000	239	2001 2005 2010 2015	1,507 1,524 2,160 1,998	205 204 286 260
Paraguay	14,648	30.8.21	7.16m	205	2000 2005 2010 2015	3,219 6,282 6,197 12,423	60 108 99 186
Peru	87,251	7.21	33.70m	259	2000 2005 2010 2015	27,734 33,010 45,464 75,003	107 119 155 239
Suriname	c. 1,000	11.14	540,000	c. 185	2000 2005 2009	786 820 915	163 167 177
Uruguay	13,402	17.3.21	3.50m	383	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,469 6,211 8,700 9,996	135 187 257 291
Venezuela	37,543	.20	33.17m	113	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,196 19,853 40,825 49,664	58 74 140 160
French Guiana/ Guyane (France)	712	1.7.21	311,000	229	2001 2005 2010 2015	423 600 715 701	247 293 306 259

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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	57,000	.19	39.31m	145	2004 2007 2010 2015	c. 7,000 26,472 39,130 45,000	c. 26 91 125 127
Israel	19,376	.18	8.27m	234	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,421 16,059 20,164 21,072	158 240 270 265
Jordan	17,708	.20	10.20m	174	2001 2005 2010 2015	5,621 6,378 8,434 11,489	107 112 117 123
Kuwait	4,420	2.20	3.98m	111	2000 2005 2010 2015	c. 3,100 c. 3,500 4,179 c. 4,000	c. 162 c. 152 140 c. 112
Lebanon	6,670	14.9.20	6.81m	98	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,917 6,921 5,060 6,502	129 147 102 98
Oman	1,960	11.15	4.33m	45	2000 2002 2013	2,020 1,403 1,300	92 61 36
Qatar	c. 1,150	.13	2.17m	c. 53	2000 2004 2008	570 465 551	96 60 38
Saudi Arabia	68,056	.17	32.94m	207	2000 2002 2009 2013	23,720 28,612 44,600 47,000	116 131 168 161
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	9,719	.17	28.12m	35	2003 2006 2010 2013	16,252 10,415 12,409 12,603	84 49 52 48
Central Asia							
Kazakhstan	33,217	8.7.21	18.78m	177	2000 2005 2010 2015	78,029 52,608 63,643 47,939	520 342 393 272
Kyrgyzstan	10,142	1.7.19	6.30m	161	2000 2005 2010 2015	20,000 16,662 9,923 9,581	402 327 183 163
Tajikistan	c. 8,000	10.20	9.59m	c. 83	2001 2006 2010	c. 11,000 10,804 9,317	c. 175 157 123
Turkmenistan	c. 35,000	.21	6.08m	c. 576	2000 2005 2010 2013	c. 22,000 13,462 c. 26,500 30,568	c. 488 283 c. 522 583
Uzbekistan	22,867	17.8.20	33.53m	68	2000 2003 2009 2014	63,900 48,000 c. 42,000 c. 43,900	258 186 c. 150 c. 144
Southern Asia							
Afghanistan	28,240	31.1.21	36.84m	77	2004 2007 2010 2015	5,262 10,590 18,283 27,527	22 41 65 85

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Table 3 (continued)

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Bangladesh	83,107	3.21	171.72m	48	2000	62,669	47
					2005	74,766	52
					2010	69,650	46
					2015	69,719	43
Bhutan	1,119	12.14	772,000	145	2011	1,001	137
India	478,600	31.12.19	1,373m	35	2000	272,079	26
					2005	358,368	32
					2010	368,998	30
					2015	419,623	32
Iran	189,000	1.1.20	83.02m	228	2001	158,000	237
					2005	134,384	192
					2010	204,365	275
					2014	225,624	287
Maldives	1,800	.20	541,000	333	2000	2,166	776
					2005	983	307
					2010	830	227
					2015	1,513	330
Nepal	25,758	Feb/Mar 21	30.40m	85	2000	6,000	25
					2005	7,135	28
					2010	10,739	40
					2015	17,486	61
Pakistan	82,139	8.20	221.61m	37	2000	78,938	56
					2005	89,370	56
					2010	75,586	42
					2015	80,169	40
Sri Lanka	28,915	12.20	21.45m	135	2000	16,412	87
					2005	22,114	111
					2010	26,984	130
					2015	17,996	86
South-Eastern Asia							
Brunei Darussalam	841	28.11.20	452,000	186	2000	333	101
					2005	492	136
					2010	379	96
					2015	565	134
Cambodia	39,000	4.20	16.76m	233	2000	5,502	45
					2005	8,160	61
					2010	14,043	97
					2015	17,522	111
Indonesia	266,259	31.8.21	274.96m	97	2000	53,399	26
					2005	97,671	44
					2010	117,863	49
					2015	176,754	68
Laos	c. 9,000	.16	6.915m	c. 130	2004	4,020	70
					2011	c. 6,000	c. 94
Malaysia	69,507	25.8.21	32.84m	212	2000	27,358	116
					2005	35,644	138
					2010	38,387	137
					2015	51,184	169
Myanmar	92,000	.18	53.86m	171	2001	31,648	68
					2004	c. 60,000	c. 125
					2009	60,053	121
					2013	c. 60,000	c. 117
Philippines	165,583	31.5.21	109.86m	151	2000	79,299	102
					2005	90,492	105
					2010	95,390	103
					2015	139,469	138
Singapore	11,198	31.12.20	6.04m	185	2000	13,791	352
					2005	13,644	299
					2010	12,852	250
					2015	12,394	219
Thailand	309,282	1.6.21	69.49m	445	2000	223,406	354
					2005	162,293	248
					2010	210,855	313
					2015	310,399	452
Timor-Leste	757	10.20	1.39m	54	2003	c. 320	c. 35
					2008	179	17
					2013	429	36
					2017	659	51
Vietnam	125,697	mid-19	96.46m	130	1998	55,000	69
					2005	88,414	104
					2010	108,557	122
					2015	136,245	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	1,690,000*	31.12.18	1,418m	119*	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,427,407* 1,565,771* 1,656,773* 1,613,000*	111* 118* 121* 115*
Japan	47,064	mid-20	126.00m	37	2000 2005 2010 2015	61,242 79,052 72,975 58,497	48 62 57 46
Korea (Republic of)	53,920	30.6.20	51.25m	105	2000 2005 2010 2015	62,959 52,403 47,471 53,892	136 110 97 107
Mongolia	5,832	mid-20	3.18m	183	2001 2005 2010 2015	6,656 6,998 7,044 5,471	275 277 260 184
Taiwan	51,673	31.8.21	23.55m	219	2000 2005 2010 2015	56,676 60,122 65,311 62,899	254 264 282 268
Hong Kong (China)	7,107	31.12.20	7.43m	96	2000 2005 2010 2015	12,017 11,311 9,988 8,438	180 165 142 115
Macau (China)	1,533	31.8.21	682,500	225	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). In addition, it is widely reported that more than a million Uighur Muslims are detained in camps in Xinjiang province.

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	4,227	15.4.21	5.84m	72	2000 2005 2010 2015	3,382 4,041 3,965 3,422	63 75 71 60
Estonia	2,231	27.9.21	1.33m	168	2000 2005 2010 2015	4,712 4,565 3,555 2,921	343 337 267 222
Finland	2,743	1.1.21	5.53m	50	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,855 3,888 3,291 3,068	55 74 61 56
Iceland	106	15.6.20	366,270	29	2000 2005 2010 2015	78 119 165 146	28 40 52 44
Ireland	3,802	30.9.21	5.04m	75	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,948 3,151 4,290 3,722	77 76 94 79
Latvia	3,124	20.9.21	1.89m	165	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,815 7,646 7,055 4,745	370 340 333 239
Lithuania	5,153	31.7.21	2.80m	184	2000 2005 2010 2015	14,412 8,125 8,655 8,636	410 242 275 296

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Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Norway	3,034	7.8.21	5.43m	56	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,548 3,124 3,624 3,746	57 68 74 72
Sweden	7,607	1.10.20	10.37m	73	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,326 7,008 6,902 5,920	60 78 74 60
UK: England & Wales	78,789	1.10.21	60.07m	131	2000 2005 2010 2015	64,602 75,979 84,725 85,626	124 142 153 148
UK: Northern Ireland	1,480	1.10.21	1.90m	78	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,068 1,301 1,465 1,661	64 76 81 90
UK: Scotland	7,509	1.10.21	5.47m	137	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,869 6,792 7,806 7,744	116 133 150 144
Faeroes (Denmark)	9	average 19	51,600	18	2000 2005 2010 2015	9 10 10 10	20 20 20 19
Guernsey (UK)	82	9.21	66,200	124	2000 2005 2010 2015	59 105 75 91	94 164 114 140
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)	146	average 20	108,300	135	2000 2005 2010 2015	130 172 177 151	150 190 183 148
Southern Europe							
Albania	5,042	8.21	2.82m	179	2001 2005 2010 2015	3,053 4,356 4,750 5,934	99 139 148 205
Andorra	61	15.9.20	78,570	78	2001 2006 2010 2015	48 30 61 52	72 37 78 73
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Federation	1,813	31.12.19	2.19m	83	2000 2005 2010 2014	1,041 1,435 1,714 1,722	45 64 77 78
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Republika Srpska	556	31.12.20	1.20m	46	2001 2005 2010 2015	849 955 1,046 877	61 68 75 67
Croatia	3,941	16.9.21	4.02m	98	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,027 3,022 4,891 3,763	45 68 110 89
Cyprus*	716	15.9.20	893,700	80	2000 2005 2010 2015	312 536 900 654	45 70 108 77
Greece	11,001	16.7.21	10.69m	103	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,625 8,722 11,364 11,798	70 79 102 109
Italy	53,930	30.9.21	58.97m	91	2000 2005 2010 2015	53,165 59,523 67,961 52,164	93 101 112 86
Kosovo	1,642	29.7.20	1.77m	93	2000 2005 2010 2015	227 1,199 1,333 1,478	11 58 61 84

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Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Malta	821	2.21	516,300	159	2001 2005 2010 2015	257 294 598 569	65 73 144 126
Montenegro	863	15.9.20	621,070	139	2000 2005 2010 2015	664 812 1,457 1,131	110 132 235 182
North Macedonia	2,125	11.8.20	2.07m	103	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,178 1,844 2,516 3,498	59 90 122 169
Portugal	11,603	1.9.21	10.30m	113	2000 2005 2010 2015	12,944 12,889 11,613 14,224	126 123 110 138
San Marino*	0	31.1.20	34,735	0	1999 2005 2010 2015	2 1 0 2	- - - -
Serbia	10,598	12.10.20	6.89m	154	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,160 8,078 11,211 10,067	82 109 155 142
Slovenia	1,360	13.9.21	2.12m	64	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,148 1,159 1,304 1,392	58 58 64 68
Spain	55,433	15.9.20	47.38m	113	2000 2005 2010 2015	45,309 60,707 76,701 65,472	113 139 165 141
Gibraltar (UK)	92	.21	33,700	273	2000 2005 2010 2015	18 27 53 53	67 94 180 158
Western Europe							
Austria	8,132	1.9.21	8.95m	91	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,862 8,869 8,597 8,743	86 108 102 101
Belgium	10,808	31.1.20	11.56m	93	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,688 9,375 10,561 11,041	85 90 97 98
France*	62,991	1.7.21	65.27m	119	2000 2005 2010 2015	48,049 55,302 61,430 61,714	82 91 98 96
Germany	58,004	31.12.20	83.16m	70	2000 2005 2010 2015	70,252 78,664 69,385 61,737	85 95 85 75
Liechtenstein*	12	15.9.20	38,965	31	1999 2005 2010 2015	24 10 14 8	74 29 39 21
Luxembourg	548	1.1.21	634,700	86	2000 2005 2010 2015	394 693 690 668	90 149 136 117
Monaco*	13	15.9.20	38,275	34	2000 2005 2010 2015	18 26 12 28	51 74 34 74
Netherlands	10,542	30.9.20	17.50m	60	2000 2005 2010 2015	13,847 21,826 15,235 10,274	87 134 92 61
Switzerland	6,316	31.1.21	8.67m	73	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,760 6,137 6,181 6,884	80 82 79 83

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Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Central & Eastern Europe							
Belarus	32,556	31.12.18	9.43m	345	2000 2005 2010 2015	56,590 41,538 39,627 33,329	566 426 418 351
Bulgaria	6,427	15.9.20	6.91m	93	2000 2005 2010 2015	10,147 10,871 9,896 7,870	124 140 131 109
Czech Republic	18,969	29.9.21	10.71m	177	2000 2005 2010 2015	21,538 18,937 21,900 20,866	210 185 209 198
Hungary	16,752	31.12.20	9.75m	172	2000 2005 2010 2015	15,539 15,720 16,328 17,449	152 156 163 178
Moldova*	6,423	1.7.21	3.54m	181	2000 2005 2010 2015	9,449 9,377 6,535 7,317	260 260 183 206
Poland	71,907	31.8.21	37.76m	190	2000 2005 2010 2015	70,544 82,955 80,728 70,836	184 217 212 187
Romania	22,921	29.9.21	19.08m	120	2000 2005 2010 2015	48,267 36,700 28,244 28,334	215 173 140 143
Slovakia	10,333	1.9.21	5.46m	189	2000 2005 2010 2015	6,941 8,897 10,031 9,913	129 165 186 183
Ukraine*	49,211	1.8.21	35.20m	140	2000 2005 2010 2015	218,800 188,465 147,716 73,431	443 400 323 c. 201
Europe/Asia							
Armenia	2,145	15.6.20	2.96m	72	2000 2005 2010 2015	7,281 2,673 4,807 3,880	236 89 162 130
Azerbaijan	21,253	15.9.20	10.10m	210	2000 2005 2010 2015	23,504 18,656 21,971 24,197	291 221 241 250
Georgia*	9,444	31.8.21	3.73m	253	2000 2005 2010 2015	8,349 9,688 23,684 9,716	190 220 530 261
Russian Federation	471,490	1.9.21	144.50m	326	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,060,404 763,115 864,197 671,649	729 532 609 466
Turkey	291,198	31.8.21	83.92m	347	2000 2005 2010 2015	49,512 55,870 120,814 178,089	73 77 164 226

* The figures for Cyprus do not include prisoners in the internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). There were 587 prisoners in TRNC in September 2020.

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 independence from Georgia, without international recognition.

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

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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 more than 3,000 prisoners in 2019.

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 2021 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	42,909	3.21	25.7m	167	2000 2005 2010 2015	21,714 25,353 29,700 36,134	114 126 135 152
Fiji	2,506	9.19	913,000	274	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 Islands	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	8,397	30.6.21	5.12m	164	2000 2005 2010 2015	5,720 7,100 8,604 8,821	148 171 198 192
Palau	86	9.20	18,000	478	2001 2005 2010 2015	70 97 88 72	368 485 489 400
Papua New Guinea	5,087	7.1.19	8.70m	58	2000 2005 2010 2015	3,531 4,056 4,268 4,864	65 67 61 60
Samoa	400	12.17	198,400	202	2000 2005 2011 2015	173 247 427 501	99 137 227 257
Solomon Islands	c. 500	.19	635,000	c. 79	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
Vanuatu	253	8.20	295,000	86	1999 2005 2010 2016	46 138 187 192	25 66 80 71
American Samoa (USA)	193	27.9.17	56,000	345	2000 2005 2010 2015	140 222 188 197	241 376 337 352

Table 5 (continued)

OCEANIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Cook Islands (NZ)	47	4.19	21,000	224	2000	23	128
					2005	27	142
					2010	40	200
					2014	37	176
Fr. Polynesia (France)	581	1.7.21	283,000	205	2001	275	114
					2005	314	123
					2012	426	156
					2015	456	164
Guam (USA)	600	30.9.20	169,000	355	2000	684	440
					2005	505	319
					2010	559	352
					2015	756	465
New Caledonia (France)	520	1.7.21	288,000	181	2001	329	154
					2006	316	136
					2011	438	171
					2015	448	166
Northern Mariana Is. (USA)	175	31.12.19	56,000	313	2000	97	141
					2005	149	235
					2011	162	304
					2014	175	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 1.10.2021)	National populations (at dates of prison population totals)	Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national populations)
AFRICA	1,194,497	1,302.97m	92
AMERICAS	3,859,690	1,026.56m	376
ASIA	4,184,126	4,477.50m	93
EUROPE	1,470,140	837.82m	175
OCEANIA	62,751	42.85m	146
WORLD	10,771,204	7,687.71m	140

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 1.10.2021)	Change in prison population total since about 2000	Change in national populations mid-2000 to mid-2021 (United Nations)
AFRICA without Rwanda	902,500 787,500	1,194,497 1,118,398	+32.4% +42.0%	+ 69.4%
AMERICAS without U.S.A	2,690,300 752,818	3,859,690 1,790,890	+43.5% +137.9%	+ 23.6%
ASIA without China & India	3,023,500 1,324,014	4,184,126 2,015,526	+38.4% +52.2%	+ 25.0%
EUROPE without Russia	2,013,600 953,196	1,470,140 998,650	-27.0% +4.8%	+ 5.7%
OCEANIA	34,400	62,751	+82.4%	+ 37.5%
WORLD	8,664,300	10,771,204	+24.3%	+ 28.2%

*Does not include estimates in respect of the number of prisoners in Eritrea, Somalia and D.P.R.K. (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 slightly less than the estimated increase in the world's general population over the same period (28%). There is considerable variation between and within continents.

The growth in the African prison population (32%) is much less than that in the continent's general population (69%). However, this discrepancy is heavily influenced by the figures for Rwanda. Rwanda's prison population is still inflated by the those detained in connection with the genocide in 1994, but many of these prisoners have been released since 2000. Excluding the Rwandan numbers, the prison population in Africa has increased by 42% since 2000.

The growth in the prison population in the Americas since 2000 (43%) is greatly influenced by the trend in the United States, whose prison population is by far the largest but has grown much more slowly than those of many other countries in the continent. Without the figures for the United States, the prison population in the Americas has increased by 138% since 2000: the increase being 77% for central America and 200% for south America.

Prison population trends since 2000 in Asia have varied greatly between the different parts of the continent: total prisoner numbers in south-eastern Asia and in western Asia (Middle East) rose by 116% and 119% respectively while the total in central Asia fell by 44%. China and India, with their high national populations, strongly influence the overall Asian prison population level, but show contrasting trends: the total prison population in China rose by 18%, and in India by 76%. Excluding these two countries, the Asian prison population rose by 52%.

Europe is the only continent that has seen a fall in its total prison population 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 56%. Excluding the Russian Federation, the prison population in Europe has risen by 5% since 2000. Russia is not the only part of Europe that has seen a large fall in its prison population: prisoner numbers in central and eastern Europe (excluding Russia) have fallen by 49% since 2000. By contrast, there has been growth in the other regions of Europe: 2% in western Europe, 3% in northern Europe and 19% in southern Europe.

Oceania's total prison population has grown at a much higher rate than that of 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 47%.