

Prisons in Europe 2005-2015

Serbia

Country Profile

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This country profile on Serbia 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	SERBIA		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	142.2	Medium	NAP	135.6	↑↑↑↑
Rate of entries into penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants)	325.3	High	NAP	321.9	↑↑↑↑
Rate of releases from penal institutions in 2014 (inmates per 100,000 inhabitants) – Available since 2009	322.3	High	NAP	353.0*	↔↔
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on the total number of days spent in penal institutions (in months)	5.2	Low	NAP	4.9***	---
Average length of imprisonment in 2014 based on stock and flow (in months)	5.3	Low	NAP	5.0	↔↔
Prison density on 01.09.2015 (inmates per 100 places)	106.4	High	NAP	129.4	↑↑↑↑
Median age of the prison population on 01.09.2015 (in years)	35.0	Medium	NAP	35.9	---
Percentage of female inmates (01.09.2015)	3.6	Low	NAP	3.5	↑↑↑↑
Percentage of foreign inmates (01.09.2015)	3.5	Low	NAP	2.7	↔↔
of which: in pre-trial detention	46.7	Medium	NAP	43.8	↑↑↑↑
Percentage of non-sentenced inmates (01.09.2015)	23.8	Medium	NAP	27.2	↓↓↓↓
Rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates in 2014	59.3	High	NAP	64.4	↓
Rate of suicides per 10,000 inmates in 2014 (n=10)	9.7	High	NAP	8.2	↓↓↓
of which: % in pre-trial detention (n=NA) – Available since 2013	---	---	NAP	---	---
Ratio of inmates per staff (number of inmates per 1 staff person)	2.5	High	NAP	2.6	↔↔
Percentage of custodial staff in the total staff	58.0	Medium	NAP	56.0	↔↔
Total budget spent by the prison administration (in Euro) – Available since 2011	71 769 767.0	NAP	NAP	63 484 493.8**	↑↑↑↑
Average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (in Euro) – Available since 2008	19.4	Low	NAP	16.0***	↑↑↑↑

* Average calculated from 2009 to 2014

** Average calculated from 2011 to 2014

*** Average calculated from 2008 to 2014

Serbia in brief

- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show a *decrease*: percentage of non-sentenced inmates (-50%), and rate of deaths per 10,000 inmates (-10%), percentage of suicides (-16%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators show an *increase*: prison population rate (+36%), rate of entries into penal institutions (+36%), prison density (+32%), percentage of female inmates (+22%), percentage of pre-trial detainees among foreign inmates (+34%), total budget spent by the prison administration (+24%), and average amount spent per day for the detention of one inmate (+30%).
- Comparing 2014/15 to 2005, the following indicators remain *stable*: rate of releases from penal institutions (-2%), average length of detention based on stock and flow (+1%), percentage of foreign inmates (+2%), ratio of inmates per staff (+3%), and percentage of custodial staff (0%).

Serbia in comparative perspective

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

General comments

Figure 1 (297)

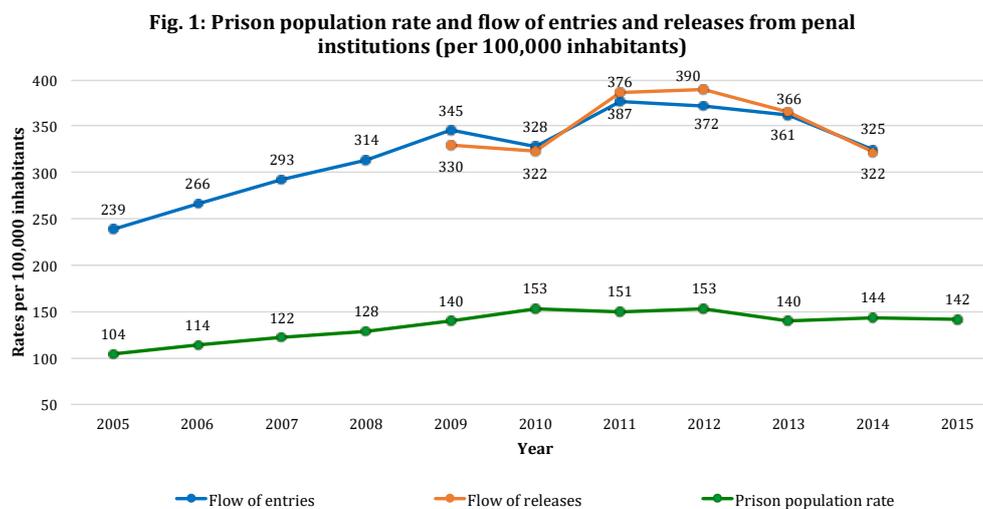


Figure 1 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison population rate of Serbia (stock) increased by 36%. In 2005, the country had 104 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 142.

From 2005 to 2014, the rate of entries (flow of entries) increased by 36%. In 2005, there were 239 entries into penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 325.

From 2009 to 2014, the rate of releases (flow of releases) remained relatively stable. In 2009, there were 330 releases from penal institutions per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2014 there were 322.

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

As can be seen, the increase in the indicators included in Figure 1 took place mainly at the beginning of the series (from 2005 to 2010/11) and was followed by a decrease, although by 2014-5, the indicators remained higher than in 2005. According to the information collected during this research, the decrease observed at the end of the series could be due to several reasons. In particular, there is a wider application of all the measures that ensure the presence of the accused persons during the trial proceedings without placing them in detention (bail, prohibition of leaving the apartment and residence, prohibition of approaching, etc.). There has also been an increase in the number of persons convicted to community sanctions and measures for sentences of up to one year, which reduced the number of persons with such sentences in prisons.

Figure 2 (298)

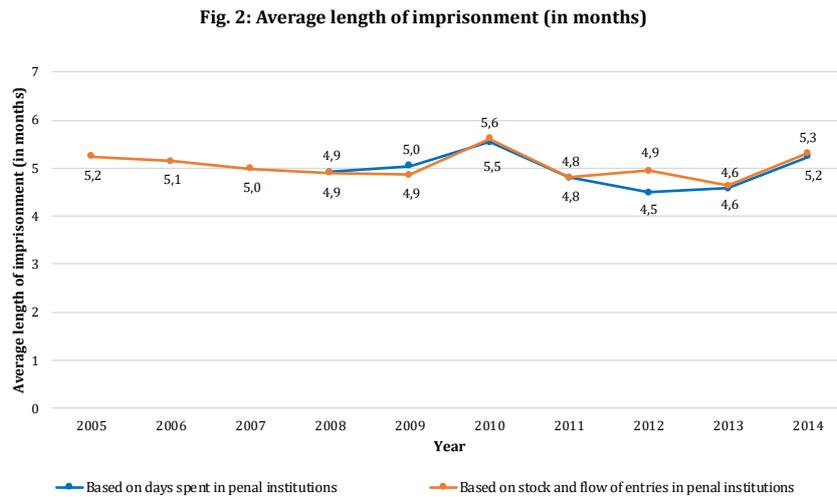


Figure 2 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the average length of imprisonment computed on the basis of the ratio between the stock and the flow remained relatively stable. In 2005, the average length of imprisonment was 5.2 months, while in 2014 it was 5.3 months.

The estimation of the average length of imprisonment based on the number of days spent in penal institutions is only available since 2008 and shows a similar evolution.

Figure 3 (299)

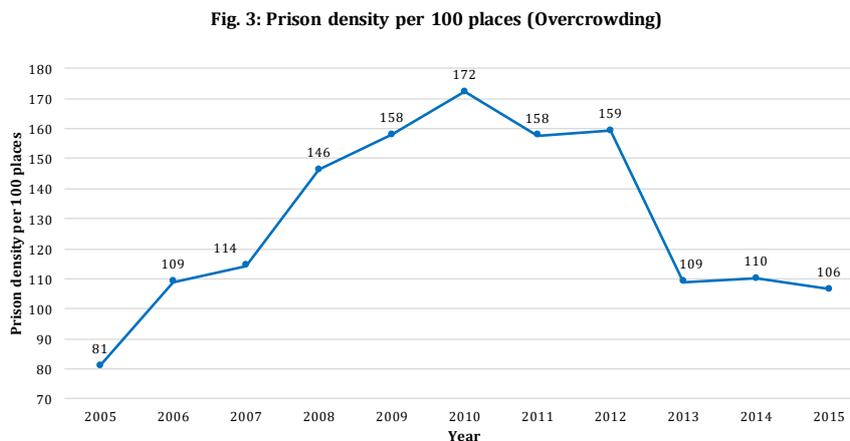


Figure 3 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the prison density of Serbia increased by 32%. In 2005, the country had 81 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, while in 2015 it had 106.

Figure 4 (300)

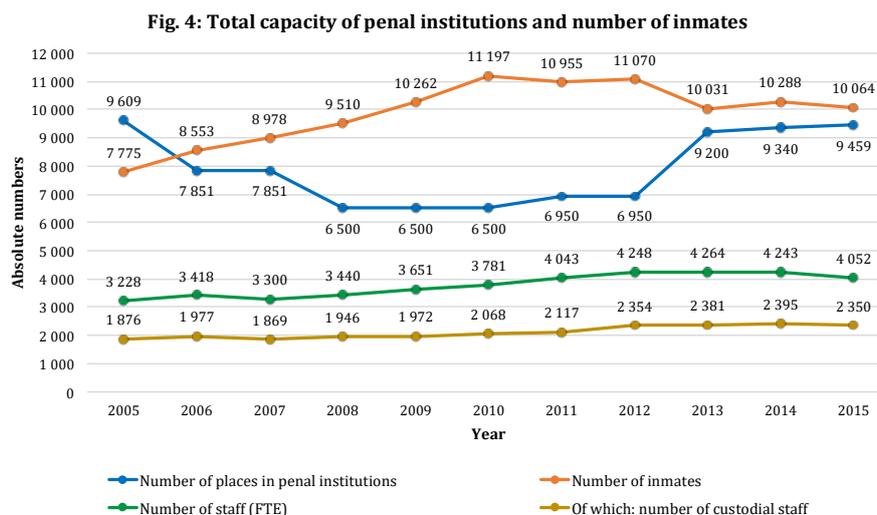


Figure 4 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the total number of places in penal institutions in Serbia suffered several fluctuations but, in the end, the number of places was similar at the beginning and at the end of the series. In 2005, the country had 9,609 places, while in 2015 it had 9,459. According to the information provided by the SPACE national correspondent, the fluctuations observed are due to several reasons, including changes in the way in which places are counted, and the reconstruction and building of prisons. In particular, in the past it was not mandatory to comply strictly with the standard of 4 square meters of space per person deprived of liberty. Currently, it is mandatory to respect that standard. Works of reconstruction took place in the prisons, which in some cases led to a reduction of the number of places, but in others had the opposite effect (i.e. an increase of the number of places in the prison). In particular, new buildings were constructed within some of the existing institutions, which resulted in an increase of their capacity. Finally, a new prison with special security and increased capacity was constructed.

From 2005 to 2015, the total number of inmates increased by 29%. In 2005, the country had 7,775 inmates, while in 2015 it had 10,064.

From 2005 to 2015, the total number of staff increased by 26%. In 2005, Serbia had in total a staff of 3,228 persons, while in 2015 it had 4,052.

During the same period, the total number of custodial staff increased by 25%. In 2005, the total custodial staff was 1,876 persons, while in 2015 it was 2,350.

Figure 5 (301)

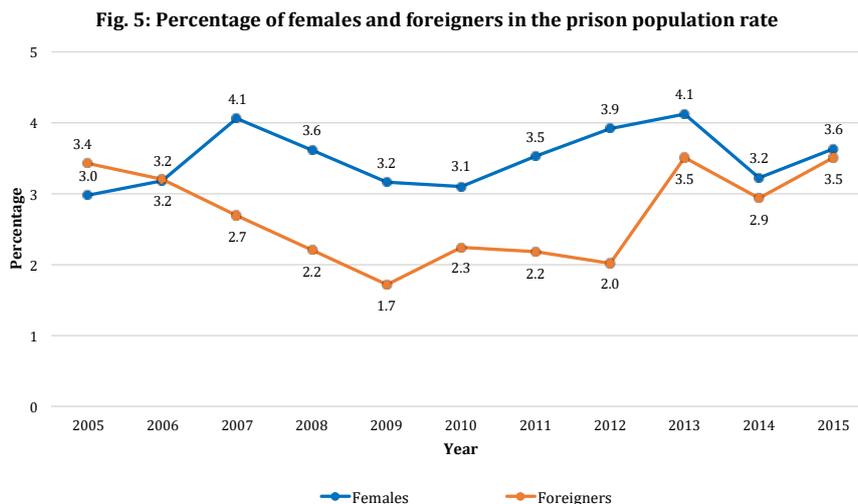


Figure 5 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of female inmates increased by 22%. In 2005, 3.0% of the inmates were females, while in 2015 they represented 3.6% of the total prison population.

During the same period, the percentage of foreign inmates remained relatively stable. In 2005, 3.4% of the inmates were foreigners, while in 2015 they represented 3.5% of the total prison population. According to the information collected during this research, the percentage of foreign prisoners in Serbia was heavily influenced on the one hand by the presence of persons from neighbouring countries, which historically were not considered as foreigners (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, the FYRO Macedonia, etc.) and, on the other hand, by the events in the Middle East which led to a large number of migrants passing through Serbia, thus creating crime opportunities and increasing the number of foreigners in prisons.

Figure 6 (302)

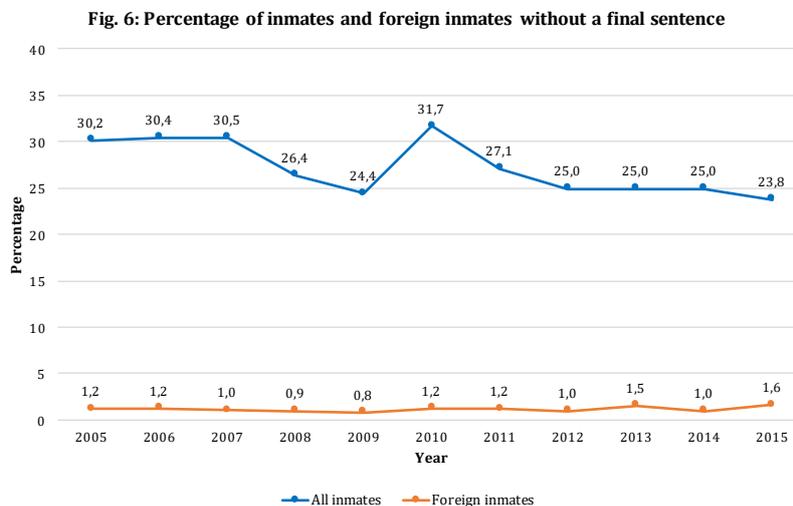


Figure 6 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of inmates without a final sentence decreased by 50%. In 2005, 30% of the inmates did not have a final sentence while, in 2015, inmates without a final sentence represented 15% of all inmates.

During the same period, the percentage of foreigners held in pre-trial detention increased by 37%. In 2005, they represented 1.2% of the total number of inmates, while in 2015 they represented 1.6% of them.

Figure 7¹²³ (303)

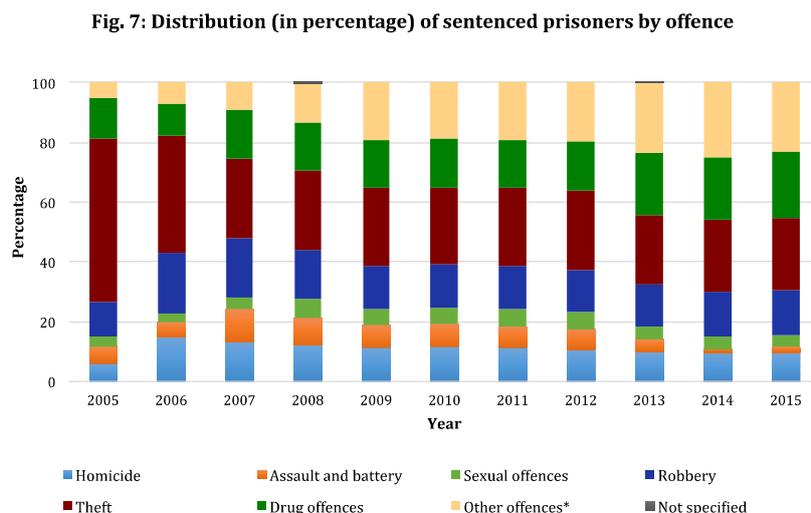


Figure 7 shows that, from 2005 to 2015, the percentages of prisoners serving sentences for homicide, sexual offences, robbery, drug offences, and other types of offences have increased; while the percentages of those serving sentences for assault and battery as well as for theft have decreased.

Figure 8 (304)

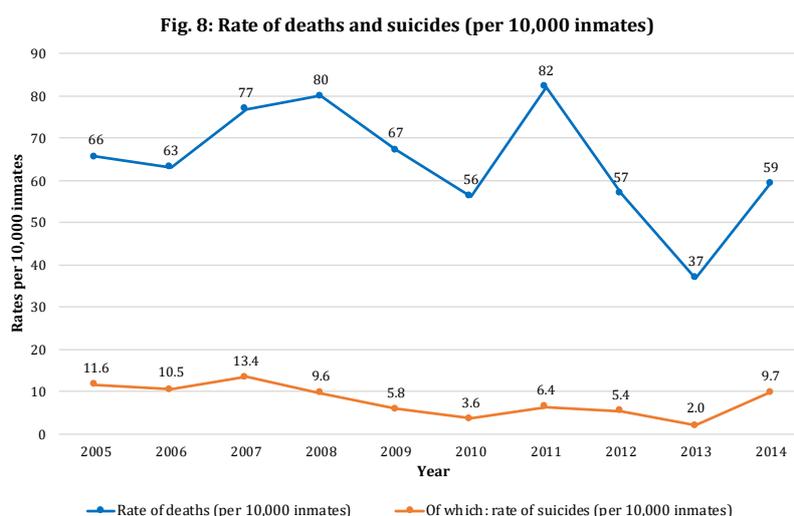


Figure 8 shows that, from 2005 to 2014, the rate of deaths of inmates in penal institutions per 10,000 inmates decreased by 10%. In 2005, there were 66 deaths per 10,000 inmates, while in 2014 there were 59. However, the overall trend is relatively instable.

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 2 and 13 cases 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).