

**THE OFFICE OF  
THE PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN**

Helsinki 13 April, 2015

Ref. No 1654/8/15

OHCHR-United Nations Office at Geneva  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

e-mail: [registry@ohchr.org](mailto:registry@ohchr.org)

Dear Nathalie Prouvez,

In the letter of 31 March 2015 you ask about the input of the National Human Rights Institutions regarding the causes and human rights implications of over-incarcerations and overcrowding in prisoners, and ways to remedy such situations, including alternatives to detention and other relevant good practices and experiences,

Mr Petri Jääskeläinen, Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland, wishes me to inform you the following. As a rule, the overcrowding is not a problem in Finnish prisons. During the last 10 years the numbers of prisoners have been decreasing. According to the statistics of the Criminal Sanctions Agency, the number of prisoners in 2015 is 18% less than the number of prisoners in 2005. However, the number of remand prisoners has slightly increased during the last 10 years (from 13% to 18% of the prison population)

As regards over-incarceration, one can also note that it is not a problem in Finland. The average prison population per 100 000 inhabitants in Finland is one of the lowest in Europe.

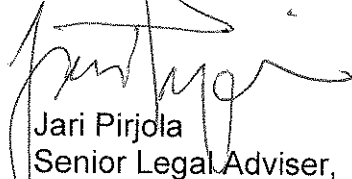
The reasons for the decreasing number of prisoners include the use of community sanctions which are a significant part of the sentence enforcement system in Finland. Community sanctions include: 1) community service, 2) juvenile punishment, 3) supervision of conditionally sentenced young offenders and 4) supervision of parolees.

For further and more detailed information on the above mentioned community sanctions in English can be found at

<http://www.rikosseuraamus.fi/en/index/sentences/communitysanctions.html>

Should you need further information, feel free to contact Mr Jari Pirjola, Senior Legal Adviser (email: [jari.pirjola@eduskunta.fi](mailto:jari.pirjola@eduskunta.fi)).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jari Pirjola', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jari Pirjola  
Senior Legal Adviser,  
The Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman  
Finnish National Preventive Mechanism under the OPCAT