



NODO ALLA GOLA

Antigone's 20th Report on Detention Conditions in Italy

Executive summary

The full report can be found at www.rapportoantigone.it

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ANTIGONE'S VISITS

99 VISITS IN 2023. FROM THE LARGEST (POGGIOREALE IN NAPLES) TO THE SMALLEST (ICAM IN LAURO)

During 2023, the Antigone Observatory visited 99 penitentiary institutions. All records of the visits made are posted on our Observatory website. The 99 visits covered all Italian regions. The largest prison visited, which housed 2,022 people deprived of liberty at the time, was Poggioreale in Naples. The smallest was the Open Prison for Detainee Mothers (ICAM) in Lauro, which housed 7 mothers with 7 children.

OVERCROWDING

RECORD OCCUPANCY RATES. THERE ARE OVER 13,500 PEOPLE MORE THAN THE ACTUAL CAPACITY

Despite an official capacity of 51,178, the people detained in our prisons as of March 31, 2024 were 61,049. The most recent available data, obtained from the Ministry of Justice's factsheets, and updated to June 6, 2023, however, tells us that there were 3,640 unavailable places at that time. This is a number that changes over time, but reading the Ministry's Report on the Administration of Justice for the year 2023, we find that the number of unavailable places should trend at best towards a "physiological threshold of 5% of unavailable places." At least 2,500 fewer detention places at each point in time are thus inevitable.

DETAINED PEOPLE GROW BY AN AVERAGE OF 331 PER MONTH

The number of detained people continues to grow and in the last year even more sharply. From the end of 2019 to the end of 2020, due to the deflationary measures taken during the pandemic, prison admissions had dropped by 7,405. But they immediately rose again. First slowly, with an increase in admissions of 770 in 2021, which was then followed by a growth of 2,062 in 2022 and even 3,970 in 2023. In the last year, therefore, the growth in admissions has averaged 331 units per month, an alarming growth rate, which if confirmed in 2024 would take us over 65,000 presences by the end of the year.

THE CAUSES OF GROWTH

The causes of the growth can be summarised as follows: longer sentences imposed, less willingness of the surveillance judge to grant alternative measures to detention or early release, introduction of new criminal laws and police practices leading to an increase in admissions.

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CRIME RATES DO NOT JUSTIFY PRISON OVERCROWDING

From January 1st to July 31st 2023, 1,228,454 crimes were committed in Italy, 5.5% less than in the same period last year. A projection of these data on the whole year allows us to observe that the decrease in crime has resumed. In fact, according to ISTAT data on crimes reported by the police to the judicial authorities, there has been a continuous decrease in numbers over the last 9 years. Only during the two-year period 2020-2022 has there been an increase in the number of reports, but this is due to the collapse in numbers during the pandemic.

THE NUMBER OF HOMICIDES SETTLES AT THE PRE-PANDEMIC PERIOD

In 2023, 315 homicides were committed, 115 of which involved female victims. The figure, therefore, stabilises at pre-pandemic levels: in fact, 315 murders were committed in 2019 (it was 314 in 2022).

20,000 PEOPLE ARE DETAINED FOR DRUG-LAW VIOLATIONS. PUNISHING MINOR CASES WILL PRODUCE ANOTHER WAVE OF OVERCROWDING

From the observation of the Ministry of Justice data, it can be noticed that the most represented crime category is that of crimes against property, with 34,126 prisoners compared to 32,050 in 2022 (an increase of 6.5%), followed by the number of people detained for crimes against the person, which are 26,211 (7.4% more than in 2022), and crimes for violations of the drug law, which amount to 20,566 (6.35% more than in 2022).

SINCE THE GOVERNMENT TOOK OFFICE IN SEPTEMBER 2022, ALMOST 20 NEW CRIMES AND NEW CRIMINAL OFFENCES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED

The season of new crimes and penalty increases began with the "Rave decree" continued with the "Caivano decree", then with the "Security decree", the latter still under consideration in Parliament, which punishes: possession of material for the purpose of terrorism (from 2 to 6 years), arbitrary occupation of property intended as someone else's domicile (from 2 to 7 years), amending Article 600-octies of the Penal Code by inserting inducement and coercion to begging (penalty from 2 to 6 years), amending again Article 583-quater of the Penal Code to punish those who cause bodily harm to an officer or a judicial police officer (from 2 to 5 years), and the crime of prison riot (2 to 8 years) is introduced.

THE OFFICIAL NATIONAL OCCUPANCY RATE IS 119%. IT RISES TO 125% CONSIDERING THE CLOSED WARDS

The official occupancy rate rises to 119.3% on a national level. The highest occupancy rates at regional level continue to be recorded in Apulia (152.1%), Lombardy (143.9%) and Veneto (134.4%). Considering the provisionally closed wards, the national average

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crowding rate rises to 125.6%, in Apulia to 160.1%, in Lombardy to 151.4% and in Veneto to 141.5%.

THE MOST OVERCROWDED PRISON: BRESCIA, LODI, FOGGIA, TARANTO, ROME “REGINA COELI”

At the end of March, the most overcrowded prisons were Brescia Canton Mombello (209.3%), Lodi (200%), Foggia (195.6%), Taranto (184.8%), Rome “Regina Coeli” (181.8%), Varese (179.2%), Udine (179%), while overall, the prisons with an occupancy rate above 150% were now 39, scattered all over Italy, and together they host 14,313 detainees.

NO CONSTRUCTION PLAN CAN HOLD. IT WOULD TAKE SEVERAL BILLION EUROS

The average construction time for a prison in recent history has been about 8-10 years. The average cost of a prison for 400 people is about 30 million euros. This means that it would take about 40 new prisons at a cost of 1.2 billion euros. Not to mention the need to hire at least 300 police officers per prison, and thus a total of 12,000 prison police officers, in addition to all the other professionals, to the services needed to operate the institutions.

THE DAILY COST OF A PERSON DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY IS 150 EUROS PER DAY. A PERSON IN AN ALTERNATIVE MEASURE COSTS A THIRD AND PROVIDES GREATER SECURITY

A person in an alternative measure to detention costs an average of 50 euros per day. In contrast, a person detained in prison costs about 150 euros per day. A person on alternative measures has a recidivism rate 3 times lower than someone who has served the entire sentence in detention. If we send 12,000 people to alternative measures we would save 438 million euros a year. Or it could be used for prevention anyway.

22,180 DETAINEES HAVE LESS THAN THREE YEARS LEFT TO SERVE

If a part (those who have the legal requirements) of the 22,180 persons serving a residual sentence of less than three years had the opportunity to access alternative measures to detention, the problem of overcrowding would find a partial solution.

73.5% OF THE DETAINEES ARE SERVING A FINAL SENTENCE

The percentage of persons detained with a final sentence has risen steadily in recent years; it was 73.5% at the end of 2023, an indication that new admissions, which are mainly of persons in pre-trial detention, although they have grown, have not yet led to a reversal of the trend. Finally, the number of persons in prison with a long residual sentence to be served is increasing, both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total. People with a remaining sentence of more than three years, including lifers

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(whose number 1,866), rose from 36.2% of those present in 2010 to 43.8% in 2015 and 48.7% in 2023.

THE AVERAGE AGE OF PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY GROWS. THE MOST REPRESENTED ARE THOSE BETWEEN 45 AND 49 YEARS OLD. 10% ARE OVER 60 YEARS OLD

The average age of the detained population continues to rise. The age group that has grown the most in recent years is that between 45 and 59 years old and today, with 32.2% of those present, it is definitely the most representative group of the prison population. Only 10 years ago, this group made up 25.3% of those present. In the meantime, the number of detainees over 60 years of age has also increased and now accounts for 10%.

THE NUMBERS OF DETENTION IN EUROPE

According to data made available by SPACE, the criminal statistics of the Council of Europe, and updated on January 1, 2023, if we look only at the countries of the European Union, the average detention rate is 113.8 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants. At that date, the Italian rate was 95.5 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants, just below the average. The countries with the highest rate of imprisonment are Hungary and Poland, with 203.2 and 193.8 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants respectively, demonstrating the centrality of the use of prison in less liberal systems. This is followed by all the newcomer countries that were part of the Soviet area of influence (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania). The countries with the lowest rate are the Netherlands and Finland (51.3 and 51 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants), preceded by Slovenia (66.5 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants). France, Spain and Germany have respectively a rate of 106, 97.8 and 66.8 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants.

REMS AND MENTAL HEALTH

NUMBERS IN THE REMS

As of December 31 2023, there were 577 people without or with diminished criminal responsibility housed in the 31 Rems (Residences for the Execution of Security Measures), a slightly lower number than the maximum capacity of places in Rems, which is around 600.

Of these 63 were women (11%) and 144 were foreign nationals (25%). For foreign nationals, this is an increase from 2022 (131 patients), as well as from 104 in the year 2021 and 79 in 2020. Lombardy remains a national "anomaly," having 136 people hosted in only one place, the Rems (former Forensic Psychiatric Hospital, "OPG") in Castiglione delle Stiviere (Mantua).

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TOO MANY PEOPLE GO THROUGH PRISON OR REMAIN IN PROVISIONAL SECURITY MEASURES

157 people (i.e., 1 in 5 guests) spent a period in prison before entering Rems: these are "paths" that are not very in line with the normative dictate and potentially harmful to the person's health. The number of people admitted to Rems who are serving a "provisional" security measure is rather problematic: they are 44%, or 244 people.

If we compare provisional security measures to people with no final sentence in prison in prison we will see how the phenomenon of provisionality is significantly overrepresented in Rems compared to prison whose figure is around 26% and is already among the highest in Europe.

WAITING LISTS

In spite of the Constitutional Court's decision that deemed it legitimate to have a system of 'waiting lists' to avoid overcrowding the Rems, calls for an indiscriminate increase in the number of beds have not subsided. A measure that is hardly justifiable from a therapeutic point of view and not at all sustainable from an economic point of view, which would risk betraying the reform to close the judicial psychiatric hospitals. At the end of January 2024 there were 755 people "on the waiting list" for a place in the Rems, 45 of them "waiting" in prison, in many cases without a valid detention title. Sicily is the region with the longest waiting list (150 people) followed by Lazio (104 people).

PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITY IN PRISON

In prison, the presence of widespread psychosocial disability remains one of the most often reported problems to the Antigone Observatory: 12% of detained people (almost 6,000) have a serious psychiatric diagnosis. The massive use of psychotropic drugs remains the main tool with which mental health is "managed" in prison: 20% of detained people (more than 15 thousand) regularly use mood stabilisers, antipsychotics and antidepressants, that is, the type of psychotropic drugs that can have important side effects; 40% (30 thousand people) use sedatives or hypnotics. In 2023, Antigone recorded 122 Compulsory Health Treatments (TSO) carried out in prison: an illegal practice if carried out within prison sections without admitting the person to a hospital, as required by law.

FOREIGN PEOPLE, MINORS AND WOMEN

DECREASE OF 5.7% OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS IN THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN NATIONALS IN PRISON

As of March 31, 2024, there were 19,108 people with foreign nationality deprived of liberty in Italy's adult prisons, accounting for 31.3% of the total prisoners population, a substantial decrease from 15 years ago, when it exceeded 37%.

THE DETENTION RATE OF FOREIGN NATIONALS ALSO DECLINES SIGNIFICANTLY

In 2009, people with foreign nationality in Italy numbered 3,891,295 and accounted for 6.5% of the resident population while in 2023 they came to be 5,141,341 and account for 8.7% of the resident population. While in 2009 the detention rate of foreign people (percentage of foreign detainees compared to the total number of foreigners in Italy) was 0.61%, today it is 0.37%. It is a sign that there is no crime emergency related to migrants and that any security campaign that starts from emphasising the number of foreign nationals in prison is a propaganda exercise that does not function as a serious investigative, social and crime prevention action.

MOST REPRESENTED NATIONALITIES IN PRISON. THE POSITIVE CASE OF ROMANIAN DETAINEES WITH A PERCENTAGE DROP OF A THIRD IN 15 YEARS

The most represented nations among foreign people deprived of liberty today are: Morocco, Romania, Albania, Tunisia, Nigeria, Egypt. Compared to ten years ago, Romania's percentage weight on the total number of foreign detainees fell by 4.9%, Albania's by 3.6%, and Morocco's by 4.2%. The Romanian case is of particular interest. The detention rate of the Romanian community is now 0.19%. In 2014, Romanians had a detention rate of 0.25%. It was 0.30% in 2009. There has therefore been a percentage drop of almost a third in fifteen years. A clear sign that as the integration process progresses, as second generations consolidate and community life becomes a family life, the propensity to crime and the detention rate decrease.

FOREIGN COMMUNITIES WITH A MAJORITY OF WOMEN OFFEND LESS. FILIPINOS HAVE A LOWER CRIME RATE THAN ITALIANS

There are 415,088 Moroccans in Italy today, with a clear male predominance. The detention rate of the Moroccan community is 0.97%, ten years ago it was 0.56%: a significant growth. As a non-EU country that has seen the closure of family reunifications, there has been a lack of attention to the needs of the community and the organisation of family-type flows. When migration policies lose their sense of pragmatism, they become criminogenic. In communities where there is a prevalence of women, the detention rate is decreasing. This is the case for the Filipino community, for

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example. There are only 89 Filipino detainees with an insignificant detention rate of 0.057% lower than that of Italians, which is 0.076%.

PRISONS WHERE FOREIGN NATIONALS ARE OVER 50%

There are many prisons where foreign nationals are more than 50% of the total number of detainees, especially in the north of the country and in Sardinia (also because of the willingness to go to work in penal colonies): Bologna (437 out of 885 people deprived of liberty), Modena (320 out of 534), Trieste (143 out of 237), Rieti (272 out of 482), Genoa Marassi (368 out of 705), Como (206 out of 402), Cremona (350 out of 536), Lecco (54 out of 88), Milan San Vittore (689 out of 1130), Mantua (79 out of 142), Pavia (367 out of 673), Vigevano (186 out of 359), Busto Arsizio (225 out of 416), Alessandria (113 out of 196), Cuneo (191 out of 339), Is Arenas (56 out of 78), Isili (54 of 92), Mamone (94 of 141), Firenze Gozzini (53 of 93), Firenze Sollicciano (354 of 544), Grosseto (13 of 26), Gorgona (45 of 79), Lucca (37 of 65), Pisa (163 of 286), Bolzano (76 out of 115), Perugia (251 out of 421), Aosta (89 out of 139), Belluno (57 out of 101), Padua CC (117 out of 185), Treviso (128 out of 246), Venezia Santa Maria Maggiore (146 out of 246), Verona (309 out of 559).

FOREIGN NATIONALS HAVE A LOWER CRIMINAL PROFILE. 7.12% OF THEM ARE SERVING LIFE SENTENCES

A look at the socio-criminal profile of foreign nationals in prison shows us that they tend to commit less serious crimes and are recipients of shorter sentences than Italian detainees. Foreign nationals make up 7.12% of the total number of people serving life sentences and as many as 44.26% of those sentenced to less than a year in prison, a sign among other things of their limited access to alternative measures to detention compared to Italians.

THE NUMBER OF DETAINEES IN JUVENILE PRISONS GROWS DANGEROUSLY. EFFECT OF CAIVANO DECREE: OVER 500 DETAINEES

At the end of February 2024, there were 532 juveniles detained in Italy's 17 Juvenile Prisons, representing a figure that is rapidly growing. Just two months earlier, at the end of 2023, it stood at 496. At the end of 2022, Italy's juvenile prisons housed 381 detainees. The increase, in one year, was more than 30%. The number of admissions to juvenile prisons recorded in 2023 (1,143) had never been reached in the past decade.

67.3% OF YOUTHS IN JUVENILE PRISONS ARE IN PRE-TRIAL DETENTION

Of the 523 youths detained at the end of February, 312 were juveniles and 211 were young adults. There were only 18 girls, 7 of whom were foreigners. Foreigners in general made up 51% of the total. The number of juvenile detainees ranged from 63 in Milan to 8 in Quartucciu (Cagliari). Pontremoli is the only entirely female IPM in Italy and currently houses 13 girls. Only 30 youths, 5.7% of the total, are in prison only serving sentences.

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Another 27% have a mixed legal status, with at least one final conviction and other proceedings pending. The remaining percentage, by far the majority, are in prison with no final conviction but only on remand.

JUVENILE FOREIGNERS ARE GIVEN FEWER OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCESS COMMUNITY MEASURES

Regardless of the seriousness of the crime committed, those with stronger ties in the territory and more initial opportunities also have a better chance of avoiding incarceration. A look at the situation of foreign young adults provides evidence of this, given their greater difficulty in accessing alternatives to prison than Italian young adults. In 2023, in fact, they accounted for 29.2% of the total number of people under the supervision of the juvenile justice services, 38.7% of placements in community residential facilities, and 48.7% of prison admissions. The more restrictive the measure, the more foreign juveniles are proportionally represented.

THE MAJORITY OF FOREIGN JUVENILE DETAINEES COME FROM NORTH AFRICA

73.2% of foreign young people who entered juvenile prison during 2023 came from North Africa, in particular from Tunisia (133), Morocco (118), Egypt (113), and Algeria (40). 19.6% were from European countries.

WOMEN ARE 4.3% OF THE PRISON POPULATION. A LOWER PERCENTAGE THAN THE EUROPEAN AVERAGE

The percentage figure for women detained in Italian prisons remains substantially stable. There are 2,619 women, 4.3% of the total prison population. A percentage that has seen only small fluctuations in recent decades. The average female presence in Council of Europe countries is 5.4%, according to the latest available data.

WOMEN ARE CONFINED IN 4 FEMALE PRISONS AND 45 SECTIONS AT MALE PRISONS

There are only four all-female prisons on Italian territory (in Rome, Venice, Pozzuoli and Trani). They house 646 women, less than a quarter of the total number of female prisoners. The remaining (more than three-quarters) are found in the 45 women's sections within male institutions, some of which are very small: the Reggio Emilia prison houses 14 women, the Piacenza prison houses 16, the Mantova prison 9, and the Barcelona Pozzo di Gotto prison 5. These are situations in which the daytime separation of men and women is likely to adversely affect the provision of meaningful activities toward the female ward.

THERE ARE 22 CHILDREN IN PRISON WITH THEIR MOTHERS

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A total of 19 women currently live in prison with their 22 children between Icam and daycare sections of regular prisons. There were 20 with 20 children as of December 31, 2023, when there were 12 pregnant women. Among them, there was a 26-year-old woman who lost her baby in Florence's Sollicciano prison early last March due to pregnancy complications. It had already happened in July 2022 that a woman lost her baby after feeling ill in the Milan prison of San Vittore, as well as in March 2019 in Pozzuoli. In Rebibbia in Rome, however, in August 2021 a woman gave birth suddenly in her own cell with only the help of her cellmate. Despite all this, the government's new "Security decree" (C. 1660) under discussion in Parliament provides for the abolition of the mandatory deferment of the execution of the sentence for pregnant women.

MOST CRIMES COMMITTED BY WOMEN ARE AGAINST PROPERTY

Among the crimes ascribed to women in prison, the most represented category is crimes against property, which at the end of 2023 accounted for 28.7% of all crimes ascribed to women prisoners. The corresponding percentage for men was 23.7%.

FOREIGN WOMEN ARE DECLINING IN PRISONS. 26.8% OF DETAINED WOMEN ARE NOT ITALIAN. THEY WERE 36% ABOUT 10 YEARS AGO

On December 31, 2023, there were 701 foreign women prisoners, accounting for 26.8% of women in prison and 3.7% of foreign detainees as a whole. The top three most represented nationalities were Romanian (168 women), Nigerian (95 women) and Moroccan (40 women). Foreign women deprived of liberty have been steadily declining in numbers. One year earlier, at the end of 2022, they made up 30.5% of the total number of detained women, while ten years ago they accounted for over ten percentage points more.

WOMEN ACCESS THE ALTERNATIVE MEASURES SYSTEM BY A GREATER PERCENTAGE

A look at alternative measures to detention shows us that women are much more represented here than their percentage presence in prison. At the end of February, 4,025 women were serving one of the three classic alternative measures, 9.5% of the total number of people in alternative measures.

THERE ARE 70 TRANSGENDER WOMEN DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

Transgender detained women, who number about 70 in Italian prisons, are allocated by the Prison Administration according to their biological sex, thus in male institutions, but are kept separate from the rest of the prisoners population.

SCHOOL AND WORK

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1,760 SCHOOL COURSES WERE ORGANISED. HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE. TOO MANY TRANSFERS BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

In the 2022 - 2023 school year, a total of 1,760 school courses were provided with a total of 19,372 people enrolled, and the percentage of enrolled detainees who succeed in obtaining promotion stands at 47.8%. Among those enrolled, 9,002 were foreigners, almost half of whom were engaged in literacy and Italian language learning courses. High school dropout rates are confirmed, also due to transfers and organisational problems: less than half of the detainees enrolled in school courses (47.8%) obtained promotion.

IN THE SOUTH, PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL COURSES IS HIGHER

Our direct survey shows a rather uneven and differentiated situation not only between regions but also between institutions. There is a difference between northern and southern regions, where the average number of detainees enrolled in the latter tends to be higher than the national average, such as in Campania, which stands at 35.85%, or in Calabria, which stands at 31.57%. In some northern regions, on the other hand, the average number of detainees enrolled is below the national figure, such as in Lombardy where it is 20.78% or in Piedmont where it is 22.91%.

THE SCHOOL SITUATION ALSO CHANGES WITHIN THE REGION

Within each Region it is possible to detect a substantial difference between large versus small institutions as in the case of Campania where, while in Icam Lauro there is an average of 85.7% of people deprived of liberty involved in school courses, in the Naples Secondigliano prison only 8.2% of detainees are involved, or as in Sardinia where while in the Arbus prison there is 56.2% of detainees involved, in the Sassari prison only 7.9%. To conclude, the numbers also vary according to the type of institution, in fact while in the "case di reclusione" (for long-sentenced prisoners) there is an average coverage of 33.91%, in the "case circondariali" (for pre-trial detention and short-sentenced prisoners) on the other hand there is 26.27%. There are institutions that are more virtuous than others, with a percentage of detainees enrolled in school courses that exceeds 60%, such as the Pozzuoli women's prison (67.92%), while others are decidedly less virtuous with a very low percentage of enrollment, among them we highlight the Benevento prison (3.71%), the Brindisi prison (4.17%) and the Sassari prison (7.9%).

1,458 PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY ENROLLED IN UNIVERSITY ACCORDING TO CNUPP DATA

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Not only participation in first- and second-level schooling courses is increasing over the years, but also participation in university courses. Penitentiary University Poles, which are organised in a network called the National Conference of Penitentiary University Poles (CNUPP) established at the CRUI (Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities). Today the CNUPP has 44 universities. The balance of the monitoring carried out by CNUPP on the academic year 2022-2023 is as follows: 1,458 university students enrolled (1,406 men and 52 women), 1,270 of whom are detained in 97 penitentiary institutions and 188 are in external criminal execution or end of sentence. Among the detained students, there is no shortage of those in high-security detention (537) and those under the regime provided by Article 41-bis of the Penitentiary Law (39).

ONE IN THREE DETAINEES WORKS

According to the most recent data, 33.3% of detainees worked, a percentage in slight decrease from the previous year, when it was 35.2%.

85% OF DETAINEES WORK FOR THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION

Among working detainees, 16,305 people are found to be employed by the prison administration, accounting for 85.1% of the total number of working people deprived of liberty, and 2,848 are hired by external employers (14.9% of the total). Based on Antigone's observation, the percentages of detainees working for external employers remain very low: only 7 institutions, among the 99 visited, exceed 10% of those involved, and these are small institutions located mainly in Northern Italy or Central-Northern Italy.

PRECARIOUS WORKERS

Almost all workers for the prison administration are engaged for a few hours per week in order to involve more people.

274 VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES: A NUMBER IN SLIGHT INCREASE. LOMBARDY AND TUSCANY HAVE THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF COURSES. IN MOLISE NOT A SINGLE ONE

With regard to vocational training offered in prisons, on June 30, 2023 there were 274 active courses, a higher number of that recorded at the end of 2022, with 3,359 detainees enrolled (5.8% of the total number of detainees, compared to 4% recorded in 2022). 179 courses have been carried out, with 2,590 people enrolled, among which 2,301 were those successfully accomplished (accounting for 88.8% of the total enrolled in terminated courses). At the local level, the region reporting the highest result in terms of completed courses remains Lombardy (44), followed by Tuscany (34), which, however, is by far the region offering the most vocational training in relation to attendance. Only one course was completed in Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Liguria,

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Umbria and Valle D'Aosta, while Molise is the only region that has neither completed nor activated any courses.

SPORT

SPORT IN PRISON

Sports activities, under the Penitentiary Law, are part of the resocialization programs. They play a significant role for detainees not only for physical well-being but also for the fundamental opportunities for aggregation through positive relational and value models.

"SPORT DI TUTTI - CARCERE"

In 2023, the Department of Sports, in collaboration with "Sport and Health" s.p.a., the Department of Prison Administration and the Department of Juvenile and Community Justice, has launched a major project, titled "Sport di tutti - Carcere", with the aim of supporting and promoting sports and training activities within adult and juvenile correctional institutions. The project, renewed in 2024, has enabled the funding of 78 projects, and has involved more than 10,000 people in 60 adult prisons, 13 juvenile prisons, and 25 juvenile detention communities across the country, and aims to fund an additional 70 activities with the next grant opportunities. A substantial investment of more than 3 million euros, with each project receiving 20,000 euros in funding.

ATLETICO DIRITTI

In 2014, together with the association Progetto Diritti, Antigone founded the Atletico Diritti multi-sport club. To the three sections already active (men's 11-a-side soccer, basketball and cricket) in 2018 Atletico Diritti decided to add an all-female section, 5-a-side soccer with a special team composed entirely of women in the Rebibbia Women's Prison in Rome. The Rebibbia Women's 5-a-side soccer team is the first women's team in prison in Italy, that in 2023 participated in the "Sport di tutti" project. In 2021 Atletico Diritti brought another sport inside another Roman penitentiary institution; thus, in Rebibbia' prison the table tennis team was created.

THE PENITENTIARY STAFF

THERE ARE 1,021 EDUCATORS. ON AVERAGE, LESS THAN ONE FOR EVERY 60 PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

The total number of educators, according to factsheets updated to February 2024, is 1,021 compared to the 1,040 on the staffing plan. The national average number of

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detainees taken in charge by each officer is 59.7. For calculation purposes, however, the 234 officers who entered service through the public selection held in 2023 were also included. The new selection will improve the situation in most Italian regions, reducing the proportion of detained persons per educator, with the exception of Campania, Valle d'Aosta, and Umbria, where instead the proportion has increased since last year.

AT ROME "REGINA COELI" PRISON THERE IS ONE EDUCATOR ON DUTY FOR 163 PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

However, situations that cause greater alarm persist, such as the Novara prison where there is only one educator compared to the 3 provided by the staffing plan for a total amount of 178 detainees . In the Rome "Regina Coeli" prison there are 7 educators out of 11 planned, with a proportion of 163.3 detainees per educator, and even if all 11 educators were present, with a constantly increasing overcrowding rate (182% in this institution) it would be necessary to downsize the numbers planned in the organic plan in an attempt to reach the national average. The greatest critical issues continue to be in medium or large institutions such as in the Taranto, Syracuse and Verona prisons, where the ratio of detainees per educator stands at 132.4, 138.2 and 141.7, respectively.

31,068 OFFICERS ON DUTY. APPROXIMATELY 1 FOR EVERY 2 DETAINEES

According to the data reported in the Ministry's factsheets updated to 2024, 16% of the planned staffing units are missing. In total, there are 31,068 actual staff. The current people deprived of liberty-agent proportion is 1.9 inmates for every agent, compared with a forecast of 1.5. Among Italian regions, this ratio varies between 1.2 and 2.5 inmates per officer, suggesting an uneven distribution of personnel. The regions that have a higher ratio of detainees per agent on average are Lombardy, Lazio and Apulia, with 2.5, 2.4 and 2.2 inmates, respectively; presenting the opposite situation are Molise and Friuli, with 1.3 and 1.4 inmates per agent, respectively.

THE UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF PRISON POLICE PERSONNEL

The uneven distribution of personnel is also evident from the gap among institutions in the number of detainees per officer. The highest proportion is found in Rieti, where it is 3.9; the lowest, on the other hand, is in the ICAM in Lauro, with 0.15 detainees per officer. The uneven allocation of prison police units is also found within regions. For example, in Marche even though organic plans are respected, situations of serious shortage coexist with more positive situations. In Ascoli Piceno the current detainees-agent ratio is 0.7 (with 42 more prison police officers); much higher is what reported in Ancona Montacuto, where it is 2.57 (with 197 fewer units).

57 NEW DIRECTORS TOOK OFFICE IN OCTOBER 2023 AND ANOTHER 50 WILL TAKE OFFICE IN OCTOBER 2024

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As for directors, the recent public selection has finally made an impact on the systematic shortage of managerial staff, with the goal of ensuring the presence of a director in every prison. The selection enabled the recruitment of 107 new directors. However, due to future retirements and transitions to management offices, the numbers are still not adequate and the situation is even worse with regard to deputy directors.

IN ONLY OVER HALF OF THE PRISONS AT THE TIME OF THE VISITS THERE WAS A DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR THAT INSTITUTION

During the 99 visits carried out by the Antigone Observatory in 2023, before the new directors took office, it was found that in only 53.5% of prisons there was a director responsible only for that prison. 38.4% of the directors were in charge of more than one institution. This is a recurrent situation; in Lazio for example, the 3 visited prisons had their own full-time director. In contrast, in Marche, the 6 visited prisons had directors in more than one management position.

AT THE TIME OF THE VISITS, ON AVERAGE, 20.3% OF POLICE OFFICERS AND 27.7% OF EDUCATORS WERE MISSING COMPARED TO THE ORGANIC PLAN

On average, the prison police staff represented the 79.7% of the total prison staff (1.9 inmates for every police officer). In the 41 largest prisons among those visited, these figures were 80% and 2.2 detainees per officer, respectively. Educators covered, on average, 72.3% of the staffing plan and there was, on average, one educator for every 80.7 detainees. In the 41 largest prisons, educators were one for every 102.4 detainees.

THE SPACES OF DETENTION

NEW PRISONS? ONLY PORDENONE IS MENTIONED IN MINISTERIAL ACTS

In the Ministry's Report on the Administration of Justice for the year 2023, there is almost no mention of new prisons. The only exception is the reference to the "new prison in Pordenone at San Vito al Tagliamento," which, however, is placed in a broader time horizon and has been mentioned since the 1990s.

FORMER MILITARY BARRACKS? THE GROSSETO CASE

Still on the subject of new prisons, we have then in recent years repeatedly heard about the rehabilitation of former barracks as an alternative and innovative solution to the failing track record of numerous extraordinary prison construction plans. But even on this the Report freezes enthusiasm, revealing that due to problems that emerged in the planning and design of the interventions, the only one that could be followed up is the

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one for the Barbetti barrack. The military barracks therefore are reduced to the former "Barbetti" barrack in Grosseto, and moreover, the construction of a new prison in Grosseto has also been mentioned since the 1990s.

NEW DETENTION WINGS? OLD PROPOSALS

No new prisons in the near future, then, not even in the former military barracks, but instead the Report talks extensively about the construction of new detention wings. It mentions the one for 41 bis at Cagliari's prison, which was supposed to be ready as early as 2009, or the one in Sulmona, which was also mentioned in the 2009 Prison Plan, expected delivery date: June 2011. And the same is true for many other new pavilions announced in the Report.

21 OF THE VISITED PRISONS WERE BUILT BEFORE 1900

Most of the visited prisons, 51 out of 99, are located outside the urban setting, and are more recently built, but there are many older institutions. 21 out of 99 were built before 1900. The Reggio Emilia prison, for example, has been functioning since 1805.

IN 28 PRISONS CELLS DID NOT ENSURE 3 SQ M PER PERSON. IN 6 PRISONS THERE WERE CELLS WITH A TOILET IN A CORNER

In 28 prisons out of the 99 visited, there were cells in which 3 sq. m. of floor space per person were not guaranteed, in 9 there were cells without heating, and in 47 there were cells without hot water. In 48 there were cells without a shower, and in 6 (Fermo, Lucera, Pordenone, Rimini, Trani, and Trieste) toilets were not in a separate room but in a corner of the cell. In 86 out of 99 prisons, separation of young adults from adults was not ensured.

7,643 COMPLAINTS FOR INHUMANE AND DEGRADING DETENTION CONDITIONS

In 2022, the last year for which the data is available, 7,643 complaints under Article 35b arrived at the Italian probation offices for detention conditions in violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), i.e., lack of living space (3 sq m walkable per person). 7,859 complaints were decided (including complaints filed in previous years) and of these 4,514, 57.4%, were upheld. There were 3,115 convictions in 2018, 4,347 in 2019, 3,382 in 2020, and 4,212 in 2021. As can be seen, Italy is being systematically condemned, by its own courts, for violations of Article 3 of the ECHR, more than at the time of the "Torreggiani" pilot judgement by the ECtHR. In that scenario there were a total of about 4,000 pending appeals with potential success; today there are over 4,000 convictions per year. And it is to be expected that the numbers for 2023 will be even higher.

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IN 6 PRISONS THERE WAS A LACK OF SPACE FOR SCHOOLS

In 6 out of 99 of the visited prisons, there were no spaces exclusively dedicated to schooling, and in as many as 30 there were no spaces for workshops. In basically all prisons there was a library, but only in 54 was it also usable as a reading room. In 29 prisons there were no green areas for family visits in the summer months.

PRISON LEAVES AND EXTERNAL PENAL MEASURES

30,560 PREMIUM PRISON LEAVES GRANTED. HALF A PERMIT PER PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY ON AVERAGE

The surveillance judge interprets the granting of premium prison leaves unevenly. For example, in Lazio there were 1,084 out of about 7,000 detainees and in Lombardy 12,531 out of less than 9,000 inmates. Lazio is among the most restrictive regions in Italy.

137,053 PEOPLE TAKEN IN CHARGE BY THE PROBATION SYSTEM OFFICES (UEPEs), OF WHOM 88,163 ARE SERVING ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

As of March 15, 2024, there were 137,053 individuals under the supervision of probation offices (UEPE). Of these, 48,890 for investigation and counselling, while 88,163 for external penal measures. Among them 78,138 were men (87.2%), while 10,025 were women (12.8%).

WOMEN HAVE AN EASIER ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

Women, who account for just over 4% of the prison population, proportionally benefit far more from alternatives to prison. Overall, their percentage is 12.8%, a value that drops considerably if we look only at semi-freedom (2.8%) while it is very high for probation (15.2%). Indeed, women on probation account for almost half of the total number of women serving an alternative measure (42.8%).

FOREIGNERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, PROPORTIONALLY BENEFIT LESS

The data on community-based measures do not provide detail on the foreign population, but it is available for the total number of cases under the probation office's care, thus including investigations and counselling. Among the 137,053 cases as of mid-March, 26,933 were foreigners (19.6%), a much lower percentage than the 31.4% in prison on the same date.

STRONG TERRITORIAL UNEVENNESS. CRITICAL SCENARIO IN LAZIO AND SICILY

Finally, the territorial unevenness of community sanctions is noteworthy. On a national level, at the end of 2023 there were on average 0.7 detainees for every person in a

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community measure (the number of people in measure in Italy has exceeded the number of detainees for several years now). In individual regions, this ratio changes considerably, ranging from 0.35 detainees for every person in a community measure in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, to 0.7 in Sicily and 1.36 in Lazio, where people in custody are far more than those in community measures.

INDIVIDUAL CASES FOLLOWED BY ANTIGONE

ONE YEAR OF ANTIGONE OMBUDSMAN. 498 REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT

It has been some time now that the Antigone Ombudsman has been handling about 500 annual support requests related to persons deprived of their liberty. The year 2023 confirmed this trend with 498 requests. Of these, 284 were new cases and 214 were updates of underway issues.

TRANSFERS AND HEALTH ARE MAJOR REQUESTS

Once again this year, requests on transfer issues ranked first and requests on health issues ranked second (the two issues added together accounted for 33% of total requests). In most cases - 76% - the communications involve the provision of information. The remaining 24%, on the other hand, is composed of interventions involving more complex actions, such as the numerous reports forwarded to the National Guarantor for the Rights of Persons Detained or Deprived of Liberty, the prison administration, and the prison health areas. To handle such a volume of work as it has in recent years, the Ombudsman now relies on an office composed of about 70 volunteers located throughout the country.

12 ANTIGONE PRISON-BASED LEGAL INFORMATION DESKS. ABOUT 1,300 PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY COUNSELLED. HEALTH IS AT THE CENTRE OF DEMANDS

2023 was a year of big changes for Antigone's network of in-prison legal information desks. Two new ones were inaugurated in Lecce and Palermo. During 2023, there were 12 legal information desks: in five prisons in Rome, three prisons in the Marche region (Pesaro, Fermo and Ancona Montacuto), two prisons in Puglia (Bari and Lecce), one in Campania (Pozzuoli women's prison) and one in Sicily (Palermo). In total, the 12 legal information desks conducted about 1,300 interviews with inmates. Most of them concerned issues related to the right to health.

PRISON REGIMES

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THERE ARE 733 INMATES UNDER THE 41-BIS REGIME IN 12 DIFFERENT PRISON SECTIONS, OF WHICH 12 WOMEN

After the heated discussion that arose from the Cospito case, the 41-bis regime (and the special regimes in general) lost space in the public debate, getting back to being a neglected and underestimated issue. On December 11, 2023, according to data from the Ministry of Justice, the number of detainees was 733 – 12 of which were women in L'Aquila prison – displaced in the 12 41-bis sections present in the country. As of April 4, 2024, there are 721 inmates in 41-bis, according to DAP data.

PEOPLE SERVING LIFE SENTENCES ARE LESS THAN 30% OF THE DETAINEES UNDER THE 41-BIS REGIME

Very problematic is the situation of those who have been in the 41-bis regime for more than 20 years; it is equally problematic that of people serving their entire sentence in 41-bis sections. Lifers under the special regime are less than 30%.

9,439 PEOPLE ARE IMPRISONED IN THE HIGH-SECURITY SECTIONS

According to the data from the Department of Penitentiary Administration updated as of April 4, 2024, there are 9,439 detainees assigned to the High Security macro-circuit. From the data collected during Antigone's monitoring activity carried out in 2023, of the total number of detainees placed in High Security, 97.1% are assigned to the AS3 sub-circuit (the visited prison that houses the most detainees is Secondigliano), 2.1% to the AS1 sub-circuit (38 in Parma, 29 in Oristano, 19 in Catanzaro), and about 0.8% to the AS2 sub-circuit (11 in Terni, 9 in Sassari, 8 in Melfi, 5 in Ferrara 1 in Piacenza).

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT HURTS AND IS OVERUSED ESPECIALLY WHERE FOREIGNERS ARE PREVALENT: 13.9 CASES PER 100 DETAINEES

Solitary confinement can be ordered for disciplinary, health or judicial reasons. Moreover, daytime solitary confinement is used for people serving multiple life sentences.

According to data collected by the Antigone Observatory, disciplinary solitary confinement is most widely used in prisons where more than half of the population is foreign; while the average number of disciplinary solitary confinement orders is 11.8 per 100 detainees in institutions where less than half of the prison population is foreign, it reaches an average of 13.9 in institutions with more than 50% foreigners.

UMBRIA IS THE REGION WHERE SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IS MOSTLY USED

The region where solitary confinement has been applied the most is Umbria, particularly at the "Capanne" prison in Perugia (with an average of 117.91 disciplinary

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solitary confinement orders applied in 2022 for every 100 detainees), the Orvieto prison (99.78 solitary confinements per 100 detainees) and the Spoleto prison (40.57 solitary confinements per 100 detainees).

DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

In general, Antigone's monitoring activities reveal an uneven situation regarding the conditions of the cells in which solitary confinement takes place. In some cases they are very similar to the ordinary ones, as is the case at the Campobasso prison. At the "Sergio Cosmai" prison in Cosenza and at the "Rebibbia Nuovo Complesso" prison in Rome, however, the cells are much more cramped and in worse condition. In other prisons (the "Rocco d'Amato" prison in Bologna, the Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi prison, the Augusta prison) there are not even cells expressly dedicated to solitary confinement. If needed, these have to be purposely set up to face up these vulnerability conditions.

Increasingly, detainees with mental distress or mental disabilities are subjected to solitary confinement. For example, a visit to the "Francesco Uccella" prison in Santa Maria Capua Vetere showed how some of the people in solitary confinement cells, located on the second floor of the Danube ward, had even serious psychiatric diagnoses. At the time of the visit, one detainee was found to have been placed in solitary confinement for more than three weeks without a mattress, although there were shreds of mattress in the cell, likely broken by the inmate himself, some of which had been stuck in the door lock.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT LENDS ITSELF TO VIOLENCE

An analysis of the cases taken over by Antigone shows that it is almost always solitary confinement spaces that serve as the setting for episodes of violence by officers on detainees. This is the case, for example, in the judicial proceedings in Asti, San Gimignano, Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Viterbo, and Lucera.

AGAINST SOLITARY CONFINEMENT: INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES ON ALTERNATIVES TO PRISON ISOLATION DEVELOPED BY ANTIGONE AND PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ISRAEL (PHRI)

The Guidelines aim to bridge the gap between what emerges from worldwide practice and what international law and medical literature provide on the harm caused by solitary confinement, presenting some measures that can help reduce and eventually abolish this practice. The document boasts the signatures of several experts including the former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Professor Juan Méndez, and former President of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and National Guarantor of Persons Deprived of their Liberty, Professor Mauro Palma. The Guidelines have already been presented to the CPT and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the UN

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High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The dissemination of the Guidelines and the collection of signatures aim to ensure that its provisions are adopted by international institutions, becoming part of soft law references. On May 13, Antigone organised the conference "*Contro l'isolamento*" (Against Solitary Confinement) at the University of Roma Tre to present the Guidelines and discuss the urgency of abolishing this practice, which is so detrimental to the mental and physical health of incarcerated persons.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2024

During the first quarter of 2024, medical solitary confinement was ordered on 310 occasions (compared to 1197 in the same time frame in 2023), judicial solitary confinement on 13 occasions (compared to 14 in 2023), and, finally, disciplinary solitary confinement 559 times (35 times more than in the same period in 2023).

PRISON CLOSED AND 10,000 DETAINEES ARE NO LONGER IN OPEN CUSTODY

Through the Circular No. 3693/6143 dated July 18, 2022, the Department of Penitentiary Administration (DAP) has introduced some guidelines for the reorganisation of the medium-security circuit, which houses more than 70% of the total prison population. Although the stated goal of the circular is to overcome the duality between open and closed custody in order to ensure individualised treatment, the closed model seems to have become established, configuring open occasions as a residual exception. Data collected by the National Guarantor in the four superintendency, in which the circular's experimentation was launched (Campania, Lombardy, Sicily and Triveneto) between July 19, 2022 and December 22, 2022, showed that open-custody sections decreased by 44, while closed-custody sections increased by 79. The total number of persons assigned to open-custody sections decreased by 9750 overall, from a total of 12033 in July to 2283 in December, while the number of detained persons confined in closed-custody sections increased by more than 7000 during the same period (+7074). In addition, 107 intensified treatment sections were opened during the trial period, and the number of Article 32 sections increased by 5.

INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY IN CLOSED SECTIONS

The analysis prepared by the National Guarantor of the historical series from 2019 to 2023 shows an increasing trend of detainees assigned to closed-custody sections, with a peak in 2022 and an increase as of June 2023 of more than 5500 persons (going from 17305 to 23387) and a parallel decrease of persons assigned to open-custody sections, which more than halved going from a total of 32643 in 2019 to gradually decline to 28109

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persons in 2022 and to more than half in the first six months of 2023 (with a total of 13813 persons).

CLOSED CELL DURING THE VISITS

The trend toward closure also emerges from the monitoring activity carried out by Antigone observers during 2023. At Varese prison, Matera prison, Vicenza prison and Naples Poggioreale prison, cells at the time of the visit were closed in basically all sections.

CRITICAL EVENTS

SUMMARY OF DATA ON CRITICAL EVENTS

On average, per 100 inmates we recorded: 11.8 disciplinary solitary confinement orders, 18.1 acts of self-harm, 2.4 attempted suicides, 3.5 assaults on staff and 5.5 assaults on other detainees.

SELF-HARM

According to data collected by the Antigone Observatory during 2023 referring to 2022, for every 100 detainees the average number of acts of self-harm is 18.1, compared to 19.3 in 2021. Despite the decrease from what was recorded last year, this figure provides important indications of the suffering of the prison community. The prison with the higher rate is Sollicciano "Nuovo Complesso" prison in Florence; 375 to be exact, which corresponds to an average of 75.6 acts of self-harm for every 100 detainees. Also exhibiting high rates of self-harm are the Pordenone prison (72.41 per 100 detainees), the Cremona prison (68.21 per 100 inmates) and the Reggio Emilia prison (67.39 per 100 detainees).

SUICIDES ATTEMPTS. 2.39 CASES PER 100 PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

With respect to attempted suicides, the average recorded by Antigone in 2023, referring to 2022, is 2.39 per 100 people deprived of liberty, a very similar figure to that recorded last year. The highest figure was recorded at the Ascoli Piceno prison, with 18.35 attempted suicides per 100 detainees. This was followed by the Cremona prison, with 72 attempted suicides occurring in 2022, and the Reggio Emilia prison, where there were 48 attempted suicides.

AGGRESSIONS. 3.5 ASSAULTS ON STAFF FOR EVERY 100 DETAINEES

Reported assaults on prison staff are also on the rise; from an average of 2.6 assaults per 100 detainees recorded in 2022 with reference to 2021, to an average of 3.5 assaults per 100 detainees recorded in 2023 with reference to 2022.

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The average number of assaults on detainees recorded in 2023 referring to 2022 is 5.5 per 100 inmates, down from the data recorded last year (average of 6.6 per 100 detainees).

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE PROTESTS ON THE RISE. TWO HUNGER STRIKE DEATHS IN AUGUSTA ALONE

The comparison between the first quarter of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024 in the Department of Penitentiary Administration (DAP) data shows a substantial increase in collective protest demonstrations, while individual protest demonstrations have decreased, such as hunger or thirst strikes, which decreased from 2,235 to 1,931. Nevertheless, the Caltagirone and Augusta prisons stand out for hunger strikes in recent months; in particular, in the Augusta prison in May 2023 two detainees died in general silence following hunger strikes that lasted 40 and 60 days, respectively.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE NEW LAW APPLICATION: INCREASING OF MANIFESTATION OF DISSENT

According to DAP data, all other manifestations of dissent show growth: +49 refusals of Administration food and/or therapy, +72 episodes of beating and +41 cases of refusal to re-enter cells. Most of these conducts, if carried out by at least three detainees, could potentially be punishable by imprisonment ranging from 2 to 8 years in prison if the crime of "prison riot" is introduced.

PHONE CALLS, INTERVIEWS AND VIDEO CALLS

IN-PERSON VISITS DURING THE WEEKEND

In only 20% of the prisons visited by the Antigone Observatory in 2023, more than three-quarters of detainees have access to in-person visits. In 7 of the 99 prisons visited, weekend interviews are not held, including the two prisons with the highest attendance: the Rome Rebibbia NC and Naples Poggioreale prisons. Interviews on Saturday and Sunday, although they may be complex for the administration to organise, facilitate the participation of family members of people deprived of liberty who have work or school commitments during the week.

INCREASING OF THE VIDEO CALLS

The number of detainees accessing video calls in lieu of face-to-face visits has increased compared to 2022. In fact, in 2022, in 52% of prisons more than half of detainees were conducting video calls, but this percentage rises to 65.2% in 2023. The practice of video calls adopted during the pandemic period, continues to prove a widely

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used and valuable means of maintaining ties between detained persons and their family members.

REDUCING THE PHONE CALLS TIME: PRE-COVID STANDARDS

Compared to 2022, there is a decrease in extraordinary phone calls, which were granted as an exception to the limits set by the regulations. Currently, only 19% of correctional institutions do the Prison governors allow more than three quarters of people deprived of liberty to make extraordinary calls, while in 2022 this percentage was 36.1%.

As of December 31, 2022, there has been a return to the pre-pandemic discipline, according to what is regulated by the prison regulations, 4 calls per month (2 for inmates in the 41 bis regime), in the presence of urgent or particularly important reasons, as well as in the case of transfer of the inmate.

TORTURE

192 OFFICERS CURRENTLY INVESTIGATED

Torture is a crime against human dignity. After more than 30 years of waiting since Italy's commitment with the ratification of the UN Convention, in 2017 the crime of torture finally entered our penal system. Since its introduction to date, a civic access done by Altreconomia's editorial staff reveals that the total number of officers investigated in Italy is 192, demonstrating its reasonable capacity for impact.

ANTIGONE IS A CIVIL PARTY IN 5 DIFFERENT CRIMINAL

In 2023 there were convictions for torture for violence that occurred against inmates, such as in Ferrara and San Gimignano. In March, 2024, came the convictions for five prison police officers for torture against an inmate with psychiatric problems who was brutally beaten after setting fire to a mattress in her cell in Bari prison on the night of April 27, 2022. The Antigone association is a civil party in five different criminal proceedings involving violence, torture, abuse, mistreatment or death that occurred in various penitentiary institutions across the country.

TORTURE EXISTS

In the past year, however, there have been several attempts to attack the crime of torture, either to change it, such as Bill No. 314, or to repeal it with Bill No. 661. At the beginning of 2024, the government declared the intention to introduce changes to the crime. For this reason, Antigone, together with other organizations such as Amnesty International Italia and A Buon Diritto, asks for this law to be neither modified nor repealed, and for Italy to continue its commitment to prosecuting those guilty of the crime of torture, as repeatedly requested by the European Court of Human Rights and

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other international bodies, in the years when it had not yet equipped itself with a law to this effect.

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