

Introduction

This fourteenth 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 pretrial detainees/remand prisoners and those who have been convicted and sentenced. The information is the latest available at the beginning of April 2024.

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 fifth edition of which was published in October 2022) 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 ICPR makes continual efforts 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.

1 Helen Fair is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (ICPR) and a researcher on the World Prison Brief, a comprehensive online database on the prison systems of the world, which can be accessed free of charge at www.prisonstudies.org

2 Roy Walmsley is Honorary Senior Research Fellow at ICPR in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Birkbeck. He founded the World Prison Brief and the World Prison Population List, along with the complementary lists on female imprisonment and pre-trial/remand imprisonment.

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

- ▶ This report shows that more than 10.99 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 10.99 million and may well be in excess of 11.5 million.
- ▶ There are nearly 1.8 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), 840,000 in Brazil, 573,000 in India, 433,000 in the Russian Federation, 314,000 in Turkey, 274,000 in Thailand, 265,000 in Indonesia, 233,000 in Mexico, 189,000 in Iran, and 181,000 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 El Salvador (1,086 per 100,000), followed by Cuba (794), Rwanda (637), Turkmenistan (576), American Samoa (538), the United States (531), Tonga (516), Panama (499), Guam (475), Palau (428), Uruguay (424), Bahamas (409) Antigua and Barbuda (400), Thailand (391) and Brazil (390).
- ▶ However, just under half of all countries and territories (49%) 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 50 whereas for southern African countries it is 243;
 - in the Americas the median rate for north American countries is 220.5 whereas for central American countries it is 310.5;
 - in Asia the median rate for countries in southern Asia (mainly the Indian sub-continent) is 90 whereas for the countries of south-eastern Asia it is 166.
 - 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 267.
 - in Oceania the median rate is 184.5.
- ▶ Since about the year 2000 the world prison population total has grown by 27%, which is slightly less than the estimated increase in the world's general population over the same period (31%). There are considerable differences between the continents, and variation within continents. The total prison population in Oceania has increased by 84%, that in the Americas by 39%, that in Asia by 43% and that in Africa by 53%; in Europe, by contrast, the total prison population has decreased by 26%. The European figure reflects large falls in prison populations in Russia (59%) and also in central and eastern Europe (48%); the prison population in Europe other than Russia has increased by 12%. Particularly large rises have been recorded in south America (224%) and western Asia (141%).

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	94,749	9.21	43.74m	217	2000 2010 2015 2019	33,992 58,000 62,150 65,000	108 161 155 153
Egypt	c. 120,000	.22	103.53m	c. 116	2001 2011 2016 2020	56,587 c. 66,000 c. 106,000 c. 114,000	84 c. 83 c. 116 c. 114
Libya	19,103	5.5.23	7.11m	269	2004 2010 2014 2017	9,763 13,242 6,187 c. 9,100	178 220 99 c. 139
Morocco	103,302	10.23	38.31m	270	2000 2010 2015 2019	54,288 64,877 74,039 86,384	187 201 214 238
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	23.9.21	11.96m	196	2004 2009 2013 2017	c. 26,000 26,319 25,000 20,755	c. 261 250 226 180
Western Africa							
Benin	14,190	14.12.21	12.81m	111	2000 2010 2015 2019	4,961 6,422 6,671 9,792	71 68 61 80
Burkina Faso	8,800	31.12.22	22.41m	39	2000 2010 2015 2020	2,204 5,198 7,544 7,401	19 33 41 35
Cape Verde	2,100	9.23	574,000	366	1999 2010 2013 2018	755 1,226 1,428 1,549	172 251 286 296
Cote d'Ivoire	26,940	3.4.23	28.27m	95	2002 2008 2015 2020	10,355 11,143 12,147 21,430	62 61 52 82
Gambia	543	30.4.21	2.48m	22	1999 2009 2014 2019	478 780 1,121 686	40 44 55 29
Ghana	14,991	18.3.24	33.55m	45	2000 2010 2015 2019	9,507 13,507 14,355 15,203	51 56 53 51
Guinea (Republic of)	4,375	10.19	12.88m	34	2002 2007 2012 2016	3,070 2,539 c. 2,600 c. 2,900	36 26 c. 24 c. 24
Guinea Bissau	596	.17	1.93m	31	2014	526	29
Liberia	c. 3,000	4.23	5.41m	c. 55	2007 2011 2015 2019	1,022 1,601 2,203 2,700	29 39 49 54
Mali	8,670	6.22	21.45m	40	2002 2009 2014 2019	4,040 6,700 5,209 7,183	38 49 33 36
Mauritania	2,826	16.8.22	4.92m	57	2001 2010 2015 2019	1,413 1,700 1,873 2,462	50 47 46 55
Niger	10,179	31.12.21	25.61m	40	2002 2010 2015 2019	c. 6,000 5,337 10,383 9,187	c. 51 33 53 39

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Nigeria	77,934	1.4.24	226.33m	34	2000	44,450	36
					2010	46,586	29
					2015	57,313	32
					2019	74,195	37
Senegal	13,185	4.9.23	19.08m	69	2000	4,894	51
					2010	7,300	59
					2014	8,630	58
					2019	11,547	68
Sierra Leone	4,801	8.22	8.40m	57	2004	c. 1,400	c. 26
					2010	2,237	34
					2015	3,488	48
					2019	4,283	54
Togo	4,990	30.8.21	8.51m	59	2003	3,200	61
					2010	4,116	64
					2015	4,427	60
					2019	5,277	65
Central Africa							
Angola	24,966	12.22	31.48m	79	2001	4,000	26
					2005	c. 8,300	c. 46
					2011	19,898	90
					2016	24,000	93
Cameroon	32,003	6.22	27.56m	116	2002	20,000	119
					2009	23,368	115
					2014	25,908	112
					2019	30,606	118
Central African Republic	1,990	8.22	5.03m	40	2005	c. 1,000	c. 25
					2010	1,320	c. 29
					2015	764	17
					2019	1,023	21
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	44,536	12.22	96.58m	46	2004	c. 30,000	c. 58
					2010	c. 22,000	c. 35
					2015	c. 20,550	c. 29
Equatorial Guinea	c. 500	.15	799,000	c. 63	not available		
Gabon	5,226	8.21	2.29m	228	2006	c. 2,750	c. 195
					2013	c. 3,500	c. 210
					2018	4,476	241
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	8,400	8.21	14.52m	58	2011	c. 8,000	c. 77
					2015	6,504	52
					2019	c. 7,000	c. 50
Eastern Africa							
Burundi	13,511	29.2.24	13.25m	102	2001	9,013	130
					2010	9,481	109
					2015	8,689	85
					2020	12,761	106
Comoros	422	.23	927,000	46	2009	c. 150	c. 22
					2013	206	28
					2017	191	23
					2020	322	37
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
					2013-14	113,727	127
Kenya	58,887	5.12.22	55.25m	107	2000	40,010	129
					2010	48,153	118
					2015	54,631	119
					2019	53,348	105

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 1 (continued)

AFRICA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Malawi	16,366	10.22	21.41m	76	2000 2010 2015 2019	7,728 11,672 12,129 14,060	69 78 70 71
Mauritius	2,522	29.1.24	1.28m	197	2000 2010 2015 2019	1,635 2,449 2,072 2,889	137 196 164 227
Mozambique	23,098	7.23	34.62m	67	1999 2010 2015 2019	8,812 15,303 15,203 19,784	49 62 54 63
Rwanda	89,034*	8.23	13.97m	637*	2000 2010 2015 2019	c. 115,000* 55,000* 54,144* 70,152*	c. 1,369* 547* 477* 559*
Seychelles	420	31.12.23	120,580	348	2000 2010 2015 2019	c. 166 415 752 392	c. 205 462 805 399
Tanzania	32,671	3.22	65.49m	50	2000 2011 2015 2019	45,611 38,353 34,404 35,803	135 81 64 59
Uganda	75,764	9.23	50.62m	150	2000 2010 2015 2019	c. 21,700 30,312 45,527 60,086	c. 92 91 115 133
Zambia	25,372	1.24	20.32m	125	2000 2010 2015 2019	11,999 16,666 18,560 22,823	116 128 115 123
Zimbabwe	21,619	30.9.23	15.65m	138	2000 2010 2015 2020	20,567 13,361 18,857 22,000	164 96 138 149
Mayotte (France)	674	1.1.24	296,500	227	1998 2010 2015 2019	123 220 177 350	88 107 73 131
Reunion (France)	1,407	1.1.24	917,500	153	2001 2011 2015 2019	1,079 1,078 1,046 1,073	144 129 121 120
Southern Africa							
Botswana	3,971	15.12.22	2.46m	161	2000 2010 2015 2019	6,742 c. 5,063 4,108 c. 4,000	381 c. 256 194 c. 174
Lesotho	2,216	.19	2.13m	104	2000 2005 2010 2014	2,908 2,712 2,498 2,073	143 136 125 102
Namibia	c. 8,900	.21/22	2.80m	c. 318	2000 2010 2015 2019	4,883 4,251 3,560 c. 4,200	254 191 145 c. 157
South Africa	157,056	31.3.23	60.94m	258	2000 2010 2015 2019	171,462 163,312 159,241 162,875	394 328 292 278
Swaziland/eSwatini	3,405	9.22	1.40m	243	2000 2011 2015 2019	2,745 3,764 3,610 3,776	257 311 282 278

* 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 (fourteenth edition)

Table 2

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Northern America							
Canada	35,485	2022-23	39.22m	90	2000-01 2010-11 2015-16 2019-20	35,533 39,916 41,169 38,590	115 117 115 102
U.S.A.	1,767,200	.21	332.70m	531	2000 2010 2015 2019	1,937,482 2,270,142 2,166,600 2,068,800	683 731 672 629
Bermuda (UK)	124	.21	62,000	200	2000 2010 2015 2019	326 283 209 175	517 435 327 278
Greenland (Denmark)	136	.21	56,500	241	2000 2010 2015 2019	88 171 126 126	157 302 225 225
Central America							
Belize	1,199	31.12.22	415,500	289	2000 2010 2015 2019	765 1,420 1,443 1,150	310 441 396 296
Costa Rica	17,829	31.12.22	5.20m	343	2000 2010 2015 2019	7,575 12,110 19,003 20,257	193 259 392 401
El Salvador	c. 71,000	5.22	6.54m	c. 1,086	2000 2010 2015 2019	7,754 24,662 32,645 38,114	132 399 516 590
Guatemala	23,361	27.11.23	19.04m	123	2000 2010 2015 2019	6,974 11,148 19,834 25,303	62 78 121 143
Honduras	19,619	13.10.22	10.27m	191	2000 2010 2015 2019	11,500 11,846 15,914 21,629	175 141 174 221
Mexico	232,684	29.2.24	133.66m	174	2000 2010 2015 2019	154,765 219,027 247,488 200,936	156 191 202 157
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	22,239	31.3.23	4.46m	499	2000 2010 2015 2019	8,652 12,293 16,485 17,733	283 336 414 416
Caribbean							
Antigua & Barbuda	c. 400	5.23	100,000	c. 400	2000 2010 2015 2019	c. 170 295 370 287	c. 218 339 401 302
Bahamas	1,617	12.20	395,000	409	2000 2010 2014 2017	c. 1,400 1,322 1,396 1,746	c. 470 367 363 455
Barbados	743	12.22	288,000	258	2000 2010 2015 2018	1,411 910 927 850	527 322 325 296
Cuba	90,000	1.20	11.33m	794	2003 2006 2012	c. 55,000 c. 60,000 57,337	c. 487 c. 531 510

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 2 (continued)

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Dominica	261	11.23	75,000	348	1999 2010 2015 2018	298 295 219 194	426 415 300 262
Dominican Republic	26,396	31.1.24	11.21m	235	2000 2010 2015 2019	14,995 20,743 24,617 26,694	173 208 232 242
Grenada	379	10.22	113,000	335	2002 2010 2015 2019	297 432 502 463	291 408 456 413
Haiti	11,778	4.1.24	11.89m	99	2000 2010 2015 2019	4,219 5,331 11,046 10,905	49 53 102 97
Jamaica	3,559	2.7.22	2.85m	125	2003 2011 2015 2018	4,744 4,457 3,860 3,884	178 161 138 137
St Kitts & Nevis	c. 160	4.22	54,000	c. 296	1999 2010 2014 2019	135 256 334 c. 198	300 522 655 c. 374
St Lucia	572	9.23	186,000	308	1999 2010 2015 2019	373 526 628 503	241 301 351 274
St Vincent & the Grenadines	392	31.7.23	111,000	353	1999 2010 2014 2018	405 413 412 469	375 379 378 426
Trinidad & Tobago	3,802	4.21	1.38m	276	2000 2010 2014 2018	4,633 3,766 3,481 3,999	365 283 258 292
Anguilla (UK)	36	5.22	15,000	240	2004 2010 2014 2018	41 58 60 55	342 414 414 367
Aruba (Netherlands)	311	.22	108,000	288	2005 2011 2014 2020	231 246 170 254	232 241 165 238
Cayman Is (UK)	226	31.12.22	81,500	277	2000 2010 2015 2019	227 212 190 237	565 382 320 349
Curacao (Netherlands)	429	2.22	164,500	261	1999 2006 2010 2016	434 578 541 377	306 412 365 236
Guadeloupe (France)	871	1.1.24	339,500	218	2001 2011 2015 2019	628 784 907 915	147 174 202 204
Martinique (France)	1,024	1.1.24	373,000	275	2001 2011 2015 2019	608 885 940 827	156 225 244 215
Puerto Rico (USA)	7,176	31.12.21	3.24m	221	2000 2010 2015 2019	14,691 10,878 12,074 8,884	384 294 349 278
Sint Maarten (Netherlands)	87	1.23	44,500	196	2002 2011 2014 2018	129 138 161 62	396 319 347 148
Virgin Islands (UK)	114	.22	31,000	368	1999 2010 2014 2018	43 117 134 143	215 418 462 477

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 2 (continued)

AMERICAS

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Virgin Islands (USA)	359	30.6.21	104,000	345	2000 2010 2013 2019	518 577 571 379	475 544 535 361
South America							
Argentina	117,810	31.12.22	46.32m	254	1999 2010 2015 2019	38,604 65,095 75,769 109,405	105 157 174 241
Bolivia	25,291	2.23	12.09m	209	2000 2010 2015 2019	8,151 9,406 13,672 18,208	95 93 125 157
Brazil	839,672	6.22	215.30m	390	2000 2010 2015 2019	232,755 496,251 698,618 755,274	132 249 335 357
Chile	54,462	29.2.24	18.97m	287	2000 2010 2015 2019	33,050 54,628 42,954 43,267	215 320 240 235
Colombia	101,622	31.12.23	51.41m	198	2000 2010 2015 2019	51,518 84,444 120,444 122,679	128 183 249 245
Ecuador	30,804	29.12.23	18.43m	167	2000 2010 2015 2019	8,029 11,800 28,379 39,853	64 79 174 229
Guyana	2,156	1.23	796,000	271	2001 2010 2015 2019	1,507 2,160 1,998 2,035	205 286 260 259
Paraguay	17,006	31.5.23	7.31m	233	2000 2010 2015 2019	3,219 6,197 12,423 15,477	60 99 186 220
Peru	94,502	31.10.23	34.06m	277	2000 2010 2015 2019	27,734 45,464 75,003 94,235	107 155 239 286
Suriname	c. 1,000	11.14	540,000	c. 185	2000 2005 2009 2012	786 820 915 994	163 167 177 188
Uruguay	14,965	7.23	3.53m	424	2000 2010 2015 2019	4,469 8,700 9,996 11,380	135 257 291 326
Venezuela	67,200	3.22	33.84m	199	2000 2010 2015 2019	14,196 40,825 49,664 43,992	58 140 160 134
French Guiana/ Guyane (France)	1,040	1.1.24	326,000	319	2001 2010 2015 2019	423 715 701 726	247 306 259 243

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

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	73,715	23.5.21	41.08m	179	2004 2010 2015 2019	c. 7,000 39,130 45,000 57,000	c. 26 125 127 145
Israel	19,756	31.12.23	9.12m	217	2000 2010 2015 2018	9,421 20,164 21,072 19,376	158 270 265 231
Jordan	19,140	1.22	10.37m	185	2001 2010 2015 2019	5,621 8,434 11,489 20,060	107 117 123 198
Kuwait	4,500	11.21	4.35m	103	2000 2010 2015 2019	c. 3,100 4,179 c. 4,000 4,662	c. 162 140 c. 112 117
Lebanon	8,502	8.23	6.57m	129	2000 2010 2015 2019	4,917 5,060 6,502 10,032	129 102 98 146
Oman	1,960	11.15	4.22m	46	2000 2002 2013	2,020 1,403 1,300	92 61 36
Qatar	1,644	.19	2.83m	58	2000 2004 2008 2012	570 465 551 c. 1,150	96 60 38 c. 56
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	35,228	1.7.22	19.13m	184	2000 2010 2015 2020	78,029 63,643 47,939 29,403	520 393 272 157
Kyrgyzstan	7,633	1.7.22	6.54m	117	2000 2010 2015 2019	20,000 9,923 9,581 10,142	402 183 163 161
Tajikistan	14,000	1.7.22	9.96m	141	2001 2006 2010 2020	c. 11,000 10,804 9,317 11,345	c. 175 157 123 118
Turkmenistan	c. 35,000	.21	6.08m	c. 576	2000 2010 2013 2017	c. 22,000 c. 26,500 30,568 30,452	c. 488 c. 529 583 527
Uzbekistan	29,000	1.22	34.18m	85	2000 2003 2009 2014	63,900 48,000 c. 42,000 c. 43,900	258 186 c. 150 c. 144

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 3 (continued)

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Southern Asia							
Afghanistan	c. 19,000	1.24	42.14m	c. 45	2004 2010 2015 2018	5,262 18,283 27,527 30,748	22 65 85 87
Bangladesh	84,851	9.12.23	170.09m	50	2000 2010 2015 2020	62,669 69,650 69,719 88,084	47 46 43 52
Bhutan	1,119	12.14	772,000	145	2011	1,001	137
India	573,220	31.12.22	1,413b	41	2000 2010 2015 2019	272,079 368,998 419,623 478,600	26 30 32 35
Iran	189,000	1.1.20	83.02m	228	2001 2010 2014 2018	158,000 204,365 225,624 240,000	237 275 287 294
Maldives	c. 1,700	10.20	542,000	314	2000 2005 2010 2015	2,166 983 830 1,513	776 307 227 330
Nepal	27,550	12.22	30.50m	90	2000 2010 2015 2019	6,000 10,739 17,486 24,704	25 40 61 82
Pakistan	87,712	8.22	230.02m	38	2000 2010 2015 2019	78,938 75,586 80,169 80,145	56 42 40 37
Sri Lanka	31,164	4.4.24	21.70m	144	2000 2010 2015 2019	16,412 26,984 17,996 24,446	87 130 86 115
South-Eastern Asia							
Brunei Darussalam	841	28.11.20	452,000	186	2000 2005 2010 2015	333 492 379 565	101 136 96 134
Cambodia	45,122	12.3.24	17.54m	257	2000 2010 2015 2019	5,502 14,043 17,522 36,600	45 97 111 220
Indonesia	265,037	29.3.24	283.83m	93	2000 2010 2015 2019	53,399 117,863 176,754 265,159	26 49 68 98
Laos	11,885	6.18	7.15m	166	2004 2011 2016	4,020 c. 6,000 c. 9,000	70 c. 94 c. 130
Malaysia	72,437	2.2.23	33.40m	217	2000 2010 2015 2019	27,358 38,387 51,184 72,836	116 137 169 228
Myanmar	100,324	5.20	54.75m	183	2001 2007 2012 2017	31,648 65,063 c. 65,000 79,668	68 132 c. 127 150
Philippines	180,826	9.22	111.86m	162	2000 2010 2015 2019	79,299 95,390 139,469 215,000	102 103 138 200
Singapore	9,536	31.12.22	6.13m	156	2000 2010 2015 2019	13,791 12,852 12,394 11,619	352 250 219 195

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 3 (continued)

ASIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Thailand	274,277	12.23	70.22m	391	2000 2010 2015 2019	223,406 210,855 310,399 363,825	354 313 452 525
Timor-Leste	763	3.21	1.40m	55	2003 2011 2015 2019	c. 320 260 581 715	c. 35 23 47 53
Vietnam	133,986	6.22	98.92m	135	1998 2010 2015 2019	55,000 108,557 136,245 125,697	69 122 146 130
Eastern Asia							
China	1,690,000*	31.12.18	1,418b	119*	2000 2005 2010 2015	1,427,407* 1,565,771* 1,656,773* 1,613,000*	111* 118* 121* 115*
Japan	40,881	mid-23	124.56m	33	2000 2010 2015 2018	61,242 72,975 58,497 50,578	48 57 46 40
Korea (Republic of)	52,940	31.12.22	51.34m	103	2000 2010 2015 2019	62,959 47,471 53,892 54,624	136 97 107 107
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	54,941	29.2.24	23.48m	234	2000 2010 2015 2019	56,676 65,311 62,899 60,956	254 282 268 258
Hong Kong (China)	7,751	31.12.22	7.33m	106	2000 2010 2015 2019	12,017 9,988 8,438 7,023	180 142 115 94
Macau (China)	1,339	30.6.23	678,800	197	2000 2010 2015 2019	847 929 1,280 1,636	196 172 198 241

* 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	4,106	1.1.23	5.93m	69	2000 2010 2015 2019	3,382 3,965 3,422 3,974	63 71 60 68
Estonia	1,805	3.3.24	1.40m	129	2000 2010 2015 2020	4,712 3,555 2,921 2,450	343 267 222 184
Finland	2,839	1.1.23	5.56m	51	2000 2010 2015 2019	2,855 3,291 3,068 2,952	55 61 56 53
Iceland	140	1.1.23	387,750	36	2000 2010 2015 2020	78 165 146 160	28 52 44 44

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Ireland	4,874	29.3.24	5.38m	91	2000	2,948	77
					2010	4,290	94
					2015	3,722	79
					2019	3,971	81
Latvia	3,229	1.1.23	1.88m	172	2000	8,815	370
					2010	7,055	333
					2015	4,745	239
					2020	3,414	179
Lithuania	4,551	1.1.24	2.91m	156	2000	14,412	410
					2010	8,655	275
					2015	8,636	296
					2020	6,138	220
Norway	3,076	28.2.24	5.54m	56	2000	2,548	57
					2010	3,624	74
					2015	3,746	72
					2019	3,218	60
Sweden	8,635	1.1.23	10.52m	82	2000	5,326	60
					2010	6,902	74
					2015	5,920	60
					2019	6,922	67
UK: England & Wales	87,699	22.3.24	60.30m	145	2000	64,602	124
					2010	84,725	153
					2015	85,626	148
					2019	82,935	140
UK: Northern Ireland	1,887	22.3.24	1.93m	98	2000	1,068	64
					2010	1,465	81
					2015	1,661	90
					2019	1,487	79
UK: Scotland	7,977	29.3.24	5.52m	145	2000	5,869	116
					2010	7,806	150
					2015	7,744	144
					2019	8,205	150
Faeroes (Denmark)	12	average 21	53,280	23	2000	9	20
					2010	10	20
					2015	10	19
					2019	9	18
Guernsey (UK)	87	23.2.24	66,300	131	2000	59	94
					2010	75	114
					2015	91	140
					2019	91	140
Isle of Man (UK)	90	3.23	87,000	103	2000	54	70
					2010	97	115
					2015	78	93
					2019	105	123
Jersey (UK)	146	average 20	108,300	135	2000	130	150
					2005	172	190
					2010	177	183
					2015	151	148
Southern Europe							
Albania	5,315	2.24	2.73m	195	2001	3,053	99
					2010	4,750	148
					2015	5,934	205
					2019	5,045	177
Andorra	60	1.1.23	82,000	73	2001	48	72
					2010	61	78
					2015	52	73
					2020	49	63
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Federation	1,813	31.12.19	2.19m	83	2000	1,041	45
					2005	1,435	64
					2010	1,714	77
					2014	1,722	78
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Republika Srpska	524	1.1.23	1.20m	44	2001	849	61
					2010	1,046	75
					2015	877	67
					2019	743	62
Croatia	4,073	1.1.23	3.85m	106	2000	2,027	45
					2010	4,891	110
					2015	3,763	89
					2020	3,533	87
Cyprus*	947	20.6.23	917,500	103	2000	312	45
					2010	900	108
					2015	654	77
					2020	829	93

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Greece	10,526	1.1.23	10.39m	101	2000 2010 2015 2020	7,625 11,364 11,798 10,891	70 102 109 102
Italy	61,049	31.3.24	58.63m	104	2000 2010 2015 2019	53,165 67,961 52,164 60,769	93 112 86 102
Kosovo	1,830	4.23	1.84m	99	2000 2010 2015 2019	227 1,333 1,478 1,806	11 61 84 101
Malta	690	1.24	524,000	132	2001 2010 2015 2019	257 598 569 754	65 144 126 147
Montenegro	1,026	1.1.23	616,700	166	2000 2010 2015 2019	664 1,457 1,131 1,094	110 235 182 176
North Macedonia	2,525	1.1.23	1.83m	138	2000 2010 2015 2020	1,178 2,516 3,498 2,114	59 122 169 102
Portugal	12,272	1.4.24	10.53m	117	2000 2010 2015 2019	12,944 11,613 14,224 12,789	126 110 138 124
San Marino*	3	1.1.23	33,800	9	1999 2010 2015 2020	2 0 2 2	- - - -
Serbia	10,787	1.1.23	6.66m	162	2000 2010 2015 2019	6,160 11,211 10,067 11,044	82 155 142 159
Slovenia	1,814	2.4.24	2.13m	85	2000 2010 2015 2019	1,148 1,304 1,392 1,446	58 64 68 69
Spain	54,197	1.1.23	48.06m	113	2000 2010 2015 2019	45,309 76,701 65,472 59,398	113 165 141 126
Gibraltar (UK)	92	.21	33,700	273	2000 2010 2015 2018	18 53 53 47	67 180 158 139
Western Europe							
Austria	9,201	1.4.24	9.17m	100	2000 2010 2015 2020	6,862 8,597 8,743 8,471	86 102 101 95
Belgium	12,316	1.3.24	11.89m	104	2000 2010 2015 2019	8,688 10,561 11,041 10,559	85 97 98 92
France*	75,897	1.1.24	68.12m	111	2000 2010 2015 2020	48,049 61,430 61,714 65,628	82 98 96 101
Germany	56,325	31.12.22	84.36m	67	2000 2010 2015 2019	70,252 69,385 61,737 63,146	85 85 75 76
Liechtenstein*	6	1.1.23	39,700	15	1999 2010 2015 2020	24 14 8 12	74 39 21 31
Luxembourg	705	1.1.23	660,800	107	2000 2010 2015 2020	394 690 668 594	90 136 117 95

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

Table 4 (continued)

EUROPE

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Monaco*	27	1.1.23	39,050	69	2000 2010 2015 2020	18 12 28 13	51 34 74 34
Netherlands	11,447	31.1.22	17.59m	65	2000 2010 2015 2019	13,847 15,235 10,274 11,451	87 92 61 66
Switzerland	6,445	31.1.23	8.81m	73	2000 2010 2015 2020	5,760 6,181 6,884 6,897	80 79 83 80
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	6,501	1.1.23	6.45m	101	2000 2010 2015 2020	10,147 9,896 7,870 7,366	124 131 109 106
Czech Republic	19,796	31.3.24	10.94m	181	2000 2010 2015 2019	21,538 21,900 20,866 21,048	210 209 198 197
Hungary	18,270	31.12.23	9.51m	192	2000 2010 2015 2019	15,539 16,328 17,449 16,334	152 163 178 167
Moldova*	6,084	1.1.23	2.58m	236	2000 2010 2015 2020	9,449 6,535 7,317 6,716	260 183 257 254
Poland	74,417	29.2.24	37.40m	199	2000 2010 2015 2019	70,544 80,728 70,836 74,130	184 212 187 195
Romania	23,608	31.10.23	19.06m	124	2000 2010 2015 2019	48,267 28,244 28,334 20,578	215 140 143 106
Slovakia	9,717	1.3.24	5.42m	179	2000 2010 2015 2019	6,941 10,031 9,913 10,555	129 186 183 193
Ukraine*	48,038	1.2.22	39.00m	c. 123	2000 2010 2015 2020	218,800 147,716 73,431 52,863	443 323 c. 180 c. 133
Europe/Asia							
Armenia	2,357	1.1.23	2.98m	79	2000 2010 2015 2020	7,281 4,807 3,880 2,221	236 162 130 75
Azerbaijan	24,698	1.1.23	10.13m	244	2000 2010 2015 2019	23,504 21,971 24,197 20,972	291 241 250 208
Georgia*	10,126	29.2.24	3.79m	267	2000 2010 2015 2019	8,349 23,684 9,716 9,740	190 530 261 262
Russian Federation	433,006	1.1.23	144.50m	300	2000 2010 2015 2020	1,060,404 864,197 671,649 523,928	729 609 466 363
Turkey	314,375	1.3.24	85.98m	366	2000 2010 2015 2019	49,512 120,814 178,089 291,546	73 164 226 351

World Prison Population List (fourteenth edition)

* 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.

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, 2020 and 2022 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	41,929	30.6.23	26.64m	157	2000 2010 2015 2019	21,714 29,700 36,134 43,032	114 135 152 170
Fiji	2,276	1.24	919,500	248	2000 2010 2015 2020	1,185 1,097 1,591 2,550	146 127 178 276
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	38	mid-23	11,000	345	2003 2005 2010	6 3 20	60 30 200
New Zealand	9,115	31.12.23	5.28m	173	2000 2010 2015 2019	5,720 8,604 8,821 9,969	148 198 192 200
Palau	77	9.21	18,000	428	2001 2010 2015 2019	70 88 72 86	368 489 400 478
Papua New Guinea	5,373	mid-23	9.47m	57	2000 2010 2015 2018	3,531 4,268 4,864 5,192	65 61 60 60
Samoa	358	3.19	200,400	179	2000 2011 2015 2017	173 427 501 400	99 227 257 202
Solomon Islands	c. 500	.19	635,000	c. 79	1999 2010 2015 2017	134 268 271 477	33 51 46 78
Tonga	557	mid-22	108,000	516	2000 2005 2010	106 128 159	108 127 152

Table 5 (continued)

OCEANIA

	Prison population total	Date	Estimated national population	Prison population rate	Trend information		
					year	total	rate
Tuvalu	11	8.14	10,000	110	2000 2005 2010	6 7 8	67 70 80
Vanuatu	195	mid-21	300,000	65	1999 2010 2014 2018	46 187 151 202	25 80 58 72
American Samoa (USA)	301	3.22	56,000	538	2000 2010 2014 2017	140 188 201 193	241 337 365 345
Cook Islands (NZ)	47	4.19	21,000	224	2000 2005 2010 2016	23 27 40 48	128 142 200 229
Fr. Polynesia (France)	544	1.1.24	286,500	190	2001 2012 2015 2019	275 426 456 591	114 156 164 211
Guam (USA)	820	4.23	172,600	475	2000 2010 2015 2019	684 559 756 690	440 352 465 411
New Caledonia (France)	587	1.1.24	295,000	199	2001 2011 2015 2019	329 438 448 535	154 171 166 189
Northern Mariana Is. (USA)	153	31.12.21	56,000	273	2000 2011 2014 2019	97 162 175 175	141 304 319 313

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 5.4.2024)	National populations (at dates of prison population totals)	Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national populations)
AFRICA	1,384,534	1,383.73m	100
AMERICAS	3,730,016	1,045.39m	357
ASIA	4,316,392	4,550.47m	95
EUROPE	1,496,614	847.67m	177
OCEANIA	63,177	44.75m	141
WORLD	10,990,733	7,872.01m	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 5.4.2024)	Change in prison population total since about 2000	Change in national populations mid-2000 to mid-2023 (United Nations)
AFRICA without Rwanda	902,500 787,500	1,384,534 1,295,500	+53.4% +64.5%	+ 77.6%
AMERICAS without U.S.A	2,690,300 752,818	3,730,016 1,962,816	+38.6% +160.7%	+ 25.4%
ASIA without China & India	3,023,500 1,324,014	4,316,392 2,053,172	+42.8% +55.1%	+ 27.0%
EUROPE without Russia	2,013,600 953,196	1,496,614 1,063,608	-25.7% +11.6%	+ 5.7%
OCEANIA	34,400	63,177	+83.7%	+ 40.9%
WORLD	8,664,300	10,990,733	+26.9%	+ 30.7%

*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 27%, which is slightly less than the estimated increase in the world's general population over the same period (31%). There is considerable variation between and within continents.

The growth in the African prison population (53%) is much less than that in the continent's general population (78%). However, this discrepancy is heavily influenced by the figures for Rwanda. Rwanda's prison population is still inflated by the number of those detained in connection with the genocide in 1994, despite many of these prisoners having been released since 2000. Excluding the Rwandan numbers, the prison population in Africa has increased by 65% since 2000.

The growth in the prison population in the Americas since 2000 (39%) 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 161% since 2000: the increase being 101% for central America and 224% 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 117% and 141% respectively while the total in central Asia fell by 38%. China and India, with their large 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 111%. Excluding these two countries, the Asian prison population rose by 55%.

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 59%. Excluding the Russian Federation, the prison population in Europe has risen by 12% 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 48% since 2000. By contrast, there has been growth in the other regions of Europe: 12% in western Europe, 12% in northern Europe and 25% 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 93% since 2000, and New Zealand, whose total has risen by 59%.