

Prisons in Europe 2005-2015

Ireland

Country Profile

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This country profile on Ireland 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

IRELAND

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	80.4	Low	Low	85.6	↔
Rate of entries into penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants)	356.3	High	High	339.2	↑↑↑
Rate of releases from penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants) – Available since 2009	367.3	High	High	371.0*	↑
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (in months)	2.9	Low	Low	3.1	↓↓
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on stock and flow (in months)	2.8	Low	Low	3.1	↓↓↓
Prison density on 01.09.2015 (inmates per 100 places)	89.6	Medium	Medium	94.0	↔
Median age of the prison population on 01.09.2015 (in years)	32.0	Low	Low	30.2	↔
Percentage of female inmates (01.09.2015)	3.4	Low	Low	3.5	↑
Percentage of foreign inmates (01.09.2015)	12.4	Medium	Medium	13.1	↔
of which: in pre-trial detention	23.5	Low	Low	31.0	↓↓↓
Percentage of non-sentenced inmates (01.09.2015)	15.8	Low	Low	16.1	↓↓↓
Rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates in 2014	20.9	Low	Low	23.2	↓↓
Rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates in 2014 (n=2)	5.2	Medium	Medium	4.0	↓↓
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)	1.0	Low	Low	1.0	↑↑
Percentage of custodial staff in the total staff	71.4	High	Medium	74.9	↓
Total budget spent by the prison administration (in Euro) – Available since 2011	388 890 900	NAP	NAP	350 788 975**	↑↑
Average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (in Euro) – Available since 2008	189.0	High	High	197.9***	↓↓↓

*Average calculated from 2009 to 2014

** Average calculated from 2011 to 2014

*** Average calculated from 2008 to 2014

Ireland in brief

- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show a *decrease*: average length of detention based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (-17%), average length of detention based on stock and flow (-20%), percentage of pre-trial detainees among foreign inmates (-31%), percentage of non-sentenced inmates (-20%), percentage of non-sentenced inmates, rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates (-17%), percentage of suicides (-17%), percentage of custodial staff in the total staff (-7%), and average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (-25%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show an *increase*: rate of entries into penal institutions (+34%), rate of releases from penal institutions (+8%), percentage of female inmates (+5%), ratio of inmates per staff (+15%), and total budget spent by the prison administration (+12%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators remain *stable*: prison population rate (+4%), prison density (-3%), prison density (-3%), median age of the population (+3%), and percentage of foreign inmates (-1%).

Ireland in comparative perspective

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

General comments

Figure 1 (161)

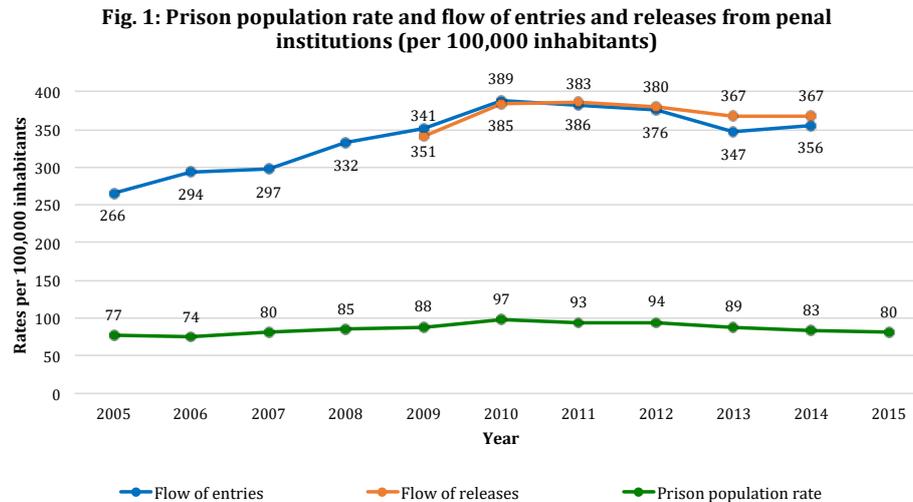


Figure 1 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison population rate of Ireland (stock) increased by 4%. In 2005, the country had 77 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 80. According to the information provided by the SPACE national correspondent, the increase or decrease of numbers in custody and indeed on probation supervision in the community at different times is often a product of a complex set of interconnected factors, including changes in numbers of crimes committed and reported, relative detection and prosecution rates, and sentencing decisions, as well as demographic changes in the population over time, such as the numbers of people in the population who are in the age groupings that are statistically more at-risk of offending, as well as a range of socio-economic and other factors. In addition, the way the criminal justice agencies and other organisations work together to manage and rehabilitate offenders, also has an impact on crime and offending, including impacting on reoffending rates and imprisonment levels too. For a number of years now, the Irish Prison and Probation Services have consciously focused on working more closely together, as well as with other partners such as An Garda Síochána and the Irish Youth Justice Service, and a range of other departments and agencies, as well as the community and voluntary sector. In doing this, they have jointly targeted their resources and efforts in ways that have been shown by research to have the best impact. This includes ensuring that the well-trained staff carry out risk assessments to ensure the Irish Prison and Probation Services prioritise those at highest risk of reoffending, that they use evidence-informed practice, and that they work at a highly developed level of interagency co-operation, including sharing information and training, and co-ordinating the different case management systems. In addition, the availability of accurate data, nationally and internationally (like the SPACE statistics), which are accurately collected and collated, is essential for the development of good policy and practice to respond to crime, and specifically for the effective management of offenders.

From 2005 to 2014, the rate of entries (flow of entries) increased by 34%. In 2005, there were 266 entries into penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 356.

From 2009 to 2014, the rate of releases (flow of releases) increased by 8%. In 2009, there were 341 releases from penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 367.

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

Figure 2 (162)

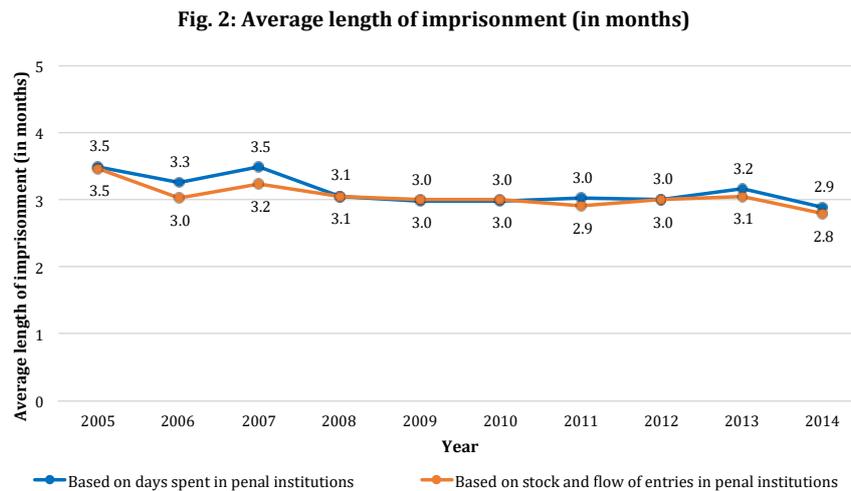


Figure 2 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the average length of imprisonment based on the number of days spent in penal institutions decreased by 17%. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 3.5 months, while in 2014 it was 2.9 months.

During the same period, the average length of imprisonment computed on the basis of the ratio between the stock and the flow decreased by 20%. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 3.5 months, while in 2014 it was 2.8 months.

Figure 3 (163)

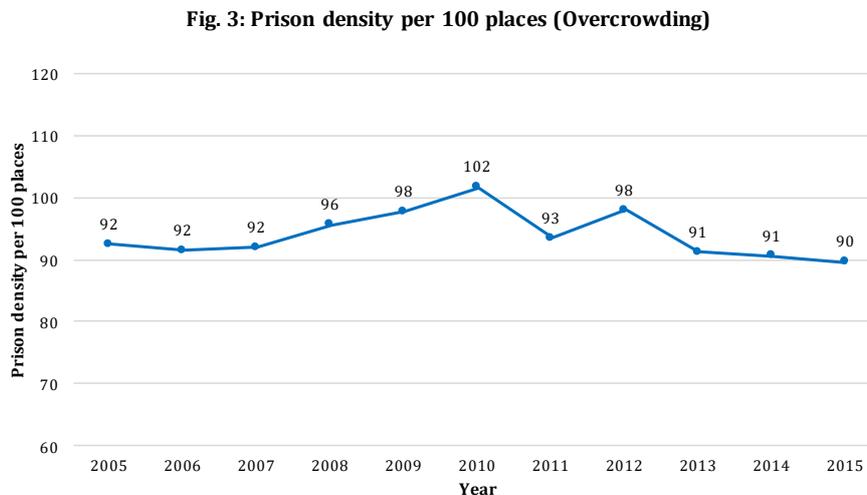


Figure 3 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison density of Ireland decreased by 3%. In 2005, the country had 92 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 90.

Figure 4 (164)

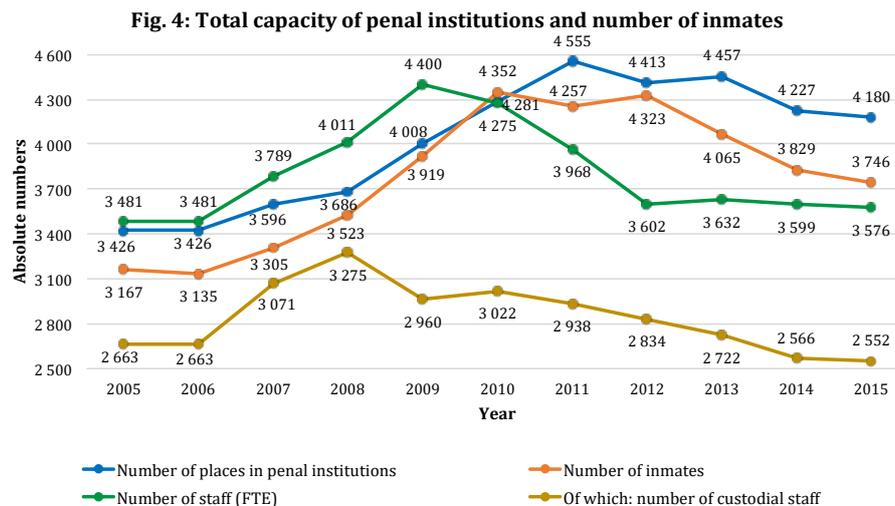


Figure 4 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the total number of places in penal institutions in Ireland increased by 22%. In 2005, the country had 3,426 places, while in 2015 it had 4,180. According to the information provided by the SPACE national correspondent, huge progress has been made by the Irish Prison Service in enhancing and modernising the prison estate since the late nineties. This has been achieved through improvement works to existing accommodation and through the provision of new prison accommodation blocks.

During the same period, the total number of inmates increased by 18%. In 2005, the country had 3,167 inmates, while in 2015 it had 3,746.

From 2005 to 2015, the total number of staff increased by 3%. In 2005, Ireland had in total a staff of 3,481 persons, while in 2015 it had 3,576.

During the same period, the total number of custodial staff decreased by 4%. In 2005, the total custodial staff was 2,663 persons, while in 2015 it was 2,552. According to the information provided by the SPACE national correspondent, in accordance with Government Decision S180/20/10/0964C of 3 February and 24 March 2009 on the implementation of savings measures on public service numbers (more generally referred to as the moratorium on public sector recruitment), the filling of vacancies in the Irish Prison Service is subject to the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Overall the prison service is down 57 staff on the agreed staffing numbers. In 2016, the Public Appointments Service launched a recruitment campaign on behalf of the Irish Prison Service for Recruit Prison Officers, the first since 2008. It is intended to recruit approximately 80 new prison officers in 2017, which will increase to at least 216 in 2018. This recruitment will allow scope for the IPS to fill vacancies across the prison Estate, including those arising from retirements.

Figure 5 (165)

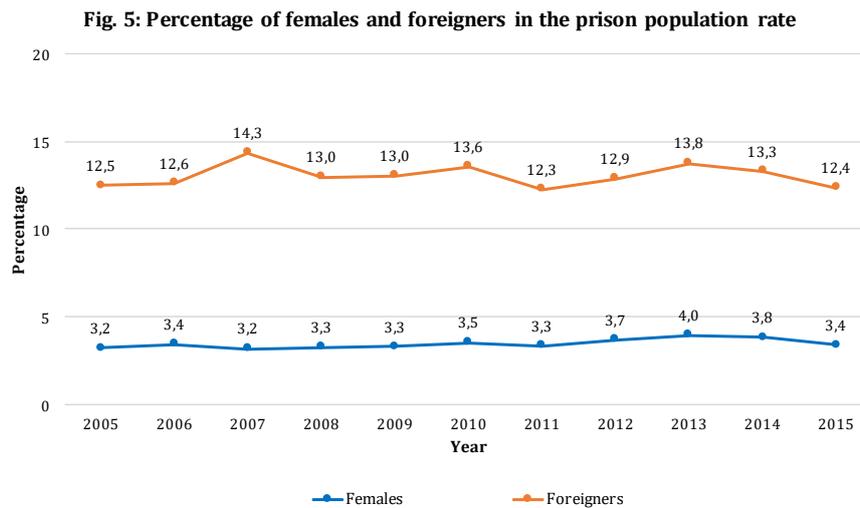


Figure 5 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of female inmates increased by 5%. In 2005, 3.2% of the inmates were females, while in 2015 they represented 3.4% of the total prison population.

During the same period, the percentage of foreign inmates remained stable. In 2005 and 2015, 12% of the total prison population were foreigners.

Figure 6 (166)

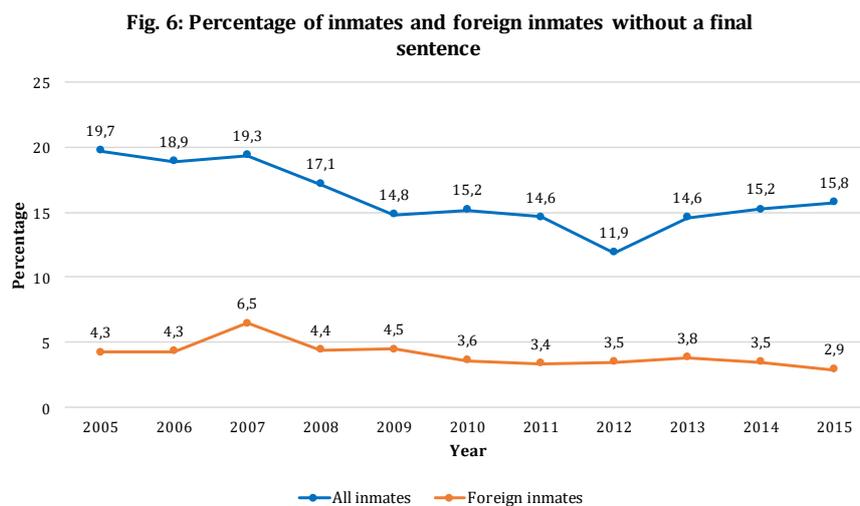


Figure 6 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of inmates without a final sentence decreased by 20%. In 2005, 20% of the inmates did not have a final sentence while, in 2015, inmates without a final sentence represented 16% of all inmates.

During the same period, the percentage of foreigners held in pre-trial detention decreased by 32%. In 2005, they represented 4.3% of the total number of inmates, while in 2015 they represented 2.9% of them.

Figure 7¹²³ (167)

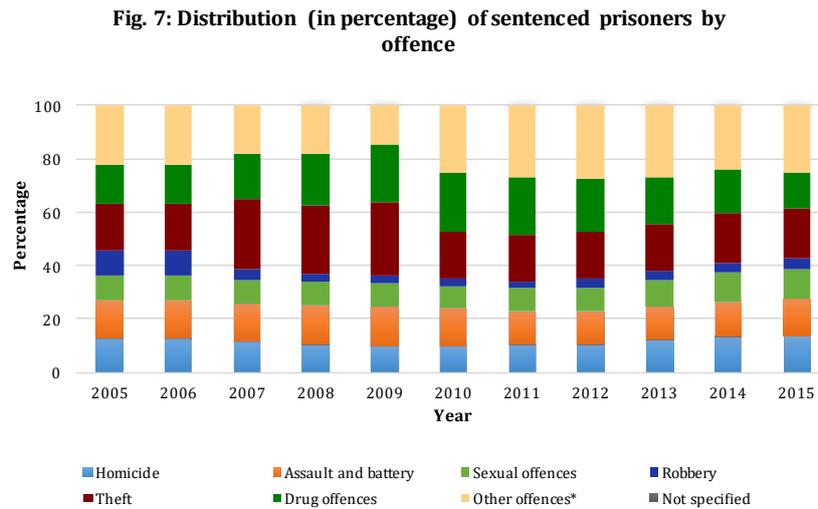
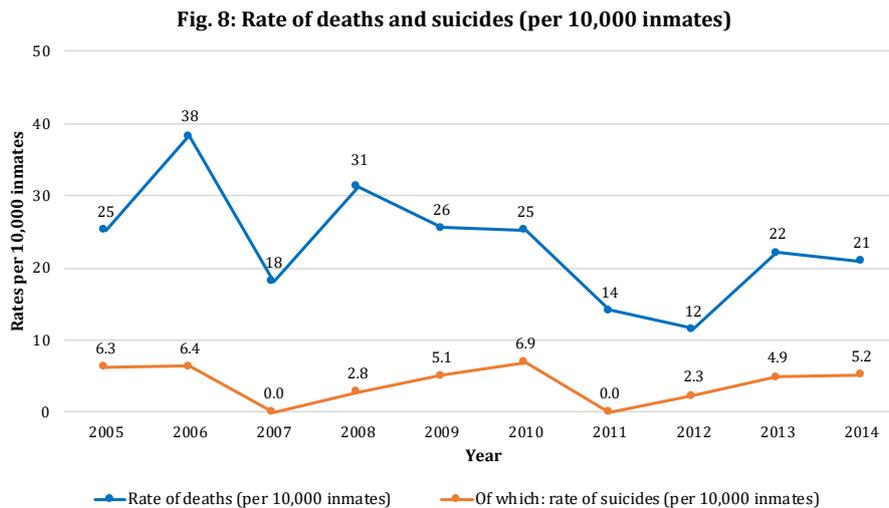


Figure 7 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentages of prisoners serving sentences for homicide, sexual offences, theft, and other types of offences have increased; while the percentages of those serving sentences for robbery and drug offences have decreased.

Figure 8 (168)



From 2005 to 2014, both the rate of deaths and the rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates show an overall decreasing trend but, from a statistical point of view, the absolute numbers are too low (between 5 and 12 deaths per year, of which 1 to 3 suicides) to reach reliable conclusions about that trend.

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).