



ANTIGONE
Per i diritti e le garanzie nel sistema penale

PRISON AT THE TIME OF THE CORONAVIRUS

ANTIGONE'S XVI REPORT ON PRISON CONDITIONS

- PRESS KIT -



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to all those prison workers who have worked tirelessly to prevent new outbreaks of the virus in prisons, which would have transformed places of detention in places of contagion and death.

A special thanks to the National Guarantor of persons deprived of personal liberty who, fulfilling his institutional role without hesitation, has carried out, also together with some territorial guarantors, an extraordinary work of protection of rights and has been the main source of information inside and outside prisons.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Department of the Penitentiary Administration and the Department of Juvenile Justice and Community Measures that allow us to carry out our observation work, which we will resume as soon as the circumstances will allow it.

Our thankfulness also goes to the associations and trade unions with whom we collaborated in this period: Cild (thanks to which we delivered thousands of masks to the prisons of San Vittore, Trieste, Bari), Msf, Anpi, Arci, Cgil, Gruppo Abele, Ristretti, Cnvg.

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This Report would not exist without Antigone's Observatory on prison conditions, which since 1998 has entered in the almost two hundred Italian prisons and is an instrument of knowledge for anyone approaching the reality of the prison's reality. We, therefore, thank the voluntary commitment of all our Observers.

And finally, our heartfelt gratitude to the dozens and dozens of young and less young people who spend time and energy on Antigone and who in this phase, since we have received about 400 requests for help, have considerably increased their volunteering.

WHO'S EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS TO AVOID CONTAGION IN PRISONS

1. screening and risk assessment should be set up for all individuals entering prison;
2. similar measures should be adopted when people are released from prison;
3. environmental cleaning and disinfection should take place at least once daily;
4. individual hygiene and hand washing should be promoted, including provision of the necessary materials (for all people in prison, including staff) to make this possible;
5. education and communication on respiratory hygiene should be put in place;
6. prison overcrowding should be addressed;
7. an action plan, specifying who is responsible for delivering a particular action, the timescale for delivery, and how and by whom delivery will be ensured, should be in place to deal with suspected and confirmed cases;
8. all those involved should be informed about contingency planning.

CREATING SPACE, A MATTER OF LEGALITY AND HEALTH.

In two and a half months the prison occupancy rate fell from 130.4% to 112.2%.

At the end of February 2020, there were 61,230 prisoners compared to the official capacity of 50,931.

At the end of 2012, there were 65,701 detainees. In January 2013 the European Court of Human Rights condemned Italy for the inhuman and degrading treatments caused by overcrowding.

Thus, at the beginning of the emergency, there were 10,229 more people than the official capacity. The figures of the official capacity don't take into account temporary deviations from the indicated value. It is estimated that about 4,000 additional places are not available in reality. So the emergency began with an overpopulation of almost 15,000 detainees. The occupancy rate was 130.4%.

On 15 May 2020, there were 52,679 prisoners. The occupancy rate dropped to 112.2%.

There are 8,551 fewer prisoners than at the end of February.

THE STAGES OF THE DROP IN NUMBERS

Prisoners decreased by 13.9% in two and a half months

From the end of February to 19 March, the number of detainees has fallen by 95 people a day.



This trend accelerated with the entry into force of the "Cura Italia" decree, which provided for the first measures to reduce the prison population: from 19 March to 16 April, the detained population dropped further by 158 people per day.

From 16 April 2020 onwards, attitudes change. The issue of the release of people belonging to organized crime is brought to the attention of the public. From 16 April to 15 May, the number of inmates decreases by 77.3 per day, less than half of what it used to be.

The National Guarantor reports that the home detention measures granted between March 18 and May 15 were 3,282; in 919 cases with the use of electronic monitoring. These are people sentenced for non-serious crimes with less than 18 months to serve.

Outside Italy, the reduction in the prison population was similar in France, while in the USA it fell by 1.8%.

THE MOST CURRENTLY OVERCROWDED PRISONS

Larino, Taranto, and Latina rank in the first places

Very critical situations are represented by Latina (179.2%), Taranto (187.6%), and Larino (194.7%), and even in the regions most hit by the virus, there are prisons such as Como (161.4%), Pordenone (156.8%), Vigevano (148.7%), Busto Arsizio (148.3%) and Tolmezzo (148.3%) which are still of great concern.

THE NUMBERS OF THE CONTAGION INSIDE

119 inmates and 162 prison workers were found positive to the virus. 4 prisoners and 4 workers (2 penitentiary officers and 2 doctors) died. In the USA 415 and 38 respectively

The first Covid-19 cases have been registered since mid-March and currently, as reported by the National Guarantor, the detainees that are positive to the virus are 119, 2 of whom are in hospitals, while among the staff there are 162 infected workers. Even in this case, however, the situation is very uneven. In most of the institutes, no Covid-19 cases were recorded, although in Verona, for example, 29 cases of Covid-19 have been reported, 67 in Turin: very high numbers compared to the rest of the country.

In France, one week earlier, infected people were 118 among detainees and 292 among the staff; in Spain, on 12 May, they were 60 and 318 respectively.

In the USA, as of May 15, they were 29,814 and 9,231 respectively, and 415 detainees and 38 workers died.

SPACE, TODAY MORE THAN EVER, IS VITAL

In 25 prisons, cells with less than 3 sq.m.

In 25 of the 98 prisons visited by Antigone in 2019, we found cells where the minimum standard of 3 square meters per prisoner was not met. In 14 visited institutes, the most crowded cells housed 5 prisoners, in 13 prisons, cells were hosting 6, in two penitentiaries there were cells with 7, in 5 we found cells housing 8 people and in 3, Poggioreale, Pozzuoli and Bolzano, cells were hosting 12 people at the same time.

THE DETENTION SPACE MUST ENSURE HIGH HYGIENE STANDARDS

In 50% of the cells, there is no shower

In 45 prisons, about half of the visited ones, there were cells without hot water and in 52, well over 50%, there were cells without showers, which forces prisoners to use communal showers. In 8 of the visited institutes, there were cells where the toilet was part of the cell, rather than in a separate room. Access to natural light and the ventilation of the rooms are reduced by the presence of screens on the windows, which were found in 29 out of 98 institutes.

AN AGING PRISON POPULATION

In 2019, detainees over sixty years old doubled. One of the oldest detained population in Europe

Crowded prisons then, and increasingly elderly inmates. At the end of 2009, less than 40% of prisoners were over 40 years old while at the end of 2019, they were over 50%. The percentage of those over 60 has more than doubled passing from 4.1% to 8.6%. It is a prison population older than the European average. Detainees over 50, at the beginning of 2019 were 25% of the total. Only in Bulgaria, they were more (35%), compared to a European average of 16%.

DRUG LAWS GREATLY IMPACT ON PRISON NUMBERS

A third of the detainees are imprisoned for the violation of drug laws. Different laws would save one billion euros.



In Italy, 32% of detainees are convicted for a drug offense, while the European average is 18%. In 2019, almost 30% of detainees admitted in prisons were drug abusers, and they represent more than a quarter of the prison population.

VERY HEAVY SENTENCES

Growing numbers of lifers. Italy is not the country of the lenience of punishment

Data show how unfounded is the stereotype that in Italy those who enter prison get out immediately. 27% had a sentence between 5 and 10 years (twice as long as France, compared to a European average of 20.5%), 17% between 10 and 20 years (European average of 12%), and 6% more than 20 years (European average of 2.5%). Life imprisonment was (and is) more than the average: 4.4%, compared with an average of 3%.

PRE-TRIAL DETENTION HAS A GREAT IMPACT ON PRISON NUMBERS

One-third of the prisoners are pre-trial detainees

As it is well known, Italy stands out for the high percentage of prisoners awaiting trial: at the beginning of 2019, they were 33%, ten points above the European average (of 23%).

THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN DETAINEES DECREASES IN TIME

The number of foreigners has decreased by 4.36% in the last 11 years. They are detained for less serious crimes and with shorter sentences

On 31 December 2019, there were 19,888 foreign prisoners in Italian prisons, having decreased by 4.36% and 1,674 people in eleven years. The percentage of detained foreigners out of the total number of foreigners resident in the country fell from 0.6% in 2008 to 0.4% in 2019. The most represented nations in prison are Morocco (18.4% of detained foreigners), Romania (12% progressively decreasing), Albania (12.1%), Tunisia (10.2%), Nigeria (8.4%). The rate of foreigners accessing alternative measures is also lower: they account for 17.5% of those under the care of the system of alternative measures to detention. Here, too, the most represented nations are Morocco, Albania, Romania, Tunisia, and Nigeria. The data on crimes and penalties tell us that foreigners generally commit less serious crimes and are sentenced to less severe penalties. The most commonly committed crimes concern the violation of drug law (35.8%). The next share is represented by crimes against the person (30.97%) while it is only 2.4% for mafia-related crimes. Foreigners sentenced to life imprisonment make up only 6.2% of the total number of lifers. Foreigners, on the other hand, account for 44.5% of the total number of those sentenced to serve less than one year.

JUVENILES IN PENAL INSTITUTES FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS (IPM). A SYSTEM THAT RESISTS AND IS NOT CONGESTED

At the end of December, juveniles were 65 less than the previous year. On average they remain in prison 102 days. Today they are less than 300.

If at the beginning of 2019 the Italian Penal Institutes for Juvenile Offenders hosted 440 minors, a year later in the 17 IPMs there were 375 people (of which 23 women), compared to 12,836 under the care of the Juvenile Justice Services. Foreign minors (who are more than 40% of the total juvenile prison population) are overrepresented in IPMs, in fact only one minor out of four under the care of the Juvenile Social Service is a foreigner. On average minors remain in prison 102 days. With the Coronavirus emergency, the number of admissions in prisons has decreased further. While it had remained substantially unchanged until March 15, in the following month it fell by 74 units to 298 inmates. The number of minors in ministerial and private communities remained substantially unchanged, with 1,034 at the beginning of 2019 and 1,104 a year later. On 15 April 2020, there were 1,062 minors, having decreased by less than 4% compared to the previous month. As of mid-April, there were no positive Covid-19 people among the juveniles detained in IPMs or among those hosted by the Communities.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Crime tends to be a male problem. Women are 4.3% of the total number of inmates. 34 children are in jail with their mothers

On 30 April 2020, there were 2,224 women prisoners in Italy, 4.13% of the detained population, the lowest numbers ever in the last few years. Compared to 29 February, there were 478 fewer women prisoners.



The detained women are scattered among the four women's prisons in Italy - in Rome ("G. Stefanini" Rebibbia Femminile), Pozzuoli, Trani, Venice ("Giudecca") - and the 44 women's sections in men's prisons: 519 female prisoners in the former, 1,705 in the latter.

Women with children under 3 years of age are 34 on 30 April 2020 (with 40 children), but there were 54 (with 59 children) just two months earlier, on February 29. They are located in ICAMs (low-security institutes) in Lauro, Salerno, Bologna, Rome Rebibbia Femminile, Bollate, Milan San Vittore, Turin Le Vallette, Florence "Sollicciano" and Venice "Giudecca".

A TYPICAL DETAINEE'S SKETCH

Low schooling, works sporadically, insufficient training. Liguria, Molise, Sardegna, Trentino Alto Adige and Veneto without training courses

Out of the 60,769 inmates present on 31 December 2019, 705 were graduates, 4,868 had a high school diploma, 714 a vocational school diploma, 19,485 a middle school diploma, 6,393 a primary school diploma, 882 were without any qualifications.

The number of illiterates continues to grow: in 2019 they were 1,054 (two years ago, in 2017, they were less than 700).

On 31 December 2019, there were 18,070 inmates involved in work, which means 29.74% of the total number of inmates. The overwhelming majority were employed by the Prison Administration (86.82%) mainly for institutes' services (82.30% of them) related to cleaning, meal delivery, and other small tasks. 4.45% of the people employed by the Administration were engaged in internal workshops (first of all tailoring, carpentry, and assembly of various components), 1.14% in agricultural settlements, 7% in building maintenance tasks, and 5.12% in external services ex art. 21 of the Penitentiary Law (work outside the prison). Of the 2,381 people who worked for other employers, 28.56% did so outside the prison ex art. 21 O.P., 33.9% were semi-freedom inmates, 8.86% worked for private businesses inside the prison, while 28.69% worked for cooperatives inside the prison.

The average number of people involved in community service according to art. 20-ter O.P., as amended by the Legislative Decree of October 2018, is 1.7% of the total number of prisoners.

In the second half of 2019, 203 vocational training courses were activated in Italian prisons and 2,506 prisoners subscribed (901 foreigners). 119 courses were completed and 1,164 people ended them successfully (429 foreigners). The national picture is very uneven, with as many as 5 regions (Liguria, Molise, Sardinia, Trentino Alto Adige, and Veneto) that did not activate any course.

DISTANCE LEARNING. AN INNOVATIVE PROJECT TO INVEST ON

A project that reduces the distance with real life

The Cisco Academy already present in Bollate with several courses, decided to grant free Webex meetings to the structures that requested them and 56 institutes (including Opera, San Vittore, Regina Coeli, Secondigliano, Cremona and others) have joined the initiative. Among the different programs for the realization of videoconferences, we mention the use of Meet, both for middle and high school classes, and for literacy courses in institutes such as Bergamo and Terni; or Zoom, which in Velletri was initially adopted for fifth-grade primary school classes, with 40-minute sessions, and then extended to other classes, even if with shorter connections. In some institutes, video lessons have been organized only for some levels of education and only for a few hours per week (in San Gimignano video lessons are addressed to the fifth class twice a week) or by dividing the students into shifts; in others, to make up for the lack of PCs, a smart whiteboard has been used in the classroom. There are also distance learning projects activated in the penal institutions of Volterra, Massa Marittima, Chieti, Milan Bicocca, Padua, and Syracuse, and others in the start-up phase, in Catania, Treviso, Livorno, and Gorgona.

SUICIDES AND SELF-HARM

In prison, in 2019 people committed suicide 13.5 times more than outside

In 2019, there were a total of 53 suicides in Italian prisons (a figure confirmed by both the DAP and Ristretti Orizzonti) compared to an average number of detainees of 60,610, which means a rate of 8.7 suicides every 10,000 prisoners, compared to a rate in the whole country of 0.65 suicides per 10,000 inhabitants. As of 14 May, there were 17 suicides in prison in 2020.



As far as acts of self-harm, among the institutes visited by Antigone in 2019, Poggioreale stands out in absolute numbers with 426 acts (18.79 every 100 inmates); while the highest value for every 100 inmates is held by the Campobasso institute with 110.43 acts for every 100 inmates, followed by Belluno with almost 100 (98.72).

PRISON STAFF

Directors are dramatically understaffed

The prison police are the most numerous professional group in prison institutions. They have an expected number of staff of 37,181 policemen and women and an while understaffing of 12.3%. In the north the lack of staff reaches -14.7%, in central Italy, it is very similar (-13.9%) while in the south it is -9.4%. The number of prisoners per policeman is 1.9, better than the European average, 2.6 prisoners per officer (according to SPACE data of 2019). The number of educators is 774, while the expected number of staff is 895 (-13.5%). This means 1 educator for every 79 inmates. Central Italy is the one that suffers the most from the lack of this professional group (-15.7%) while in northern Italy the understaffing is 11.5%.

There is also a shortage of prison directors. According to the data collected by Antigone's Observatory, only just over half of the visited institutes have a director exclusively for that institute. Fortunately, a call for the recruitment of 35 new directors has been announced.

According to the data collected by Antigone's Observatory, it is possible to see that the ration between volunteers and inmates is 1 to 13 while cultural mediators are present in 9% of the penitentiary institutes.

PRISON COSTS

3 billion a year. 134 euros a day the cost for each prisoner. Decriminalization is a great economic advantage and would allow a general tax reduction.

The administration of justice costs to the Italian State are 8.7 billion Euros in 2020; only the prison costs are 3 billion Euros. This hasn't happened since 2013. In recent years the budget has always remained around 2.8 billion. The funds that have probably been allocated in recent months to deal with the Coronavirus are not included in this section. Compared to 2019, there is a significant increase in the budget for prison police costs, which with 2 billion represents 69.4% of the DAP budget. The chapter dedicated to prison construction increased by 20 million to 72.6 million. In 2019 this chapter had already been doubled compared to previous years (from 26.6 million to 52.2 million), certainly to meet the need for repairs of the penitentiary institutions. The expenditure chapter for administrative staff and magistrates decreased by 3.7 million. The last cut of 9 million (instead of 45 million, as foreseen in the draft budget) was made to the budget on reception, prison treatment, and reintegration policies. Taking into account the number of prisoners at the end of February, the daily cost per prisoner is €134.50.

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES TO DETENTION

In twelve years alternative measures increased by almost 23 thousand people. A total of 110 thousand people are under the care of the offices for social services and alternatives to detention. One every 200 inmates commits an offense during the measure. Yet the DAP's budget is 10 times that of the Department of Juvenile Justice and Community Measures

Without alternative measures, prison numbers would have exploded. At the end of 2008, between home detention, social services, and semi-freedom, there were 7,530 people involved; 12 years later, on 15 April 2020, there were 30,416. In 2008 there were 2,257 people in home detention. On 15 April 2020, there were 10,826. Probation in 2008 involved just over 4,000 people. On 15 April 2020, the people involved were 18,598. At the same time, the detained population increased steadily from 2015 until March 2020 (i.e. until the beginning of the health emergency).

The total number of people in alternative measures as of 15 April 2020, including probation, was 61,386. The number of adults under the care of offices of social services' offices was therefore about 110,000.

In the first half of 2019, out of 44,287 alternative measures, only 1,509 had been revoked: 3.4%. Of these, only 0.5% (201) were revoked because of the commission of a new offense. And they cost much less, less than a tenth of the prison cost. In 2020, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Community Measures - which is in charge of alternative measures to detention - cost 3.16% of the total budget of the Ministry of Justice. The Department of Prison Administration costs 34.3%.

41-BIS AND HIGH SECURITY

A clarification on the numbers



As of May 18, 4 prisoners held under the 41-bis regime have been granted home detention for health reasons. In total, there are 747 prisoners under the 41-bis regime (of whom 12 are women). 390 have a final sentence. The average age is 55 years, 35% (263) is over 60.

494 high-security inmates were released of which 253 were awaiting trial; of the other 245, only 6 were released thanks to the measures provided for in the "Cura Italia" decree with a decision of the Surveillance Judge.

In all, there are 9,014 prisoners under the high-security 3 regime (AS3) (8,796 men and 218 women) distributed into 55 institutes. In high security 2 (AS2) there are 84 detainees, of which 52 are detained for Islamic terrorism. Of the 84, 75 are men and 9 women (a reduction of 20% compared to 2018).

HEALTH IN PRISON BEFORE COVID-19

An unsatisfactory service. More than one in 4 prisoners is given a psychiatric therapy. In some institutes almost all of them

The presence of a doctor is guaranteed 24 hours a day in 59 of the 98 institutes visited by Antigone. The data on the presence of the computerized medical record (that follows the detainee more easily than the paper one) appears very discouraging. It exists in 24 of the visited institutes; however, 10 of them are in the region of Emilia Romagna and 5 in Tuscany. While in the center and south the computerized medical record is present only in 4 of the visited institutes (two of which are ICATT) while it is absent in prisons located on the islands. Gynecological services are guaranteed in 22 of the female institutes or institutes with female sections, while in 4 they are absent.

As far as mental health is concerned, the WHO also confirms mental disorder as the main illness in prison. Mental disorder is both the cause and the effect of imprisonment.

In the 98 visited prisons, an average of 27.6% of prisoners were given a psychiatric therapy. The records are set by the Spoleto prison, where 97% of inmates were given a psychiatric therapy, in Lucca (90%), and Vercelli (86%). The presence of psychiatrists in these prisons was guaranteed for an average of 7.4 hours per week (every 100 prisoners), while psychologists were present for an average of 11.8 hours per week (every 100 prisoners). In 19 of the visited penitentiaries, there was a mental health section.

INTERNEES IN REMS

One man dies in silence. Fortunately limited contagions

During the health emergency, one person among the guests of the Residences for the Execution of Security Measures (REMS) died, it is a man hospitalized in the REMS of San Maurizio Canavese (Piedmont).

According to the monitoring carried out by the *Observatory for the abolition of Judicial Psychiatric Hospitals (OPG) and REMS* (promoted by StopOpg in collaboration with Antigone) and the National Coordination DSM REMS on the impact of the Covid-19 emergency, there is a limited rate of infection among the guests (only one REMS with two infected patients); while in five REMS, there were infected workers. In all REMS, the prevention measures provided for in the ministerial regulations have been implemented, including, as far as possible, social distancing; where possible, efforts have also been made to organize spaces with single rooms; external activities and visits have been reduced, which has inevitably led to difficulties; however, internal activities, telephone calls, and video calls have increased. The internal atmosphere and collaboration are generally declared to be rather good; as indicators, it is possible to cite: a low number of negative events, self-harm, and violence towards others, no physical restraints were used and protests were put in place. On the other hand, collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and with the Judiciary have worsened with a negative impact on the projects.

CRIME IN ITALY

A constant reduction that becomes more evident in the days of the Coronavirus

The trend of crime in Italy has registered a further decrease during this emergency: between 1 January and 31 March 2020, the overall total of crimes showed a downward trend (-29.2% compared to the same period in 2019).

According to the Ministry of the Interior, 410,726 crimes were reported in the first quarter of 2020 compared to 579,735 in the same period of 2019. Among the crimes that significantly decreased in comparison with 2019, there are: home robberies (-20.4%); bank robberies (-40.7%); robberies in post offices (-59.4%); robberies in public streets (-23%); extortion (-42.4%); thefts by tearing off (-34.7%); thefts carried out with dexterity (-31.9%); home thefts (-32%); car thefts (-29.1%); handling stolen goods (-31.1%). Among the crimes that significantly decreased in comparison with 2019, there is usury (+9.6%).



INFECTED WITH COMMON SENSE. ANTIGONE'S TEN PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

1. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF OFFENCES
2. REDUCE THE PRISON POPULATION BY OVERCOMING A PRISON-CENTRIC VIEW OF THE PENALTY
3. CHANGE THE LAW ON DRUGS BY REDUCING ITS REPRESSIVE IMPACT
4. ALLOW SMARTPHONES AND LONG-DISTANCE CONTACTS TO MAINTAIN THE RELATIONS WITH FAMILIES AND FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE PERSONALIZED PLAN OF THE INMATE
5. INVESTING IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES
6. TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD
7. INFORMING PRISONERS ON ALL INTERNAL RULES AND PRACTICES
8. A MORE ACTIVE ROLE OF THE HEALTH SYSTEM (ASL). NEW DOCTORS AND STABLE PERSONNEL
9. RECOGNIZING THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERING
10. HIRE 300 PRISON DIRECTORS.

TIMELINE OF ABOUT THREE MONTHS OF FACTS, NUMBERS, LAWS, AND STORIES IN PRISON

The Covid, the protests, the deaths, the norms, the appointments, the debates

22 February: First DAP internal regulation: suspension of transfers of detainees to and from institutes located in the "red zone"; prohibition to enter in prisons for anyone from the "red zone"; discretion of the directors to apply restrictions on the meetings and the activities they deem necessary and appropriate; possibility of replacing family meetings with Skype or telephone calls.

29 February: total prison population: 61,230.

March 4: Antigone writes to Prime Minister Conte and Justice Minister Bonafede asking that each prisoner may telephone for 20 minutes a day.

7-8-9 March: riots in 49 prisons (13 dead in Modena and Rieti: Salvatore Piscitelli Cuono (40 years old), Hafedh Chouchane (36), Slim Agrebi (41), Alis Bakili (53), Ben Masmia Lofti (40), Erial Ahmadi (36), Arthur Isuzu (30), Abdellah Rouan (34), Hadidi Ghazi (36), Marco Boattini (35), Ante Culic (41), Carlos Samir Perez Alvarez (28), Haitem Kedri (29). The first autopsies confirm the cause of death to be the ingestion of methadone and medicine poisoning.

14 March: proposals with Cgil, Abele Group, Arci, Anpi, and others to reduce overcrowding and ensure long-distance contacts.

March 14: Antigone receives the first report of violence committed inside a prison from the sister of a detainee of the Milan "Opera" prison. She said that on March 9, following the riot carried out by the inmates because of the "Covid-19" risk of contagion, many law enforcement officers had entered the prison in riot gear shortly after the riot had stopped. She also said that many of the family members had gone in front of the prison and had seen the arrival of police vehicles. She also said that another family member had managed to talk to the prisoner: "they threw us to the ground and hit us with truncheons, holding us with their feet. Three or four of them came in the cells." It was only the first of many reports that were to come from the Milan "Opera" prison and, in the following days, also from other prisons: Pavia, Santa Maria Capua Vetere, and Melfi. Within a month we filed four formal complaints to the Public Prosecutor's Office. The competent Prosecutor's Offices are carrying out investigations to reconstruct the events.

17 March: publication of the Cura Italia decree with two articles on home detention. Article 123 identifies home detention as the main instrument to reduce the detained population; electronic monitoring is applied to all prisoners with a final sentence and a residual sentence between 6 and 18 months. According to these calculations, there should have been at least 2,500 electronic monitoring devices available. Since the introduction of electronic monitoring (in 2001), the State has spent a total of 130 million Euros (up until 2017 in favor of Telecom, then RTI Fastweb / Vitrociset).



18 March: Antigone files a formal complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office reporting the death of 9 inmates in the Modena prison because of omissions and negligence, and a formal complaint reporting torture in the Milan Opera prison.

19 March: a 51-year-old penitentiary police officer dies. He had been out of duty since December.

22 March: DAP internal regulation extends the suspension of family meetings April 3 and encourages dialogue with detainees, video and phone calls.

24 March: Justice Minister Bonafede reports to the Parliament on prison releases and announces the purchase of 1,600 smartphones plus another 1,600 in the future

26 March: a 52-year-old prison policeman dies in Milan because of Covid-19.

31 March: the number of detainees falls to 57,405. The National Guarantor of people deprived of liberty assumes a key role in providing information

2 April: a 76-year-old prisoner dies in Bologna of Covid-19.

7 April: Antigone files an official complaint reporting the tortures that took place in the prison of Melfi

10 April: a 58-year-old pre-trial detainee dies of Covid-19, in Voghera

14 April: an internee in the REMS of San Maurizio Canavese (Turin) dies of Covid-19.

20 April: the Milan Surveillance Tribunal grants home detention to Francesco Bonura. Antigone files an official complaint reporting the tortures that took place in the prisons of Santa Maria Capua Vetere and Pavia.

23 April: the Sassari Surveillance Tribunal grants home detention to Pasquale Zagaria

28 April: the Minister of Justice appoints Roberto Tartaglia as Deputy Head of the DAP

30 April: total prison population: 53,904

2 May: Head of the DAP, Francesco Basentini, resigns

10 May: rules on the release of prisoners belonging to organized crime are approved.

10 May: a decree with norms on the release of prisoners belonging to organized crime is approved.

12 May: the Minister of Justice appoints Bernardo Petralia as head of the DAP

15 May: total prison population: 52,679.

The full report is available on Antigone's website.

