



Fact sheet – Statistical activity and published results

Imprisonment Statistics

Description

Since 1988, the Survey on Imprisonment has recorded information on the number of prisoners by type of imprisonment, sex and nationality, in addition to the number of prison places and the occupancy rate in penal institutions (prisons, establishments for the execution of sentences and measures, centres for the execution of measures). Also included in the figures are the number of admissions, days in custody, deaths and escapes during the year preceding the day of the survey.

Methodology

Methodology used:
Exhaustive survey

Characteristics recorded:

On reference date:

- Population by type of detention, sex and nationality (since 2004)
- Persons in remand or preventive detention by sex, age, nationality and residence status
- Capacity of penal institutions
- Personnel (in full-time equivalents)

In the year preceding the reference date:

- Admissions and number of days in detention
- Deaths and suicides (since 2004)
- Escapes, evasions and returns (since 2010)

Survey date / period:
Since 1988

Reference day:

- 1988–2001: March/April
- 2001–2018: 1st Wednesday in September
- 2019–: 31 January

Periodicity:
Annual

Degree of regionalisation:

- Switzerland
- Intercantonal agreement for Northwest and Central Switzerland on the execution of sentences and measures
- Intercantonal agreement for Eastern Switzerland on the execution of sentences and measures
- Intercantonal agreement for the French- and Italian-speaking regions on the execution of sentences and measures
- Cantons (only for remand and preventive detention)

Legal basis

Ordinance of 30 April 2025 on Federal Statistics (SR 431.011)

Organisation

Federal Statistical Office (FSO)

Crime and Criminal Justice Section
+41 58 463 62 40
crime@bfs.admin.ch