

The World Female Imprisonment List shows the number of women and girls held in penal institutions, as pre-trial detainees (remand prisoners) or having been convicted and sentenced, in 187 prison systems in independent countries and dependent territories. It also shows the percentage of women and girls within each national prison population. The information is the latest available at the end of April 2006.

The International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS) published in 2005 the sixth edition of the World Prison Population List and plans to publish the seventh edition before the end of 2006. The World Female Imprisonment List is the first edition of a similar publication focusing specifically on female imprisonment. Both lists complement the information which the ICPS already publishes and updates monthly in the World Prison Brief section of its website (www.prisonstudies.org).

The World Female Imprisonment List has been compiled, like the World Prison Population List, 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 being made to update them and to obtain information on the number of female prisoners in the independent countries and dependent territories on which figures are not currently available; ICPS will welcome the assistance of readers of the List in enhancing its recency and comprehensiveness. Care has been taken to ensure that the information is as accurate as possible; sources are shown. However ICPS 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 the World Female Imprisonment List will be found useful by policy makers, academic criminologists, non-governmental organisations, other criminal justice experts and everyone who is interested in the extent of female imprisonment.

Key points

- ▶ More than half a million women and girls are held in penal institutions throughout the world, either as pre-trial detainees (remand prisoners) or having been convicted and sentenced.
- ▶ About a third of these are in the United States of America (183,400), and a similar number are in China (71,280 plus women and girls in pre-trial detention or 'administrative detention'), the Russian Federation (55,400) and Thailand (28,450). No other country reports a female prison population as high as 15,000, the next highest being in India (13,350), Ukraine (11,830), Brazil (11,000), Vietnam (10,990), Mexico (10,070) and Philippines (6,860). Every other prison system has fewer than 6,000.
- ▶ Female prisoners generally (in about 80% of prison systems) constitute between 2 and 9% of the total prison population. Just twelve systems have a higher percentage than that. The highest is in Hong Kong-China (22%), followed by Myanmar (18%), Thailand (17%), Kuwait (15%), Qatar and Vietnam (both 12%), Ecuador, Netherlands Antilles and Singapore (all 11%), Aruba (Netherlands), Bermuda (UK) and Laos (all 10%) and Macau-China (9.2%). The median level is 4.3%.
- ▶ There are continental variations in the prevalence of women and girls within the total prison population. In African countries they constitute a much smaller percentage of the total (the median is 2.65%) than in the Americas and Asia where the median level is twice as high (5.3% and 5.4% respectively). The median levels in Europe and Oceania are 4.4% and 4.3% respectively.

Table 1: AFRICA

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
Northern Africa				
Algeria	610	31.12.01	1.8%	National prison administration
Egypt	2,213*	31.12.02	4.3%*	United Nations 8th Survey
Libya	387	31.7.04	3.3%	National prison administration
Morocco	1,776	31.12.02	3.3%	Penal Reform International
Sudan	c. 200	3.03	c. 1.7%	National prison administration
Western Africa				
Benin	c. 140	23.8.99	c. 3.6%	National prison administration
Burkina Faso	25	01	1.0%	National prison administration
Cape Verde	38	12.99	5.0%	National prison administration
Cote d'Ivoire	236	8.3.02	2.3%	National prison administration
Gambia	6	6.99	1.2%	Ministry of the Interior
Ghana	257	11.11.05	2.1%	National prison administration
Guinea (Rep. of)	61	mid-02	2.0%	National prison administration
Mali	80	2.02	2.0%	National prison administration
Mauritania	10*	9.03	2.7%*	US State Dept. human rights report
Nigeria	756	29.2.04	1.9%	National prison administration
Senegal	183	31.12.00	3.7%	National prison administration
Togo	64*	12.04	4.0%*	US State Dept. human rights report
Central Africa				
Angola	196	4.4.03	3.3%	National prison administration
Chad	21*	mid-02	2.4%*	National prison administration
Dem. Repub. of Congo	c. 83*	1.04	3.2%*	Criminal justice expert, DR Congo
Sao Tome e Principe	3	4.02	2.3%	National prison administration
Eastern Africa				
Burundi	216	mid-02	2.5%	National prison administration
Kenya	1,254	mid-02	3.6%	National prison administration
Madagascar	650	03	3.4%	Ministry of Justice
Malawi	117	13.9.05	1.2%	National prison administration
Mauritius	137	23.8.05	5.6%	National prison administration
Mozambique	551	31.12.99	6.3%	UN Development Programme
Rwanda	2,925**	mid-02	2.6%	National prison administration
Seychelles	2	03	1.3%	US State Dept. human rights report
Tanzania	1,515	1.12.05	3.3%	National prison administration
Uganda	901	30.6.05	3.4%	National prison administration
Zambia	380	2.12.05	2.6%	National prison administration
Zimbabwe	602	12.12.05	3.3%	National prison administration
Mayotte (Fr)	2	1.4.03	1.2%	Ministry of Justice (France)
Reunion (Fr)	29	1.4.03	2.7%	Ministry of Justice (France)
Southern Africa				
Botswana	306	3.12.04	5.0%	National prison administration
Lesotho	73	18.8.05	2.5%	National prison administration
Namibia	87	31.12.01	1.8%	National prison administration
South Africa	3,219	31.12.05	2.0%	National prison administration
Swaziland	148	31.12.02	4.6%	National prison administration

Figures are not available for 15 African countries.

Northern Africa: Tunisia. **Western Africa:** Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Sierra Leone.

Central Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo (Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon.

Eastern Africa: Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia.

* The asterisked figures for Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritania and Togo relate only to the main prison in the capitals of these countries, and those for Egypt relate only to convicted prisoners.

** The high female prison population in Rwanda is probably a result of the large number of persons held on suspicion of participation in genocide.

Table 2: AMERICAS

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
North America				
Canada	1,589*	2003/04	5.0%*	National prison administration
USA	183,400	30.6.04	8.6%	US Bureau of Justice Statistics
Bermuda (UK)	36	11.11.03	10.5%	National prison administration
Caribbean				
Antigua & Barbuda	5	21.4.06	2.8%	National prison administration
Bahamas	23	10.02	1.8%	National prison administration
Barbados	45	11.11.03	4.5%	National prison administration
Dominica	1	6.10.05	0.3%	National prison administration
Dominican Republic	433	28.4.04	3.1%	National prison administration
Grenada	2	22.2.05	0.8%	National prison administration
Haiti	116	03	3.3%	Ministry of Justice
Jamaica	231	8.12.05	4.8%	National prison administration
St Kitts & Nevis	5	31.12.05	2.4%	US State Dept. human rights report
St Lucia	8	8.03	1.7%	US State Dept. human rights report
St Vincent & Grenadines	10	19.4.06	2.7%	National prison administration
Trinidad & Tobago	108	1.5.06	2.8%	National prison administration
Aruba (Neth)	23	21.1.05	10.0%	National prison administration
Cayman Is (UK)	16	17.12.04	8.6%	National prison administration
Guadeloupe (Fr)	9	1.4.03	1.3%	Ministry of Justice (France)
Martinique (Fr)	12	1.4.03	1.9%	Ministry of Justice (France)
Netherlands Antilles (Neth)	75*	2.02	11.1%*	Council of Europe
Central America				
Belize	29	24.11.05	2.3%	National prison administration
Costa Rica	454	12.03	6.8%	Ministry of Justice
El Salvador	629	31.12.03	5.5%	Inter'l Corrections & Prisons Assoc.
Guatemala	381	29.11.05	5.3%	National prison administration
Honduras	395	9.12.05	3.4%	National prison administration
Mexico	10,068	4.05	5.0%	National prison administration
Nicaragua	365	6.05	6.5%	National prison administration
Panama	811	10.10.05	7.0%	National prison administration
South America				
Argentina	2,402	31.12.02	5.3%	Ministry of Justice
Bolivia	539	30.11.05	7.0%	National prison administration
Brazil	11,000	6.04	3.3%	National prison administration
Chile	c. 1,990	1.02	6.3%	National prison administration
Colombia	4,656	10.04	6.8%	National prison administration
Ecuador	1,307	1.12.05	10.7%	National prison administration
Guyana	14	31.12.05	0.9%	National prison administration
Paraguay	207	99	5.1%	UN Latin American Institute
Peru	2,363	11.05	7.0%	National prison administration
Suriname	42*	1.7.00	5.9%*	United Nations 7 th Survey
Uruguay	c. 240	8.99	6.0%	Non-governmental organisation
Venezuela	1,408	8.7.03	6.6%	National prison administration
Fr. Guiana/ Guyane (Fr)	34	1.4.03	5.8%	Ministry of Justice (France)

Figures are not available for one independent country and four dependencies, namely Cuba, Greenland (Denmark), Puerto Rico (US), Virgin Is. (UK) and Virgin Is. (US).

* The asterisked figures for Canada relate only to adult prisoners, those for Suriname only to certain convicted prisoners and those for Netherlands Antilles only to two prisons, Bon Futuro and Pointe Blanche, which hold some 85% of the prison population.

Table 3: ASIA

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
Western Asia				
Israel	311	6.9.04	2.3%	National prison administration
Jordan	51*	31.12.02	2.1%*	United Nations 8 th Survey
Kuwait	550	03	14.9%	US State Dept. human rights report
Lebanon	207	12.11.04	3.9%	National prison administration
Oman	101	00	5.0%	United Nations 7 th Survey
Qatar	67	00	11.8%	United Nations 7 th Survey
Saudi Arabia	1,639	02	5.7%	United Nations 8 th Survey
Central Asia				
Kazakhstan	2,870	12.1.06	5.4%	Penal Reform International
Kyrgyzstan	700	30.1.06	4.4%	Penal Reform International
Tajikistan	511	30.1.06	4.7%	Penal Reform International
South Central Asia				
Bangladesh	2,043	5.04	2.8%	National prison administration
India	13,355	30.6.04	4.0%	National Human R'ts Commission
Iran	c. 4,985	11.05	3.5%	National prison administration
Nepal	218*	02	8.3%*	Penal Reform International
Pakistan	1,323	05	1.5%	Human R'ts Commission, Pakistan
Sri Lanka	906	mid-05	3.8%	National prison administration
South Eastern Asia				
Brunei Darussalam	44	23.11.05	8.3%	National prison administration
Cambodia	500	mid-05	6.1%	National prison administration
Indonesia	4,656	mid-05	4.7%	National prison administration
Laos	421	mid-04	10.5%	National prison administration
Malaysia	2,322	mid-05	6.5%	National prison administration
Myanmar	5,842	31.12.02	17.8%	National prison administration
Philippines	6,856	05	7.6%	National prison administrations
Singapore	1,649	30.6.05	11.0%	National prison administration
Thailand	28,452	mid-05	17.2%	National prison administration
Timor-Leste	1	03	0.3%	UN Human Rights Commissioner
Vietnam	10,990*	mid-05	12.4%*	National prison administration
Eastern Asia				
China	71,286**	12.03	4.6%	National prison administration
Japan	4,545	1.1.05	5.9%	National prison administration
Korea (Rep of)	2,413	31.1.06	5.3%	National prison administration
Mongolia	308	mid-05	4.4%	National prison administration
Hong Kong (China)	2,708	31.10.05	22.1%	National prison administration
Macau (China)	82	mid-05	9.2%	National prison administration

Figures are not available for twelve Asian countries.

Western Asia: Bahrain, Iraq, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Central Asia: Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

South Central Asia: Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldive Is.

Eastern Asia: Democratic People's Republic of North Korea and Taiwan.

* The asterisked figures for Nepal and Vietnam relate only to convicted prisoners; those for Jordan relate only to convicted adults.

** The total for China relates only to convicted prisoners. Figures are not available for the number of female prisoners held in pre-trial detention or administrative detention.

Table 4: EUROPE

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
Northern Europe				
Denmark	175	5.10.04	4.6%	National prison administration
Estonia	174	31.10.05	3.9%	National prison administration
Finland	249	1.4.06	6.3%	Ministry of Justice
Iceland	7	1.9.04	6.1%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
Ireland	101	30.9.04	3.2%	National prison administration
Latvia	422	1.10.05	5.8%	National prison administration
Lithuania	260	1.11.05	3.3%	National prison administration
Norway	165	30.9.05	5.2%	National prison administration
Sweden	368	1.10.05	5.2%	National prison administration
UK: England and Wales	4,392	28.4.06	5.7%	National prison administration
UK: Northern Ireland	32	24.4.06	2.3%	National prison administration
UK: Scotland	325	21.4.06	4.8%	National prison administration
Faeroe Is. (Denmark)	0	4.10.05	0%	National prison administration
Guernsey (UK)	8	2.12.04	7.5%	National prison administration
I. of Man (UK)	4	24.11.04	6.5%	National prison administration
Jersey (UK)	13	26.11.04	7.7%	National prison administration
Southern Europe				
Albania	100	2.11.05	2.9%	National prison administration
Andorra	4	1.9.02	7.3%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
<i>Bosnia & Herzegovina</i>				
– Federation	38	31.1.06	2.5%	Ministry of Justice
– Republika Srpska	14	31.12.05	1.5%	Ministry of Justice
Croatia	159	31.10.05	4.4%	National prison administration
Cyprus	16	11.4.06	2.8%	National prison administration
Greece	518	16.12.04	5.9%	Ministry of Justice
Italy	2,632	31.12.04	4.7%	National prison administration
Macedonia	33	1.1.06	1.6%	National prison administration
Malta	11	1.9.02	3.9%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
Portugal	914	15.4.06	7.0%	National prison administration
San Marino	0	1.9.03	0%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
<i>Serbia & Montenegro</i>				
– Serbia	231	6.05	3.0%	National prison administration
– Montenegro	18	25.4.02	2.5%	National prison administration
– Kosovo	25	27.7.03	2.1%	UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)
Slovenia	46	24.2.05	4.1%	National prison administration
Spain	4,964	21.4.06	7.9%	National prison administration
Gibraltar (UK)	0	4.11.05	0%	National prison administration
Western Europe				
Austria	470	1.11.05	5.3%	National prison administration
Belgium	406	30.12.04	4.4%	National prison administration
France	1,958	1.9.05	3.7%	National prison administration
Germany	4,037	31.3.05	5.0%	Federal Ministry of Justice
Liechtenstein	0	1.9.02	0%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
Luxembourg	29	16.2.05	4.4%	National prison administration
Netherlands	1,767	1.7.04	8.8%	National prison administration
Switzerland	332	7.9.05	5.4%	National prison administration
Europe/Asia				
Armenia	82	1.11.05	2.8%	National prison administration
Azerbaijan	262	1.9.04	1.4%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
Georgia	211	8.6.05	2.4%	National prison administration
Russian Federation	55,400	1.4.06	6.5%	National prison administration
Turkey	1,775	31.10.05	3.3%	National prison administration

Table 4: EUROPE (continued)

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
Central and Eastern Europe				
Belarus	3,098	1.1.06	7.5%	National prison administration
Bulgaria	390	1.1.06	3.4%	National prison administration
Czech Rep.	913	31.3.06	4.8%	National prison administration
Hungary	966	1.1.05	5.8%	National prison administration
Moldova	429	1.11.05	4.8%	National prison administration
Poland	2,510	31.3.06	2.9%	National prison administration
Romania	1,735	11.11.05	4.7%	National prison administration
Slovakia	405	26.10.05	4.4%	National prison administration
Ukraine	11,832	1.9.04	6.1%	Council of Europe (SPACE)

Figures are not available for Monaco.

Figures for Cyprus do not include the internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

Figures for France are for metropolitan France, excluding departments and territories in Africa, the Americas and Oceania.

Figures for Moldova do not include the internationally unrecognised Transnistria/Transnistria.

Table 5: OCEANIA

	Female prison population (number of women and girls in penal institutions)	Date	Female prisoners – percentage of the total prison population	Source of female prison population total
Australia	1,734	30.6.05	6.8%	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Fiji	23	mid-05	2.1%	National prison administration
Kiribati	1	mid-05	1.4%	National prison administration
Marshall Is.	2	5.05	4.7%	National prison administration
Nauru	0	30.4.05	0%	National prison administration
New Zealand	435	30.6.05	6.1%	National prison administration
Palau	8	30.4.05	8.6%	National prison administration
Papua New Guinea	201	30.4.05	5.0%	National prison administration
Samoa	20	30.4.05	9.0%	National prison administration
Solomon Is.	2	30.11.05	0.7%	National prison administration
Tonga	7	30.4.05	5.5%	National prison administration
Tuvalu	0	19.12.05	0%	National prison administration
Vanuatu	6	mid-05	4.3%	National prison administration
Cook Is. (NZ)	1	4.05	3.7%	National prison administration
Fr. Polynesia (Fr)	12	1.4.03	4.1%	French Ministry of Justice
Guam (US)	31	29.12.05	6.2%	National prison administration
New Caledonia (Fr)	4	1.4.03	1.3%	French Ministry of Justice

Figures are not available for one independent country in Oceania (the Federated States of Micronesia) and two United States dependencies (American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands).

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