

Prisons in Europe 2005-2015

Croatia Country Profile

Marcelo F. Aebi
Léa Berger-Kolopp
Christine Burkhardt
Mélania M. Tiago

Lausanne, 30 June 2018 – Updated on 21 November 2018

This country profile on Croatia is taken from the report *Prisons in Europe 2005-2015* ([link](#)), which contains 51 profiles on the prison populations in the Prison Administrations of the 47 member States of the Council of Europe.

Prisons in Europe 2005- 2015 presents data on prison populations across Europe from 2005 to 2015. It is divided in two volumes: Volume 1 presents country profiles based on several indicators concerning prison populations, and Volume 2 includes all the data used for the report. The report has been prepared by the University of Lausanne and co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Each country profile includes a Table with Key Facts about the country, which are presented in the form of several indicators referring to the latest available year and to the evolution during the latest ten years, as well as the relative position of the country (low, medium or high) for each indicator compared to the 28 member States of the European Union (“EU 28”) and the 47 member States of the Council of Europe (“CoE 47”). The classification in “low”, “medium” and “high” is based on the comparative indicators presented in Part 2 of the study. The country profile is divided in four sections and includes 8 Figures. The four sections are the following:

- Key facts
- The country in brief: This section summarizes the trends shown in the key facts from 2005 to 2014/15. It illustrates which indicators have increased, which have decreased and which have remained stable. The indicator is considered as showing a stable trend if the variation is lower than 5%.
- The country in comparative perspective: This section compares each country to the rest of the countries included in the study.

General comments:

This section includes eight Figures, comments to these Figures and some possible explanations of the observed trends. The eight Figures are numbered from 1 to 8 within each country profile and also include, between brackets, their absolute number from 1 to 408.

The Key facts include indicators of stock and flow. The stock indicators refer to the situation on 1st September 2015. The flow indicators refer to the situation during the year 2014. On the basis of the data included in this study, we have calculated for each indicator the average for the 10 to 11 years under study. This average is presented in the fifth column of the country profiles.

Finally, the last column of the country profiles provides a graphic indicator of the trend observed when one compares the last year of the series (2014 and 2015 respectively) to the first one (2005). The arrows included in this column reflect the evolution of the indicator according to the following table:

↔	+/- 4.9%	stable
↑	+5 to +9%	slight increase
↑↑	+10 to +19%	moderate increase
↑↑↑	+20 to +49%	substantial increase
↑↑↑↑	+50% and more	huge increase
↓	-5 to -9%	slight decrease
↓↓	-10 to -19%	moderate decrease
↓↓↓	-20 to -49%	substantial decrease
↓↓↓↓	-50% and more	huge decrease

COUNTRY PROFILE	CROATIA		TRENDS 2005-2015		
Key Facts					
	2014/15	Comparative		Evolution 2005-2014/15	
		CoE 47	EU 28	Average	% Change
Prison population rate (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants) on 01.09.2015	79.7	Low	Low	98.5	↔
Rate of entries into penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants)	216.3	Medium	Medium	288.1	↓↓↓
Rate of releases from penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants) – Available since 2009	214.0	High	High	257.8*	↓↓↓
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (in months)	5.8**	Medium	Medium	4.3***	↑↑↑↑
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on stock and flow (in months)	4.9	Low	Low	4.2	↑↑↑↑
Prison density on 01.09.2015 (inmates per 100 places)	83.1	Low	Low	120.3	↓↓↓
Median age of the prison population on 01.09.2015 (in years)	36.8	High	High	35.7	↔
Percentage of female inmates (01.09.2015)	4.9	Medium	Low	4.6	↑↑↑
Percentage of foreign inmates (01.09.2015)	5.7	Medium	Low	6.0	↓↓
of which: in pre-trial detention	55.5	High	High	46.4	↑↑
Percentage of non-sentenced inmates (01.09.2015)	23.7	Medium	Medium	26.3	↓↓↓
Rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates in 2014	42.5	High	High	26.7	↓↓↓
Rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates in 2014 (n=0)	0.0	Low	Low	3.2	↓↓↓↓
of which: % in pre-trial detention (n=0) - Available since 2013	0.0	Low	Low	NAP	NAP
Ratio of inmates per staff (number of inmates per 1 staff person)	1.3	Low	Low	1.7	↓↓
Percentage of custodial staff in the total staff	59.5	Medium	Medium	58.3	↑
Total budget spent by the prison administration (in Euro) – Available since 2011	71 427 935	NAP	NAP	70 479 168****	↔
Average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (in Euro) – Available since 2008	7.3	Low	Low	16.2*****	↓↓↓↓

*Average calculated from 2009 to 2014

**Data refers to 2013

*** Average calculated from 2005 to 2013

**** Average calculated from 2011 to 2014

***** Average calculated from 2008 to 2014

Croatia in brief

- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show a *decrease*: rate of entries into penal institutions (-28%), rate of releases from penal institutions (-23%), prison density (-25%), percentage of foreign inmates (-16%), percentage of non-sentenced inmates (-40%), rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates (-21%), percentage of suicides (there were no suicides in 2014), ratio of inmates per staff (-15%), and average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (-83%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show an *increase*: average length of imprisonment based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (+98%), average length of imprisonment based on stock and flow (+57%), percentage of female inmates (+22%), percentage of pre-trial detainees among foreign inmates (+10%), and percentage of custodial staff in the total staff (+5%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators remain *stable*: prison population rate (+2%), median age of the prison population (+3%), and total budget spent by the prison administration (-1%).

Croatia in comparative perspective

- Compared to other European countries, in 2014/15 Croatia presents:
 - **Low:** prison population rate, average length of imprisonment based on stock and flow, prison density, rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates, percentage of suicides in pre-trial detention, ratio of inmates per staff, average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate.
 - **Medium:** rate of entries into penal institutions, average length of imprisonment based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions, percentage of non-sentenced inmates, percentage of custodial staff in the total staff.
 - **High:** rate of releases from penal institutions, median age of the prison population, percentage of foreigners in pre-trial detention, rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates.
- When the percentage of female and the percentage of foreign inmates are calculated, the Croatian percentages are medium compared to the member States of the Council of Europe, but low compared to the member States of the European Union.

General comments

Figure 1 (65)

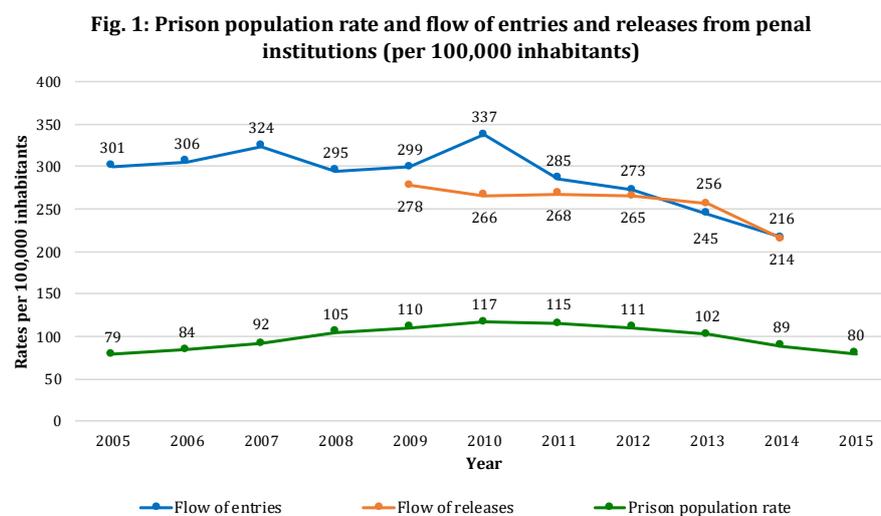


Figure 1 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison population rate of Croatia (stock) increased by 2%. In 2005, the country had 79 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 80. According to the information collected during this research, the decrease observed in the prison population rate since 2011 is due to several factors including an increased application of community sanctions and measures and modifications to the criminal code, in particular the decriminalization of some offences related to the possession of soft drugs.

From 2005 to 2014, the rate of entries (flow of entries) decreased by 28%. In 2005, there were 301 entries into penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 216.

From 2009 to 2014, the rate of releases (flow of releases) decreased by 23%. In 2009, there were 278 releases from penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 214.

The flow of entries and the flow of releases show relatively similar rates and trends.

Figure 2 (66)



Figure 2 shows that, from 2005 to 2013, the average length of imprisonment based on the number of days spent in penal institutions increased by 98%. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 2.9 months, while in 2013 it was 5.8 months.

From 2005 to 2014, when the average length of imprisonment is computed on the basis of the ratio between the stock and the flow, it shows an increase of 57%. According to this indicator, in 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 3.1 months, while in 2014 it was 4.9 months.

Figure 3 (67)

Fig. 3: Prison density per 100 places (Overcrowding)

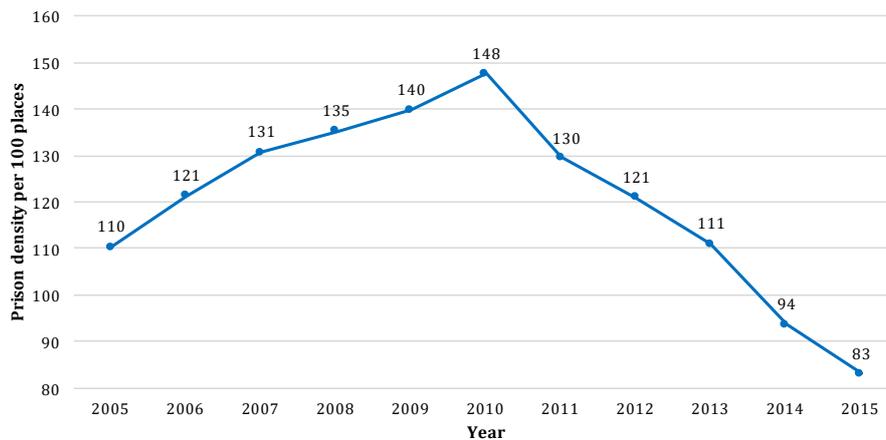


Figure 3 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison density of Croatia decreased by 25%. In 2005, the country had 110 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 83.

Figure 4 (68)

Fig. 4: Total capacity of penal institutions and number of inmates

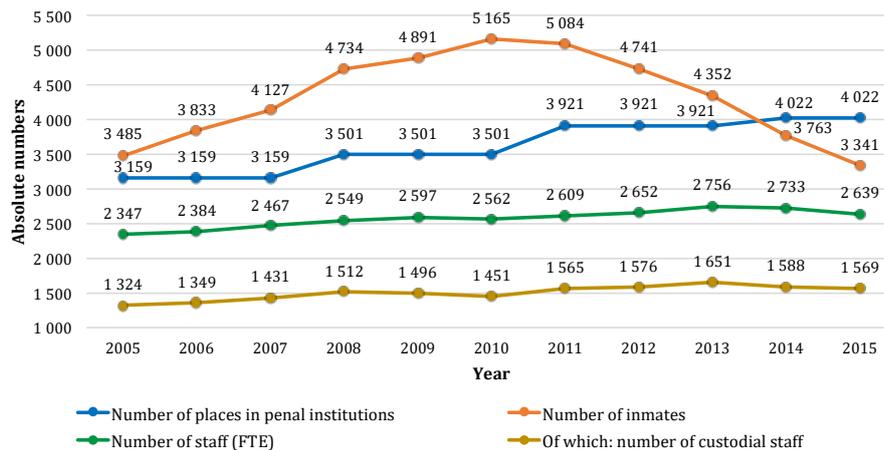


Figure 4 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the total number of places in penal institutions in Croatia increased by 27%. In 2005, the country had 3,159 places, while in 2015 it had 4,022.

During the same period, the total number of inmates decreased by 4%. In 2005, the country had 3,485 inmates, while in 2015 it had 3,341.

From 2005 to 2015, the total number of staff increased by 12%. In 2005, Croatia had in total a staff of 2,347 persons, while in 2015 it had 2,639.

During the same period, the total number of custodial staff increased by 19%. In 2005, the total custodial staff was 1,324 persons, while in 2015 it was 1,569.

Figure 5 (69)



Figure 5 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of female inmates increased by 22%. In 2005, 4.0% of the inmates were females, while in 2015 they were 4.9%.

During the same period, the percentage of foreign inmates decreased by 16%. In 2005, 6.8% of the inmates were foreigners, while in 2015 they represented 5.7% of the total prison population.

Figure 6 (70)

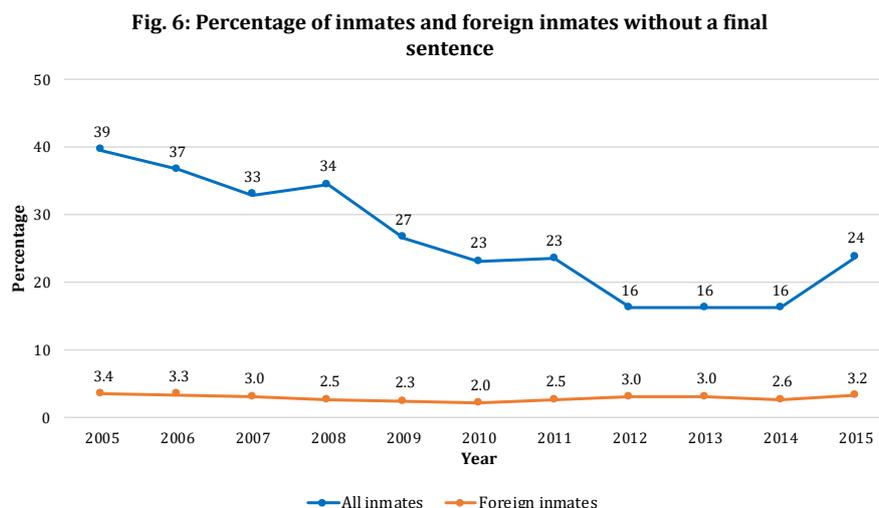


Figure 6 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of inmates without a final sentence decreased by 40%. In 2005, 39% of the inmates did not have a final sentence while, in 2015, inmates without a final sentence represented 24% of all inmates.

During the same period, the percentage of foreigners held in pre-trial detention decreased by 7%. In 2005, they represented 3.4% of the total number of inmates, while in 2015 they represented 3.2% of them.

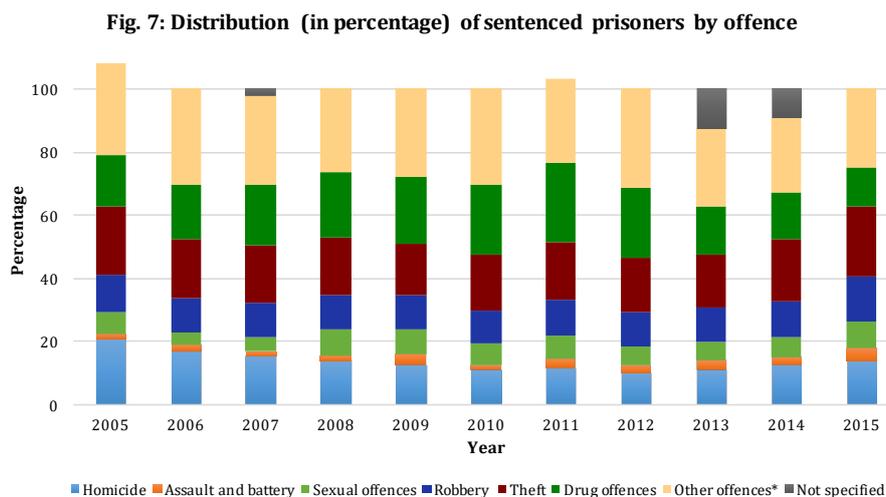
Figure 7¹²³ (71)

Figure 7 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentages of prisoners serving sentences for assault and battery, sexual offences, and robbery have increased; while the percentages of those serving sentences for homicide, drug offences, and other types of offences have decreased. The percentage of those serving sentences for theft remained stable.

Figure 8 (72)

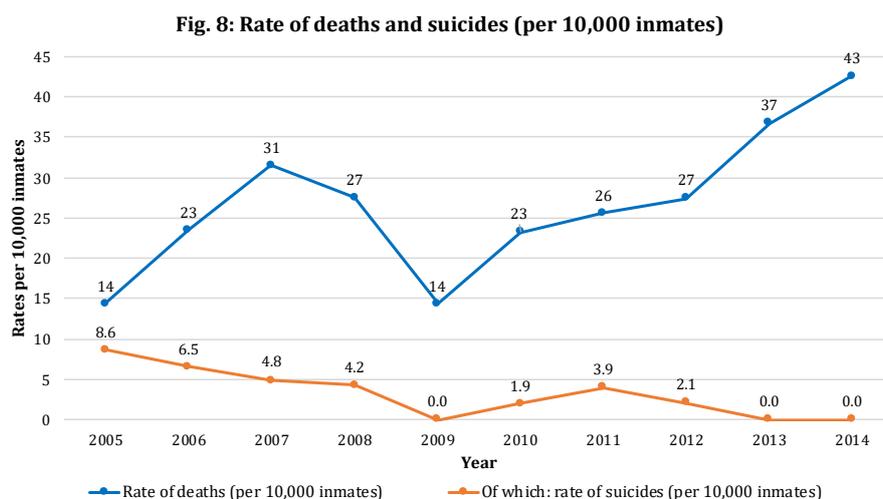


Figure 8 shows an overall increasing trend in the rate of deaths of inmates in penal institutions per 10,000 inmates. However, this trend must be interpreted cautiously because, from a statistical point of view, the absolute number of cases studied is low. In particular, there were 10 deaths of inmates in 2005 and 16 in 2014.

Any interpretation of the rates and trends of suicides would be misleading because, from a statistical point of view, the absolute numbers are too low (between 3 suicides and none per year) to reach reliable conclusions.

¹ The figures provided by the country do not always add to 100%.

² Sexual offences include (1) rape (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2005), and (2) other sexual offences (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2008).

³ Other offences include (1) economic and financial offences (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2008); (2) terrorism (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2007); (3) organised crime (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2007); (4) cybercrime (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2014); and (5) other cases (included in the SPACE questionnaire since 2005).