

Prisons in Europe 2005-2015

France Country Profile

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This country profile on France 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	FRANCE		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	114.2	Medium	Medium	106.8	↑↑↑↑
Rate of entries into penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants)	137.7	Medium	Medium	136.2	↔↔
Rate of releases from penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants) – Available since 2009	138.6	Medium	Medium	131.8*	↑
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (in months)	8.9	Medium	Medium	8.7	↑
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on stock and flow (in months)	10.3	Medium	Medium	9.3	↑↑
Prison density on 01.09.2015 (inmates per 100 places)	131.6	High	High	126.4	↔↔
Median age of the prison population on 01.09.2015 (in years)	31.0	Low	Low	31.9	↔↔
Percentage of female inmates (01.09.2015)	3.5	Low	Low	3.6	↓
Percentage of foreign inmates (01.09.2015)	19.3	Medium	Medium	18.7	↑
<i>of which: in pre-trial detention</i>	---	---	---	---	---
Percentage of non-sentenced inmates (01.09.2015)	23.1	Medium	Medium	25.3	↓↓↓↓
Rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates in 2014	17.0	Low	Low	28.2	↓↓↓↓↓
Rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates in 2014 (n=77)	9.9	High	High	14.6	↓↓↓↓↓
<i>of which: % in pre-trial detention (n=0) – Available since 2013</i>	0.0	Low	Low	NAP	NAP
Ratio of inmates per staff (number of inmates per 1 staff person)	2.1	High	High	2.1	↔↔
Percentage of custodial staff in the total staff	72.0	High	High	73.3	↓↓
Total budget spent by the prison administration (in Euro) – Available since 2011	2 523 691 845	NAP	NAP	2 418 278 212**	↑↑
Average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (in Euro) – Available since 2008	102.7	Medium	Medium	94.5***	↑↑↑↑

*Average calculated from 2009 to 2014

** Average calculated from 2011 to 2014

*** Average calculated from 2008 to 2014

France in brief

- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show a *decrease*: percentage of female inmates (-8%), percentage of foreign inmates (-5%), percentage of non-sentenced inmates (-68%), rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates (-55%), percentage of suicides (-46%), ratio of inmates per staff (-15%), and percentage of custodial staff in the total staff (-12%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show an *increase*: prison population rate (+23%), prison density (+16%), rate of releases from penal institutions (+6%), average length of imprisonment based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (+7%), average length of detention based on stock and flow (+11%), total budget spent by the prison administration (+12%), and average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (+21%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators remain *stable*: rate of entries into penal institutions (+1%), median age of the population (-4%).

France in comparative perspective

- Compared to other European countries, in 2014/15 France presents:
 - **Low**: Median age of the prison population, percentage of female inmates, percentage of non-sentenced inmates, rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates, percentage of suicides in pre-trial detention.
 - **Medium**: Prison population rate, rate of entries into penal institutions, rate of releases from penal institutions, average length of imprisonment based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions, average length of detention based on stock and flow, percentage of foreign inmates, ratio of inmates per staff, average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate.
 - **High**: Prison density, rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates, percentage of custodial staff in the total staff.

General comments

Figure 1 (113)

Fig. 1: Prison population rate and flow of entries and releases from penal institutions (per 100,000 inhabitants)

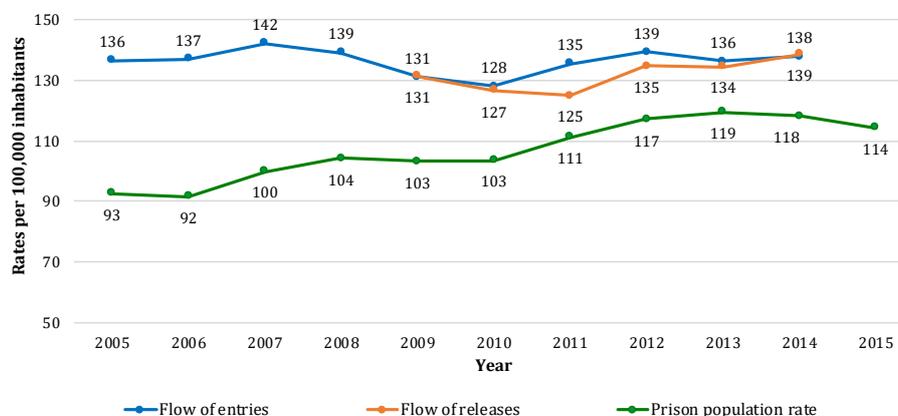


Figure 1 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison population rate of France (stock) increased by 23%. In 2005, the country had 93 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 114.

From 2005 to 2014, the rate of entries (flow of entries) remained relatively stable. In 2005, there were 136 entries into penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 138.

From 2009 to 2014, the rate of releases (flow of releases) increased by 6%. In 2009, there were 131 releases from penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 139.

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

Figure 2 (114)

Fig. 2: Average length of imprisonment (in months)

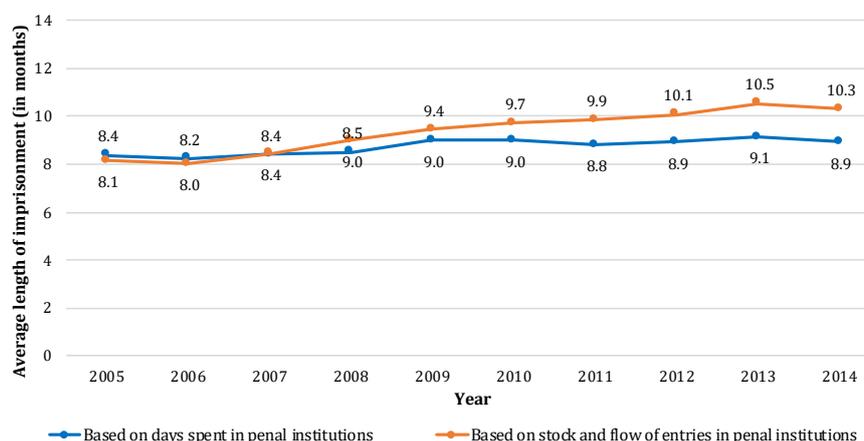


Figure 2 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the average length of imprisonment based on the number of days spent in penal institutions increased by 7%. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 8.4 months, while in 2014 it was 8.9 months.

During the same period, the average length of imprisonment computed on the basis of the ratio between the stock and the flow increased by 26%. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 8.1 months, while in 2014 it was 10.3 months.

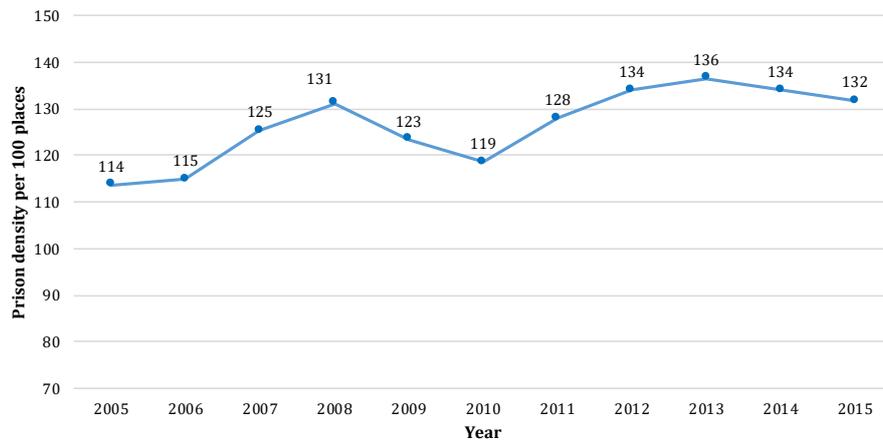
Figure 3 (115)**Fig. 3: Prison density per 100 places (Overcrowding)**

Figure 3 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison density of France increased by 16%. In 2005, the country had 114 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 132.

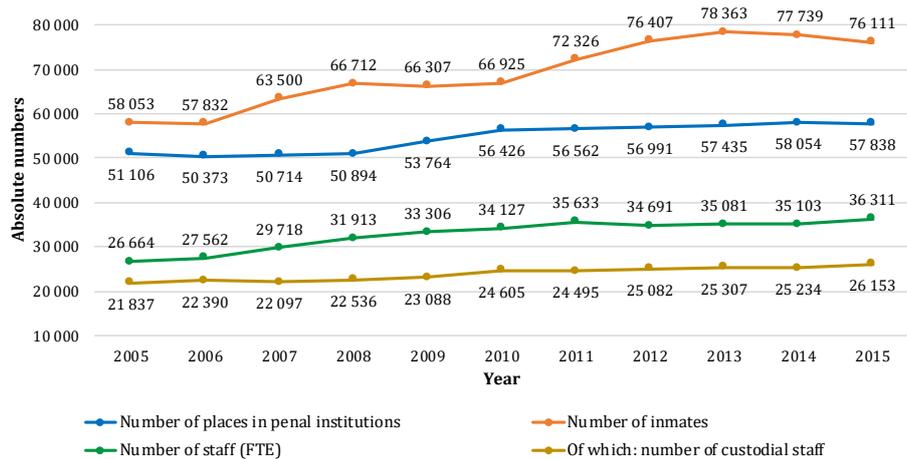
Figure 4 (116)**Fig. 4: Total capacity of penal institutions and number of inmates**

Figure 4 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the total number of places in penal institutions in France increased by 13%. In 2005, the country had 51,106 places, while in 2015 it had 57,838. According to the information collected during this research, the number of places in penal institutions increased due to the construction of new penal institutions.

During the same period, the total number of inmates increased by 31%. In 2005, the country had 58,053 inmates, while in 2015 it had 76,111.

From 2005 to 2015, the total number of staff increased by 36%. In 2005, France had in total a staff of 26,664 persons, while in 2015 it had 36,311.

During the same period, the total number of custodial staff increased by 20%. In 2005, the total custodial staff was 21,837 persons, while in 2015 it was 26,153.

Figure 5 (117)

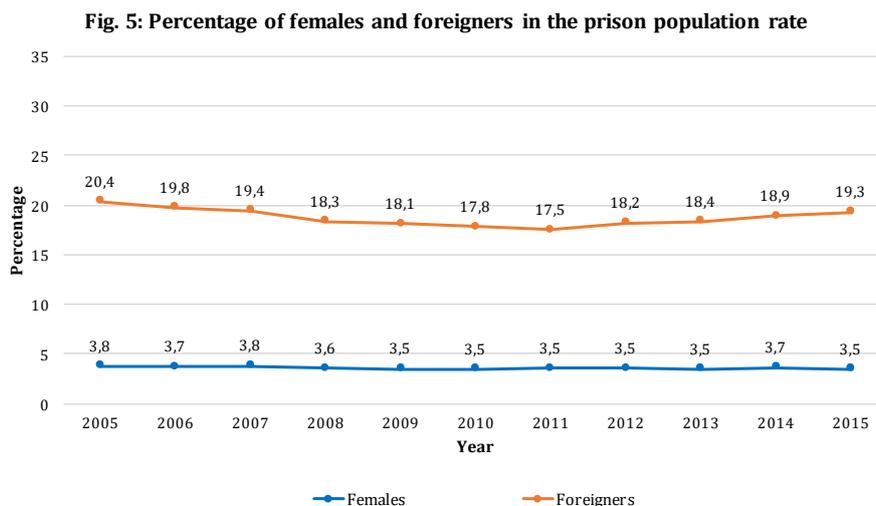


Figure 5 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of female inmates decreased by 8%. In 2005, 3.8% of the inmates were females, while in 2015 they represented 3.5% of the total prison population.

During the same period, the percentage of foreign inmates decreased by 5%. In 2005, 20% of the inmates were foreigners, while in 2015 they represented 19% of the total prison population.

Figure 6 (118)

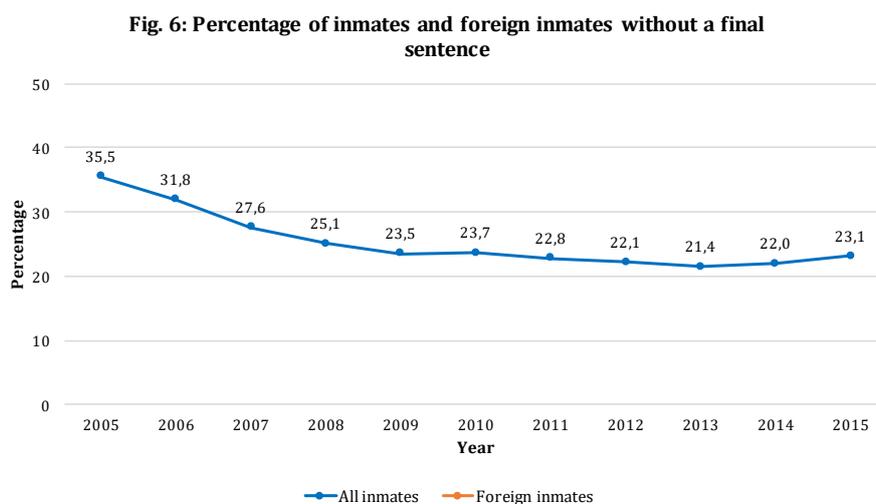


Figure 6 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of inmates without a final sentence decreased by 35%. In 2005, 35% of the inmates did not have a final sentence while, in 2015, inmates without a final sentence represented 23% of all inmates.

Data on the percentage of foreign persons in pre-trial detention were not available.

Figure 7¹²³ (119)

Fig. 7: Distribution (in percentage) of sentenced prisoners by offence

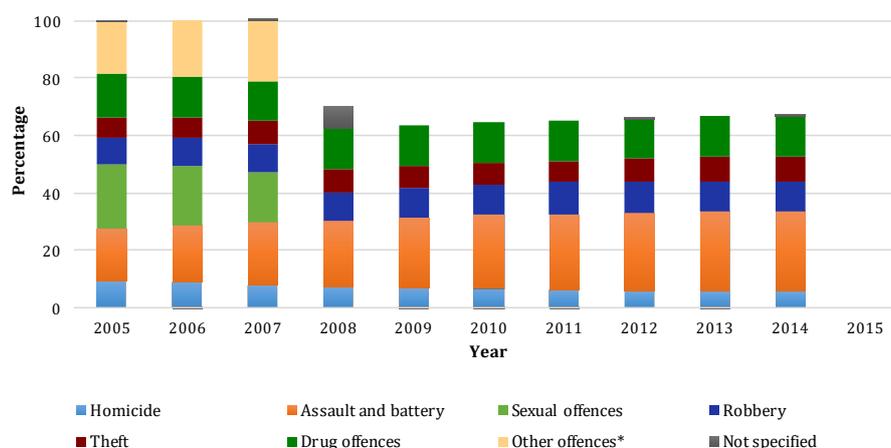


Figure 7 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the percentages of prisoners serving sentences for assault and battery, robbery, and theft have increased; while the percentages of those serving sentences for homicide have decreased.

Figure 8 (120)

Fig. 8: Rate of deaths and suicides (per 10,000 inmates)

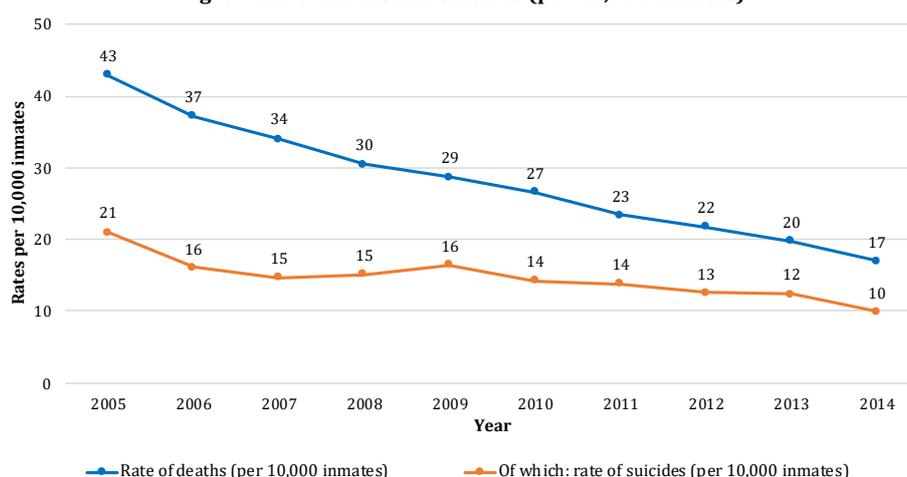


Figure 8 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the rate of deaths of inmates in penal institutions per 10,000 inmates decreased by 60%. In 2005, there were 43 deaths per 10,000 inmates, while in 2014 there were 17.

During the same period, the rate of suicides of inmates in penal institutions per 10,000 inmates decreased by 53%. In 2005, there were 21 suicides per 10,000 inmates, while in 2014 there were 10.

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).