

Widespread dispersal of prisoners revealed in new data

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Cardiff University's Wales Governance Centre today revealed the most detailed picture yet of the prison population in Wales.

The previously unseen data, which was obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests, details the prisons where all Welsh prisoners are being held, as well as which of the 22 local authority areas they come from. Separately, there is information to show the local authority origin of all English prisoners who are serving their terms in Wales.

Imprisonment in Wales: A Breakdown by Local Authority, is a follow-up to Imprisonment in Wales: A Factfile, which was released earlier in the year. Both are part of a two-year research project by the Wales Governance Centre entitled Justice and Jurisdiction, which will explore the organisation and operation of the justice system in Wales. The latest report, which, for the first time, gives an insight into the geographical spread of Welsh and English prisoners, is being shared with local authorities, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service in Wales Welsh Government and the Commission on Justice in Wales.

The report includes two datasets: a breakdown by local authority and [prison](#) of all Welsh prisoners and information on the local authority origin of all English prisoners currently being held in Welsh prisons.

Key findings of the data, captured in June 2018, include:

- 37 percent of all Welsh prisoners (based on home address prior to entering custody) were in England – spread across 104 prisons;
- Welsh people were held within 91 percent of English prisons (104 out of 116);
- Prisoners from different local authorities in Wales are frequently held in England. For example, male prisoners from Flintshire are held at 44 different English prisons. Male prisoners from Carmarthenshire are held at 36 different English prisons.
- There were a total of 261 Welsh women in prison at the end of June 2018. Welsh women were being held in each of the 12 women's prisons in England.
- 30 percent of all prisoners held in Wales in June 2018 had an address in England prior to entering custody.
- There were prisoners at HMP Berwyn, in north Wales, from 125 English local authorities—which make up 83 percent of all unitary and county authority areas in England (125 out of 151)
- At HMP and YOI Parc, in south Wales, prisoners from 74 unitary and county level authorities in England (49 percent) were being held at the prison.

There are currently a total of 4704 Welsh prisoners, who are spread across 110 different prisons in Wales and England.

Dr. Robert Jones, of Cardiff University's Wales Governance Centre, commented: "This report

presents an accurate statistical picture of the [prison population](#) in and from Wales. By making this information publicly available for the very first time we hope that it will help those responsible for prisoners and prison leavers across Wales to better target and deliver services.

"We must recognise that prisoner location is a complex but important issue, which hasn't been fully scrutinised or explored. As recently argued by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons, dispersal and distances from home is an area that requires further attention if we are to see improved outcomes. I hope that this information contributes to further discussions about imprisonment and the justice system in Wales."

Provided by Cardiff University

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