

## world Female Imprisonment List

(Women and girls in penal institutions, including pre-trial detainees/remand prisoners)

**Roy Walmsley** 

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	<b>756</b>	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
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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	<b>650</b>	03	3.4%	Ministry of Justice
Malawi	117	13.9.05	<b>1.2</b> %	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	<b>73</b>	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
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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.

<sup>\*</sup> 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.

<sup>\*\*</sup> 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** 

population (number- percentage of of women and girlsfemale prison populationin penal institutions)Datepopulationtotal	
North America	
Canada 1,589* 2003/04 5.0%* National prison administration	า
USA 183,400 30.6.04 8.6% US Bureau of Justice Statisti	
Bermuda (UK) 36 11.11.03 10.5% National prison administration	
Caribbean	
Antigua & Barbuda 5 21.4.06 2.8% National prison administratio	
Bahamas 23 10.02 1.8% National prison administratio	
Barbados 45 11.11.03 4.5% National prison administratio	
Dominica 1 6.10.05 <b>0.3%</b> National prison administration	
Dominican Republic 433 28.4.04 3.1% National prison administratio	
Grenada 2 22.2.05 <b>0.8%</b> National prison administration	า
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	
St Lucia 8 8.03 1.7% US State Dept. human rights	
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	า
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	า
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 <b>365</b> 6.05 <b>6.5%</b> 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	า
Paraguay 99 <b>5.1</b> % UN Latin American Institute	
Peru <b>2,363</b> 11.05 <b>7.0</b> % National prison administration	า
Suriname 42* 1.7.00 5.9%* United Nations 7 <sup>th</sup> Survey	
Uruguay c. 240 8.99 6.0% Non-governmental organisat	
Venezuela <b>1,408</b> 8.7.03 <b>6.6%</b> National prison administration	า
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).

<sup>\*</sup> 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 8th Survey
Kuwait	<b>550</b>	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 7th Survey
Qatar	67	00	11.8%	United Nations 7th Survey
Saudi Arabia	1,639	02	<b>5.7</b> %	United Nations 8th 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	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	3311133	,0	T Grial Flororin international
	2,043	F 04	2.8%	National prison administration
Bangladesh	2,043 13,355	5.04 30.6.04	4.0%	National prison administration National Human R'ts Commission
India	c. 4,985	11.05	3.5%	
Iran	218*	02	8.3%*	National prison administration Penal Reform International
Nepal		02	1.5%	
Pakistan	1,323 906	mid-05	3.8%	Human R'ts Commission, Pakistan
Sri Lanka	900	mia-us	3.0%	National prison administration
South Eastern Asia				
Brunei Darussalam	44	23.11.05	8.3%	National prison administration
Cambodia	<b>500</b>	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.

<sup>\*</sup> The asterisked figures for Nepal and Vietnam relate only to convicted prisoners; those for Jordan relate only to convicted adults.

<sup>\*\*</sup> 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
North on France	<b>,</b>		Population	
Northern Europe	475	E 10.04	4.00/	Nietienel maie en educirietantien
Denmark	175 174	5.10.04	4.6% 3.9%	National prison administration
Estonia	249	31.10.05	<b>6.3</b> %	National prison administration Ministry of Justice
Finland	249 7	1.4.06	6.1%	Council of Europe (SPACE)
Iceland	101	1.9.04	3.2%	National prison administration
Ireland	422	30.9.04		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Latvia	260	1.10.05 1.11.05	5.8% 3.3%	National prison administration
Lithuania	165		5.2%	National prison administration
Norway	368	30.9.05	5.2% 5.2%	National prison administration
Sweden		1.10.05	5.2% 5.7%	National prison administration
UK: England and Wales	4,392	28.4.06		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)
Bosnia & Herzegovina				
<ul><li>Federation</li></ul>	38	31.1.06	2.5%	Ministry of Justice
<ul> <li>Republika Srpska</li> </ul>	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	<b>5.9</b> %	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)
Serbia & Montenegro				
- Serbia	231	6.05	3.0%	National prison administration
<ul><li>Montenegro</li></ul>	18	25.4.02	2.5%	National prison administration
<ul><li>Kosovo</li></ul>	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
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## 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 Eu	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.

## 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	<b>6.2%</b>	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).

Roy Walmsley is an honorary consultant to the United Nations and an Associate of the International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS), King's College, London. At ICPS he is director of World Prison Brief Online, a comprehensive database of information on the prison systems of the world, which is available free of charge at www.prisonstudies.org



International Centre for Prison Studies King's College London - School of Law 3rd Floor 26-29 Drury Lane London WC2B 5RL

Tel: 00 44 (0)20 7848 1922 Fax: 00 44 (0)20 7848 1901 Website: www.prisonstudies.org

Email: icps@kcl.ac.uk

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 Transdniestria/Transnistria.