



Bangkok Rules E-Bulletin

Women in the Criminal Justice System

January 2015



Toolbox on the UN Bangkok Rules

Welcome to Penal Reform International's quarterly Bangkok Rules E-Bulletin, a round-up of news and developments from PRI and others around the world on women in detention, and the implementation of the UN Bangkok Rules. The views expressed in the news items are not necessarily those of PRI.

We welcome contributions to the e-bulletin and do let us know what you think by emailing publications@penalreform.org

What's in this issue?

- [In the spotlight](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [PRI news](#)
- [In the media](#)

WHAT ARE THE BANGKOK RULES?

The Bangkok Rules are a set of standards adopted by the UN General Assembly on 21 December 2010, which supplement existing standards for the treatment of prisoners by addressing the specific needs of women in the criminal justice system for the first time. For more information on the Rules see PRI's [short guide](#) on the Rules.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: New Arabic resources



وثيقة إرشادية

حول قواعد الأمر المتحدة لمعاملة السجناء والتدابير غير الاحتجاجية للمجرمين (قواعد بانكوك)



PRI has released [Arabic versions of the Guidance Document on the Bangkok Rules and the accompanying Index of Implementation](#).

Also, [watch a trailer](#) for the upcoming launch of the Arabic version of [PRI's e-course on the Bangkok rules and women in detention](#).

NEW RESOURCES

- [Women prisoners and the implementation of the Bangkok Rules in Thailand](#): The [Thailand Institute Justice](#) has released the findings of research conducted in 2013. The research team visited six different prisons in Thailand and conducted a survey with 533 female inmates and interviewed 34 correctional staff. The survey focused on women's characteristics, education, contact with children and family, their offense,

and their specific needs.

- **Women in prison: is the penal system fit for purpose?**: [Halsbury's Law Exchange](#) has released a new discussion paper with a view to creating a full report on penal policy and rehabilitation in 2015. They are inviting involvement by contacting them at contact@halsburyslawexchange.co.uk.

 - **Transforming lives: reducing women's imprisonment**: New report from [Prison Reform Trust](#) and [Soroptimist International](#) recommends the development in England and Wales of a cross-government strategy for women's justice, led by the Minister for Female Offenders.

 - **Women in pre-trial detention in Africa**: New report from [Promoting Pre-trial Justice in Africa](#), a project of the [Civil Society Prison Reform Initiative](#) of the [Community Law Centre](#) of the University of the Western Cape.

 - **Mitigating motherhood: a study of the impact of motherhood on sentencing decisions in England and Wales**: This article by Shona Minson, published by the [Howard League for Penal Reform](#) explores the impact of motherhood as a mitigating influence on sentencing decisions in England and Wales.

 - **Justice for girls: are we making progress?**: In this paper from the Boston College Law School, Francine Sherman discusses the history of juvenile justice policy for girls and considers the impact on girls of current trends toward developmentally centred and data-driven juvenile justice.
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NEW BLOGS

[No escape from violence: childhood abuse, offending and women in prison](#)

Dr Lillian Artz, Director of the [Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit at the University of Cape Town](#), explores some of the findings of a 2012 study on women in detention, [Hard Times: Women's Pathways to Crime and Incarceration](#). The author focuses on physical and sexual abuse in the lives of women offenders as a probable catalyst for violent offences and calls for greater international attention on this relatively unknown issue. The blog is also available as a [podcast](#).

[Albania needs a more gender-sensitive justice and penal policy](#)

Edlira Papavangjeli, Program Manager and Researcher at the Albanian Helsinki Committee, carried out research into the profile and needs of women prisoners in Albania. Here she sums up some of the findings of her research and makes recommendations for change.

PRI NEWS

[PRI at the UN General Assembly](#)

At the UN General Assembly in October, PRI organised a side-event, [Women in custody – gender equality challenges and opportunities in crisis and conflict situations](#). The event was co-hosted with the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN and the United Nations (Global Focal Point On Police, Justice and Corrections). The event broadened the discourse on gender-specific issues facing women in detention by focusing on the often extreme examples of this problem in crisis and conflict situations. A panel of experts gave an overview of these issues and canvassed ideas for greater protection of women in detention at policy and operational levels, gender-sensitive peacekeeping operations, and the post-2015 development agenda. Watch the video [here](#).



Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, spoke about the gender-specific pathways to incarceration for women

PRI's statement to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

PRI delivered a statement to the OSCE on September 26 at the OSCE [Human Dimension Implementation Meeting](#) during its dedicated session on 'Violence against women belonging to vulnerable groups'. The statement highlights the links between violence and women offenders and prisoners and encourages OSCE member states to review their penal legislation, policies, and practices in light of the Bangkok Rules. Read the full statement [here](#) and [find out more on the PRI website](#).

PRI trains criminal justice agents on Bangkok Rules

Following on from the successful [training of UN peacekeepers in Rwanda](#) in September, PRI has since conducted three further trainings:

- Andrea Huber, Policy Director for PRI, and Olivia Rope, PRI's Programme Officer, trained a group of corrections staff from Sweden, Norway, Finland and Rwanda as part of a two-week pre-deployment training session,

organised and hosted by Sweden and the UN [Department of Peacekeeping Operations \(DKPO\)](#).

- PRI hosted a delegation from the [DOST Foundation](#) for a training week at our head office in London. The delegation also met with representatives from Women in Prison and [Compass Isis](#), a specialist service for female drug users.
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- Andrea Huber also travelled to India to deliver training to officials at the [Academy of Prisons and Correctional Administration](#).

Research in Uganda on women prisoners

[Foundation for Human Rights Initiative](#) with support from PRI is conducting research into the needs and characteristics of women prisoners in Uganda. Over 100 women prisoners have been interviewed so far with initial findings showing that many are imprisoned far away from their homes and children, receiving little or no visitors. Many have experienced sexual or violent abuse, and this is linked to the prevalence of convictions for manslaughter. PRI and FHRI will discuss findings from the research with government officials and other stakeholders to identify priority areas where women offenders will benefit most from changes to law, policy and practice. [Read more about this research](#).

IN THE MEDIA

- **Canada:** [Number of aboriginal women behind bars spiking](#)
- **Canada:** [Official response to Ashley Smith case sidesteps most prison proposals](#)
- **Canada:** [Neither compassionate nor humane](#)
- **Canada:** [Women inmates on the rise](#)
- **China:** [Women bear the brunt of the abuse in 'black jails'](#)
- **Colombia:** [Prison theatre transforms inmates](#)
- **Georgia:** [Female drug addicts face double struggle](#)
- **Ghana:** [NGO inaugurated to better lives of female prison inmates and officers](#)

- **India:** [25 per cent space in women's prisons unused](#)
- **Ireland:** [Imprison fewer women](#)
- **Japan:** [Female inmates OK'd to give birth without handcuffs](#)
- **Kenya:** [Woman jailed for 6 years over burglary](#)
- **Russia:** ['Violence breeds violence': One woman's story of 16 years inside a Russian jail](#)
- **Scotland:** [First look at £75m Greenock prison](#)
- **Singapore:** [Changi women's prison](#)
- **UK:** [Women in prison will get help to maintain family links](#)
- **UK:** [Murder Trudi Hudson killed herself in jail, inquest hears](#)
- **UK:** [Inspector praises Askham Grange women's prison](#)
- **UK:** [Female detainees at Yarl's Wood routinely humiliated](#)
- **USA:** [The pernicious 'war on drugs' is behind America's staggeringly high female prison population](#)
- **USA:** [New York's largest jail to open housing unit for transgender women](#)

Do you have new publications or resources to share on women and criminal justice?

We hope that our newsletter is used to share information and resources among a growing network of individuals and organisations interested in the issue of women and detention, and would like to encourage colleagues to send us materials, feedback, news items, information about events etc to include it in our bulletins. We are also always interested in your feedback on our publications, projects and the bulletin itself. We hope to hear from you! Send your contributions to info@penalreform.org.

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