

Irish Penal Reform Trust
Annual Review and
Financial Statement

2018—
19

About IPRT

Who we are

The Irish Penal Reform Trust is Ireland's leading independent charity campaigning for a penal system that is just and humane; protects and promotes human rights, equality and social justice; and uses prison as a last resort.

What we do

IPRT publishes a wide range of policy positions and research documents; we campaign vigorously across a wide range of penal policy issues; and we have established IPRT as the leading independent voice in public debate on the Irish penal system.

What we have achieved

For 25 years, IPRT has been promoting policies that make communities safer for everyone. IPRT's effectiveness over recent years is demonstrated by real achievement in terms of progressive policy change, alongside a deepening of wider public debate around prisons and prisoners, and provision of a key central resource of research and information on prisons and penal reform.

In recent years, key reforms that IPRT's work has contributed to include:

- Strategic Review of Penal Policy, which endorses the principle of imprisonment as a sanction of last resort (2014)
- Stopping out reduced to 68 in April 2019, down from 1,000 in 2011
- Extension of the Inspector of Prisons' remit to include investigations into deaths in prison custody (2012)
- Legislation requiring judges to consider community service in lieu of short prison sentences (2011)
- Legislation to limit the use of imprisonment for failure to pay court-ordered fines (2014)
- Legislation which allows certain minor convictions to become spent after 7 years (2016)
- End of the imprisoning of children in the adult prison system (April 2017)
- Reduction in numbers held in solitary confinement from 211 in 2013 to 51 in April 2019

How you can support our work

IPRT relies on the support of a diverse group of friends and donors to assist us to achieve our mission. Contributions from both committed individuals and organisations are essential to our impact on the lives of prisoners and their families, and ongoing efforts to reform Ireland's penal system. We are deeply grateful to all our members and donors for their partnership in this work and are pleased to share this Annual Review detailing our achievements.

For more information on how you can support IPRT's work, please visit our website www.iprt.ie or call (01) 874 1400. IPRT is a registered charity (CHY 11091).

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Chairperson's Foreword

It has been another year of considerable work to advance progressive penal reform in Ireland. It is our pleasure to now report on that work to our membership, supporters and friends.

At one and the same time, the vision of IPRT is simple yet challenging. We believe in a humane penal system which uses prison as a last resort, which recognises the denial of liberty when imprisonment is used as the punishment, and which in all other respects treats people in prison as rights-bearing citizens. We recognise the negative impacts of imprisonment. We are committed to enhancing a citizenship focus in the penal system, together with a focus on reintegration and inclusion in wider society.

It is, however, a challenge to realise this vision given where we are starting from – with issues of overcrowding in prisons, limited access to education, insufficient facilities for those experiencing mental distress, the risks and reality of violence, and limited independent oversight in recent years.

2018–19 marks the mid-way point in IPRT's 5-year strategic plan (2017–21) and we are pleased to note real progress against most of our objectives.

Over the past year, there have been a range of key penal policy developments on which the IPRT has sought to bring our evidence-led human rights advocacy to bear. These include the passing of the *Parole Bill 2016* (July 2019), the *Rehabilitative Periods Bill* currently in progress, and the new step-down facility for women opened in Dublin (June 2019).

IPRT has continued both our strategic policy contributions and responsive

contributions to issues of the day. Over the past year this has included the launch of the *Care and Justice* report in February 2019; supporting and facilitating progress in relation to the OPCAT; and crucially the launch of our second flagship report on *Progress in the Penal System* (PIPS) in October 2018. The PIPS report is fast becoming the go-to source of evidence on human rights standards adherence and impacts across the penal system.

None of this work would be possible without the outstanding contribution of our staff team: Deirdre, Fíona, Michelle, Eoin, Lorraine and Pamela. The past year has seen considerable change in the team, with the departure of Deirdre Malone who made an outstanding contribution as our Executive Director over the past five years, and the appointment of Fíona Ní Chinnéide as Executive Director. This has been a seamless transition and Fíona brings a wealth of penal reform policy and communications knowledge and experience to this role. In July, Pamela Drumgoole moved on from the role of Campaigns Officer and we wish her all the best in her new role. We are fortunate to have had and to continue to have a staff team of such high calibre and commitment.

On behalf of the Board and staff, I would like to acknowledge our funders from the State, independent statutory and philanthropic sectors – in particular, the Department of Justice and Equality, Pobal, the Community Foundation of Ireland,

the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and St Stephen's Green Trust. Your commitments to social justice and human rights enable IPRT to undertake our work on a day to day basis, and for that we are truly grateful.

I would also like to thank on my own behalf and on behalf of the membership my excellent Board colleagues, Prof Aislinn O'Donnell, Kevin Gregory, Joan O'Flynn, Kathleen Leader SC, David Perry BL, Dr Suzi Lyons, Niall Walsh and Eddie D'Arcy. I am fortunate to serve with a board bringing a range of academic, strategic policy and operational experience to bear on the good governance of the IPRT.

Finally I would like to thank our wider membership, Friends and supporters for all that you do to enable the IPRT to achieve what we do in pursuit of a humane and progressive penal system in Ireland.



*Dr Seamus Taylor,
IPRT Chairperson
August 2019*

Introduction from the IPRT Executive Director

In 2019, the Irish Penal Reform Trust marks 25 years of working to bring about progressive reform of Ireland's penal system, with demonstrated impact.

IPRT has an outstanding track record of achieving progress on addressing the most serious human rights issues in Irish prisons, and for bringing about a sea-change in penal policy that recognises the harms of imprisonment and the need for penal moderation. We have done this through taking a highly strategic approach to our research, advocacy, alliances and public awareness-raising activities and our effective use of resources.

In November 2018, IPRT commissioned an external evaluation of our communications and public affairs. The findings of the evaluation were very positive, identifying the following key words associated with IPRT: **credible, authoritative, trusted, trustworthy, measured, respected, professional, expert, and fair**. We look forward to acting on the findings and recommendations over the coming years, to further embed wider public and political support for penal reform in Ireland.

The past 12 months have been an important period for the future of IPRT. With all of our key grants concluding in 2019, we have been working hard to secure our sustainability for the years ahead. We are delighted to have been awarded Pobal funding under the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) for 2019–2022, and multiannual grant funding from the Department of Justice and Equality for a further three years 2020–22.

Nevertheless, the financial support of our members and Friends remains an important stream of support for our work. **In this year of our 25th anniversary, we are asking everyone to consider becoming a Friend of IPRT to ensure that we can together achieve our vision for change.**

None of the work presented here could have been achieved without the hard work and commitment of the IPRT staff team, who always go above and beyond what is required. My sincere thanks to Michelle, Lorraine, Eoin and Pamela for their continued dedication to penal reform, along with our volunteers: Aisling Troy, Eibhlín Looney, Maebh Butler, Aisling Walsh, Rebecca Connolly and Mairéad Deevy.

I'd also like to acknowledge the outstanding legacy of Deirdre Malone, who left IPRT for a new role in February 2018 after almost 5 years at the helm of IPRT. Deirdre's courage and tenacity in her leadership saw the organisation go from strength to strength, from which we will grow and develop further.

I would like to express my personal thanks for the ongoing support, guidance, direction and expertise provided by all members of the Board of IPRT, in particular Dr Seamus Taylor as Chair, Prof Aislinn O'Donnell as Vice Chair and Chair of the PIPS Advisory group, and Kevin Gregory as Treasurer.

Finally, the quality, professionalism and impact of our work is only made possible by the support of all of our funders, members and Friends – and for this, we are grateful.

In 2019, numbers have regularly been above 4,000 people in prison, with crowded conditions in six of 12 prisons, and a return to people sleeping on mattresses on floors. The numbers held on restricted regimes have regularly been above 550, and people with severe mental health issues awaiting transfer to the Central Mental Hospital for weeks, months and in some cases more than a year.

This underscores the importance of IPRT's work in ensuring that penal reforms achieved are embedded and not reversed. We look forward to working with you all over the next 12 months to ensure that urgent and necessary reforms are achieved, and maintained.



*Fíona Ní Chinnéide,
IPRT Executive Director,
August 2019*

Irish Prisons 2018: At a Glance

January

- Average number of prisoners in custody was 3,716. [January 2018]
- Prison Visiting Committee Annual Reports for 2016 were published. Drug-related violence is a recurring issue across the reports. [15 January]

February

- Oberstown Children Detention Campus School received a positive report from the Department of Education, who carried out their inspection in December 2017. Inspection report found the quality of support for students 'commendable'.
- The 2016 Annual Report of the Committee Appointed to Monitor the Effectiveness of the Diversion Programme was published. In 2016, 77% of children referred were admitted, up from 74% in 2015. [February 2018]

March

- The *Fifth Report of the Implementation Oversight Group* was published. Milestones met over the period included work towards both the establishment of an independent Parole Board on a statutory basis and the development of an open centre for women. [16 March 2018]

- The Council of Europe (CoE) published *SPACE I: Annual Penal Statistics in Europe 2016*. Ireland had the sixth highest rate of entry into prisons in the Council of Europe area. [20 March 2018]

April

- Following an open appointments process, Ms. Patricia Gilheaney was appointed Inspector of Prisons.

May

- The Joint Committee on Justice and Equality published their 2018 *Report on Penal Reform and Sentencing*. The Committee made 29 recommendations for reform, including the immediate ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture. [10 May 2018]

June

- Data published by Oberstown Children Detention Campus provided an overview of the characteristics of young people in detention in Ireland. Figures showed that 40% of young people were either in care or had significant involvement with Tusla prior to being taken into custody. [14 June 2018]
- The Department of Justice and Equality published the *Irish Prison Service and Probation Service Strategic Plan 2018–2020*. [25 June 2018]

- The Irish Prison Service *Annual Report 2017* showed an almost 75% decrease in committals to as a result of non-payment of court-ordered fines. However, the overreliance on short-term sentences persisted, with over 80% of sentenced committals in 2017 being for sentences of under 12 months. [25 June 2018]

- The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs published the Interim and Final Reports of the Review Implementation Group of Oberstown Children Detention Campus. [27 June 2018]

July

- The Irish Prison Service updated its *Protected Disclosures Policy* to ensure staff can raise concerns about relevant wrongdoings without fear of penalisation. [4 July 2018]
- July Census of Cell Occupancy and In-cell Sanitation showed that 58 people were required to 'slop out'. A decrease of only two on the same time in 2017. [July 2018]
- The Department of Justice and Equality released their *Data and Research Strategy 2018–2020*, designed to support the delivery of "a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland" and support the development of more evidence-informed policy. [27 July 2018]

August

- *The Irish Times* reported on the sharp increase in Ireland's prison population in 2018, following years of decline and stability. The article states that for the first time since 2014, the daily numbers in custody have regularly breached 4,000. [6 August 2018]

September

- The first prison-based parkrun in Ireland was launched in Mountjoy prison with a total of 27 runners and walkers taking part, including 17 prisoners. [1 September 2018]
- The *Sixth Report of the Implementation Oversight Group* to the Minister for Justice raised concerns about a lack of general consensus across the criminal justice process that non-custodial options are to be the preferred sanction where appropriate. [10 September 2018]

October

- The first *Self-harm in Irish Prisons 2017* report was published. Findings indicate that rates of self-harm were 4.4 times higher among female prisoners than male prisoners, a larger gender difference than observed among the general population. [4 October 2018]

- The Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, published the Parole Board Annual Report for 2017. The average sentence served by life sentence prisoners who received parole in 2017 was 18 years. [4 October 2018]

- Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) report on an unannounced inspection of Oberstown Children Detention Campus undertaken in March 2018 found significant improvements in a number of areas, particularly the area of health, including medication management. However, inspectors also found inadequate record-keeping on physical interventions used with children and the use of handcuffs on children within a secure environment. [9 October 2018]

November

- Minister for Justice and Equality, Charles Flanagan TD, opened the Irish Prison Service Violence Reduction Unit in Midlands Prison. The unit is the first unit of its kind in Ireland, co-managed by the Irish Prison Service and the Prisons Psychology service. [9 November 2018]

- The Department of Justice published a report by the Office of the Inspector of Prisons examining the circumstances surrounding the death of Prisoner C on 28 January 2018. The report highlights the concerns of the Office of the Inspector of Prisons over failure to follow Standard Operating Procedures. [27 November 2018]

December

- The High Court decision in *Simpson v Governor of Mountjoy Prison & Ors* was appealed to the Supreme Court. Although the High Court found the practice of slopping out to have breached the applicant's privacy, it rejected the claim that it had constituted inhuman and degrading treatment. The Supreme Court reserved judgment on the case. [4 December 2018]
- The Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill 2018, intended to extend the provisions of the *Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016* passed First Stage in the Seanad. [20 December 2018]
- 137 prisoners were granted varying periods of temporary release for Christmas 2018.
- Average number of prisoners in custody was 3,900, an increase of nearly 300 on January 2018. [December 2018]

Our Vision

IPRT's vision is of a penal system that:

- is just and humane;
- protects and promotes human rights, equality and social justice;
- uses prison as a last resort.

Our Mission

IPRT's mission is to work towards progressive reform of penal policy and practice to achieve a penal system in line with our vision.

Our Values

Our values guide us in how we achieve our mission.

Independent we are fearless in our voice and in our actions	Committed to holding the State to account	Fair we are committed to tackling social injustice	Authoritative we are guided by human rights frameworks and best international standards
Informed our advocacy is based on high quality research and evidence-informed policies	Constructive we are constructive in our work with others in the penal system	Engaged we are mindful of the importance of engaging directly with people in prison and their families	Accountable we are committed to the highest levels of good governance and financial integrity

Our People

Patron of IPRT



Michael D. Higgins
President of Ireland

Advocates of IPRT



Paula Meehan
Poet



Peter Sheridan
Author and Director



Ivana Bacik
Senator



John Lonergan
Former Governor of Mountjoy Prison

IPRT Board of Directors

IPRT is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, made up of a minimum of seven members with expertise in a range of areas relevant to penal reform. The Board focuses on the broader strategic goals of the organisation. At least seven members of the Board are elected at the organisation's AGM and further members may be co-opted by the Board.



Dr Seamus Taylor
Chairperson
Lecturer in Social Policy, Maynooth University



Prof. Aislinn O'Donnell
Vice Chairperson
Professor of Education, Maynooth University



Kevin Gregory
Treasurer
Director of Finance, IT and Administration, Focus Ireland



Kathleen Leader
Secretary
Barrister, Senior Counsel



Eddie D'Arcy
CEO
Solas Project



Joan O'Flynn
Independent Consultant



David Perry
Barrister and Lecturer at the Honorable Society of King's Inns



Niall Walsh
Manager, Pathways Centre



Dr. Suzi Lyons
Senior Researcher, Health Research Board

IPRT Staff

In 2018–2019, the day-to-day work of IPRT was carried out by a team of 4.5 to 5.5 staff.



Deirdre Malone
Executive Director (until February 2019)



Fiona Ni Chinnéide
Executive Director (from April 2019)
Acting Executive Director (February – April 2019)
Deputy Executive Director (until February 2019)



Lorraine Whitty
Membership & Administration Officer



Michelle Martyn
Senior Research & Policy Projects Manager



Pamela Drumgoole
Campaigns Officer



Eoin Delap
Development Manager

IPRT Interns

Our work is supported by a team of dedicated interns, who bring their skills and passion for social justice and penal reform to their work with IPRT.

- **Aisling Troy** (July – Aug 2018)
- **Eibhlín Looney** (Sept 2018–Jan 2019)
- **Maebh Butler** (Sept 2018 – Feb 2019)
- **Aisling Walsh** (Feb – May 2019)

Our Strategic Priorities

IPRT is committed to reducing imprisonment, ensuring access to human rights in prisons, and progressive reform of the penal system based on evidence-led policies.

The focus of our activities is on: the use of imprisonment, including sentencing policy; alternatives to custody and diversion; and the treatment and rehabilitation of those in detention. All of our work is underscored by our commitment to promoting equality and to combating social injustice.

IPRT's actions over the period were guided by our strategic priorities, as outlined in our *Strategic Plan 2017–2019*:

01

Progressive Penal Policy

IPRT advocates for a national penal policy that is:

- just and humane,
- promotes effective non-custodial responses to crime, and
- uses prison as a last resort.

02

Humane Penal System

IPRT promotes a national penal system that is:

- humane as experienced by people who are detained,
- protects and promotes human rights and equality, and
- strives to achieve international best practice in formal regimes, daily practices and overall culture.

03

Our Organisation

IPRT ensures that the organisation is a sustainable, well-resourced, respected and collaborative stakeholder in penal policy in Ireland.

Priority 1: Progressive Penal Policy

IPRT advocates for a national penal policy that is: just and humane, promotes effective non-custodial responses to crime, and uses prison as a last resort.

Penal Policy

IPRT has long called for improved collation and publication of criminal justice data and for a commitment to evidence-led criminal justice and penal policy in Ireland – a key strategic goal in IPRT’s *Strategic Plan 2017–21*. To this end, IPRT welcomed the publication in July 2018 by the Department of Justice and Equality of its new *Data & Research Strategy 2018–2020: Supporting delivery of “A safe, fair and inclusive Ireland”* and the appointment of its first Chief Information Officer in September 2018. A recurrent call for action throughout IPRT’s Progress in the Penal System project is for improved tracking, monitoring and publication of data in a number of key areas – for example, sexual violence in prisons and lengths of time people are held in isolation. IPRT looks forward to reporting on progress in the area of research-led policy in future.

Sentencing Reform

IPRT promotes the need for reform of Irish sentencing practice in a number of key areas, and for the principle of imprisonment as a last resort to be enshrined in law. The abolition of mandatory sentencing regimes is another important strand of this work, and IPRT works tirelessly in our engagement with legislators and policy-makers to emphasise that mandatory sentencing may enjoy popular appeal but is ineffective in addressing crime and inevitably results in unequal justice.

Important developments during the period include a decision by the Supreme Court in May 2019, which declared unconstitutional a law requiring that a mandatory five-year minimum sentence be imposed on some persons convicted under a section of the *Firearms Act*. Another important development was the progress of the *Judicial Council Bill 2017*, which includes provision for a Sentencing Committee with a mandate to prepare draft sentencing guidelines. Importantly, the Bill includes a landmark provision for sentencing policy review. As part of this provision, the Minister for Justice will be required to review all mandatory, minimum and presumptive sentencing policies in light of new sentencing guidelines. The *Judicial Council Bill* was passed in July 2019.

The inclusion of a ‘Structured Sentencing’ project in the Law Reform Commission’s Fifth Programme of Law Reform, announced in June 2019, is another important development. In IPRT’s submission to the LRC, we had called for such a study to be undertaken, and we look forward to engaging with this process. Other engagement during the period included an appearance before the Justice Committee on 5 December 2018, at which we highlighted our concerns with the *Bail (Amendment) Bill 2017*.

IPRT continues to advocate that no new mandatory or presumptive sentences should be introduced until the review of such sentencing, as recommended in the Strategic Review of Penal Policy, is completed.

Parole Reform

A key strategic objective in IPRT’s *Strategic Plan 2017–21* is the establishment of an independent parole board on a statutory basis. While IPRT welcomed the *Parole Bill 2016 [PMB]* as an opportunity to achieve clarity in law and practice on parole, we recommended that a number of the provisions of the Bill should be amended or strengthened. In June 2019, IPRT issued an updated submission to Oireachtas members on ‘Parole Reform and the *Parole Bill 2016*’ in which we assessed the Bill against the key principles we believe should underpin reform of the parole system in Ireland. Other activities in the area of parole reform included engagement with all key stakeholders, and substantial media engagement to better inform the wider public on the positive role of parole and temporary release in promoting public safety. The *Parole Bill 2016* was passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas in July 2019.

Alternatives to Custody

Reducing Ireland’s over-reliance on imprisonment as punishment is at the core of IPRT’s mission. Since 2011, IPRT has secured a number of key policy commitments and recommendations on decarceration and penal moderation. Nevertheless, 2018 and 2019 has seen prison numbers rise again, and a return to people sleeping on mattresses in a number of closed prisons.

While there was an overall decrease in year-on-year committal rates from 9,287 in 2017 to 8,071 committals to prison in 2018, this is attributed largely to a decrease in committals for non-payment of fines following the enactment of the *Fines (Payment and Recovery) Act 2014*. The decrease masks a worrying rise in non-fines committals – particularly for sentences of less than 3 months – and the overall increase in the average numbers of people in prison. This is despite an increase in the numbers of people serving Community Service Orders in 2018, and a slight increase in the use of the Community Return Programme. IPRT observes that numbers participating on the successful programme are still less than half of peak participation in 2014, and we continue to advocate for eligibility for the programme to be expanded. We also call for accelerated efforts to provide community-based alternatives to prison for women who offend, with particular emphasis on provision of step-down housing, services and supports.

Spent Convictions

Despite the passing of the *Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016*, many people in Ireland with convictions histories continue to experience difficulty accessing work, education and insurance. The current blanket rehabilitative period of 7 years before any conviction can become spent lacks proportionality, and the limit to one conviction (apart from minor motoring or public order offences) means that convictions for even very minor offences can amount to lifelong punishment.

IPRT welcomed the introduction by Senator Lynn Ruane of the *Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill* in December 2018. The Bill proposes to extend the provisions of the current spent convictions legislation, and addresses issues of eligibility, proportionality, and introduces a new approach for young adults. The Bill is an important step towards embedding the principles of rehabilitation in legislation, and allowing people who have served their punishment and who have moved away from offending to move on with their lives.

In advance of Second Stage debate of the Bill in February 2019, IPRT produced a Briefing and also ran an online survey among people with convictions, with the anonymised responses disseminated to Senators. IPRT also spoke at an Oireachtas Briefing on the Bill before it was taken at Second Stage. The Bill was passed unanimously at Second Stage. We look forward to continuing to engage with the legislation as it progresses.

In further support of ensuring fair employment outcomes for people with convictions histories, in October 2018, IPRT made a submission to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Consultation that the protected ground of ‘social origin’ and/or ‘socio-economic status’ should be interpreted specifically and explicitly to include those with criminal convictions in domestic legislation, including in the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

IPRT continues to advocate for changes to both law and policy to assist people to move on from their offending pasts, including expanded spent convictions schemes and better supports for those with more serious criminal histories.

Focus On: Reducing the numbers of those in the care system entering the criminal justice system

In 2019, IPRT launched *Care and Justice: Children and Young People in Care and Contact with the Criminal Justice System* – a seminal contribution to our understanding of the key risks of some children and young people in care ending up in the penal system

It is widely recognised – both nationally and internationally – that some children in care of the State are more likely than others to end up in conflict with the law, more likely to become criminalised, more likely to end up in detention, and ultimately prison. To date in Ireland, this issue has received limited attention despite evidence that a disproportionate number of children with care experience or significant previous contact with Tusla are detained at Oberstown Children Detention Campus every year.

In order to examine the extent of this issue in Ireland and to identify the best ways to address and reduce the criminalisation of these young people, in 2018 IPRT commissioned a ground-breaking exploratory research study by Dr Nicola Carr (University of Nottingham) and Dr Paula Mayock (Trinity College Dublin), supported by the Community Foundation for Ireland.

The research comprised in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders, including representatives from the legal profession, the Irish Youth Justice Service, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla), Oberstown Children Detention Campus, An Garda Síochána, service providers, and advocacy organisations. Submissions were also received from individuals and organisations who work directly with or advocate on behalf of children, including Barnardos, Cork Life Centre, Le Chéile Mentoring and Youth Justice Support Services, Focus Ireland, and Care Leavers' Network.

The report, launched by the Ombudsman for Children, Dr Niall Muldoon on 26th February 2019, makes a series of clear recommendations on how the State can and should better support these children. Other speakers at the event included: Dr Nicola Carr, co-author of the report; Karla Charles, Policy Manager, EPIC; Pat Bergin, Campus Director, Oberstown Children Detention Campus; and Gareth Noble, Partner, KOD Lyons.

The research suggests that contact with the criminal justice system is more of a concern for children placed in residential care than for those living in foster care.

Reasons for this include that children are generally placed in residential care when they have experienced previous placement breakdowns or when they enter into care at a later age. Children in residential care have, therefore, often encountered a range of prior adversities. This can be further compounded by what some of the research respondents characterised as the paradox of 'service retreat': the greater a young person's needs, the more likely it was that they did not receive the services they required.

"Very often, these young people have complex needs related to prior histories of trauma. In these contexts young people sometimes display difficult behaviours leading to contact with the gardaí, criminal charges and escalation through the system." – Nicola Carr, Irish Times Op-Ed

Arising from the research findings, 12 recommendations were made under seven thematic headings, including key recommendations on: data collation, inter-agency working, awareness-raising, and training. The report has received very positive engagement by the relevant stakeholders, including follow up meetings with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Youth Justice Service to discuss the policy recommendations outlined in the report and propose steps forward, including that the specific needs of care-experienced young people are considered in the forthcoming Youth Justice Strategy.

This project was supported by The Horizon Fund of the Community Foundation for Ireland.



Priority 2: Humane Penal System

IPRT promotes a national penal system that is: humane as experienced by the people who are detained, protects and promotes human rights and equality, and strives to achieve international best practice in regimes, daily practices and overall culture.

Progress in the Penal System

In October 2018, IPRT published the second in a series of our annual flagship Progress in the Penal System (or 'PIPS') reports. While the report identified that some progress had been made, the overall findings indicated that the majority of identified areas still need urgent attention. The 'Spotlight' issues in 2018 called for urgent action in the areas of prisoners' mental health, female incarceration, and prison staffing.

Inspector of Prisons, Ms. Patricia Gilheaney, was the keynote speaker at the launch, which took place at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission on 26th October 2018. Other speakers included Caron McCaffrey, then Director of Corporate Affairs (now Director General) of the Irish Prison Service, and Vivian Geiran, Director of the Probation Service.

Throughout 2019, IPRT has continued to engage constructively with stakeholders to encourage progress on the report's indicators. IPRT's Senior Research and Policy Projects Manager, Michelle Martyn leads the research and delivery of the project, with the support and guidance of the PIPS Advisory Group: Prof Aislinn O'Donnell (Chair), David Perry BL, Niall Walsh and external expert Prof Ian O'Donnell.

The third annual PIPS report will be published on 25 October 2019 at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission – we hope to see you there.

An interactive version of the report is available at pips.iprt.ie

The PIPS project is supported by a donor-advised fund of the Community Foundation for Ireland.

Disability in Detention

Prisoners' rights are guaranteed by numerous international and European treaties and Irish legislation. Despite this, international research demonstrates that prisoners with disabilities are often discriminated against and still encounter inaccessible spaces and a lack of support within prison. In Ireland, there is a deficit of research on the prevalence and experience of disability in the penal system. In autumn 2018, IPRT secured funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to pursue a research project exploring the issues. The project aims to raise awareness of intersectional discrimination and human rights breaches against people experiencing disabilities in detention, build capacity among civil society organisations and state bodies to recognise and address these challenges, and realise the rights of people with disabilities in the penal system. IPRT has commissioned Prof. Eilionóir Flynn and María Gómez at the Centre

for Disability Law and Policy at the National University of Ireland, Galway to undertake the research, which is set for publication at end 2019.

This projected is supported by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

Prison Inspections

Promoting robust inspection, monitoring and oversight of Ireland's prison system is at the centre of IPRT's work. Throughout 2018 and 2019, IPRT continued to raise our concerns at inadequate resourcing of the Office of the Inspector of Prisons, given its broad and important remit, and called on the Minister to ensure the Inspectorate has the resources to fulfil its current function. Additionally, the legislation underpinning the Inspectorate should be strengthened to include the ability of the Inspector to publish reports directly.

The most recent published report on an inspection of a closed prison remains the report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), which last visited Ireland in 2014, with its findings published in November 2015. The report detailed critical issues, including prison healthcare which the Committee described as in a "state of crisis" in some prisons, detention of people with severe mental health issues, a lack of confidence in the complaints mechanism in Irish prisons, and the prevalence of inter-prisoner violence. The Committee is

due to visit Ireland again in late 2019, with its report published in 2020.

IPRT is extremely concerned at the absence of published inspection reports of closed prisons at domestic level, and continues to engage strenuously on this issue at national and at international levels.

Ratification of OPCAT

Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture is essential to safeguarding human rights and effective prevention of torture in all places of detention in Ireland. But despite successive government commitments since 2007, Ireland has yet to ratify the Protocol. To maintain public and political attention on the issue, IPRT and the Irish Criminal Bar Association co-hosted a seminar on 'Detention, Human Rights and the OPCAT' on 12th November 2018 in the Ormond Meeting Rooms in Dublin.

The seminar was an opportunity for practitioners to engage with the practical experience of ratifying OPCAT and implementation of the National Preventative Mechanism. Speakers at the event included: Laura Paton, Lead Inspector, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS); Liam Herrick, Executive Director, Irish Council for Civil Liberties; Mr. Michael Lynn S.C.; and Ms. Fiona McNulty, Michael Kelleher Solicitors.

Laura Paton's experience brought invaluable insight to the discussion. She focused on the establishment of the UK NPM, the attributes of the NPM, and the positive impact that the NPM has had on the work of HMICS and other inspectorates, including care settings. A response from attendees with expertise in areas such as disability, mental health and older people followed, with input focusing on the need for broad legislation to prevent human rights abuses in a range of detention settings, including *de facto* detention.

At the seminar, IPRT launched *Statement of Principles on Legislation to Ratify the OPCAT*, outlining the minimum legislative requirements for any legislation intended to ratify the Protocol.

As part of the events, IPRT and ICCL also hosted a closed stakeholder roundtable, held under the Chatham House Rule, to discuss options for and the practicalities of ratifying OPCAT. Since then, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission has formally communicated its willingness to take on a role as coordinating body for the National Preventative Mechanism, and the Department of Justice and Equality has undertaken to engage with its peers in other relevant departments, including health and children and youth affairs.

This event, and IPRT's wider campaign on the ratification of the OPCAT, were kindly supported by the Community Foundation for Ireland.

Know Your Rights as a Prisoner

In 2012, IPRT, in association with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, created a booklet which aimed to help prisoners understand their rights while in prison. In 2018, IPRT undertook a broad consultation process to assist with updating the booklet. Based on the information gathered in the consultation process, Sheehan & Partners assisted with the drafting of a new booklet which reflects any changes in rights since the publication of the first edition of the booklet. A new section on the rights of people with disabilities in the prison system will also be included. The booklet is due for publication in early 2020, with plans to develop an online edition to improve accessibility to families and others who support people in prison.

Focus On: External perspectives on the effectiveness of the Irish Penal Reform Trust

The Irish Penal Reform Trust is Ireland's only organisation dedicated solely to progressive reform of the penal system. Our work is grounded in the evidence that imprisonment is damaging in itself and compounds disadvantage and marginalisation.

For 25 years, the Irish Penal Reform Trust has been working to bring about progressive reform of Ireland's penal system, with demonstrated concrete outcomes. We have an outstanding track record of achieving progress on addressing the most grave human rights abuses and improving unfit conditions in Irish prisons, and for bringing about a sea-change in penal policy that now recognises the harms of imprisonment. We have done this through taking a highly strategic approach to our research, advocacy, alliances and public awareness-raising activities.

In November 2018, IPRT commissioned an external evaluation of our communications and public affairs. The research sought to provide insight into how our work is understood, the strength of our communications activities, the effectiveness of our advocacy, and potential areas of improvement in our stakeholder communications.

The evaluation comprised 12 interviews with key stakeholders, including: politicians, senior civil and public service officials, media, peer advocacy organisations, and community-based organisations; more than 100 online survey respondents; and a desk review of IPRT print materials. The evaluation found the following key words to be associated with IPRT: **credible, authoritative, trusted, trustworthy, measured, human rights, respected, professional, expert, and fair**. It is a tribute to IPRT's reputation and how the work of the organisation is valued that we received such strong engagement from senior public and political officials.

Respondents identified IPRT as a small results-oriented organisation with a wide reach, best known for our "campaign work around conditions in prison, the very vulnerable, mental health issues, and [our] incredible work keeping children out of prisons."

"It's a spectacular achievement to have effectively ended child imprisonment; they created a situation where it was untenable for the Government to continue with it."

Respondents had strong positive associations with IPRT, describing the organisation as a trustworthy, professional and authoritative organisation - "a dynamic organisation that punches well above their weight" with a strong reputation for being "instrumental in getting changes across the line". Key to this reputation was that IPRT's work is underpinned by research and facts "they really take the time to research their reports, verify and go through the proper process".

As well as the recognition of the impact of our work, opportunities for new directions and suggestions for growing our impact were identified in the evaluation:

"Changing the public mind set and sentiment towards [IPRT's] work would be beneficial for the prison sector as a whole."

IPRT looks forward to acting on these recommendations over the coming years, to further embed wide support for necessary penal reform in Ireland.

IPRT @ 25

The Irish Penal Reform Trust is Ireland's only organisation dedicated solely to progressive reform of the penal system. IPRT consistently punches above our weight in terms of resources and impact, and achieves real and demonstrated outcomes.

For our 25th anniversary, we are asking everyone to consider becoming a Friend of IPRT to ensure that we can together achieve our vision for progressive reform into the future. IPRT Friends are asked to contribute €250 or more, with many pledging to give over three years.

To become a Friend of IPRT, call 01-8741400 or visit: www.iprt.ie/friends

A Year in Images



1 Prof Aislinn O'Donnell; Inspector of Prisons, Patricia Gilheaney; Director of the Probation Service, Vivian Geiran; and Deirdre Malone, Michelle Martyn and Dr Seamus Taylor of IPRT at the launch of PIPS 2018. Photo: Derek Speirs.



2 Inspector of Prisons, Patricia Gilheaney, at the launch of *Progress in the Penal System (2018)*, 26 October 2018. Photo: Derek Speirs



3 Ombudsman for Children, Dr Niall Muldoon, launching IPRT's *Care and Justice*, 26 February 2019. Photo: Derek Speirs



10 Seamus Taylor and Deirdre Malone at *Áras an Uachtaráin* for the President's Garden Party, 1 July 2018. Photo: Ian Power



12 Michelle Martyn at the launch of *Progress in the Penal System (2018)*, 26 October 2018



11 Michelle Martyn with lecturers from the School of Business and Humanities and the Society Research Group in Dundalk Institute of Technology, following a guest lecture on Children in Detention, 6 December 2018



4 IPRT staff at a team building day, 18 September 2018



5 Fiona Ní Chinnéide speaking at 'Filling the Silence: Prison as a silent institution' as part of Trinity Week, May 2019. Photo: Dale Chen



6 Frank Berry and Niall Walsh discussing the award-winning 'Michael Inside' at IPRT Members' Event, 20 September 2018. Photo: Derek Speirs



13 Dr Nicola Carr, Judge Catherine McGuinness and Dr Paula Mayock at the launch of *Care and Justice*, 26 February 2019. Photo: Derek Speirs



14 Fiona McNulty and Laura Paton at the IPRT/ICBA Seminar 'Detention, Human Rights and the OPCAT', 12 November 2018. Photo: Pamela Drumgoole



15 Ms Laura Paton, Lead Inspector, HMICS at the IPRT/ICBA Seminar 'Detention, Human Rights and the OPCAT'. Photo: Pamela Drumgoole



7 Michelle Martyn and Lorraine Whitty at Pathways Christmas Dinner



8 Dr Paula Mayock and Dr Nicola Carr at 26 February.



9 Oireachtas Briefing on the *Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill 2018*, 12 February 2019.



16 Deirdre Malone, Fiona Ní Chinnéide and Liam Herrick, former and current Executive Directors of IPRT. Photo: Pamela Drumgoole



17 Deirdre Malone Patricia Gilheaney of *Progress in the Penal System (2018)*, 26 October 2018



18 Supporters of the Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill 2018, 13 February 2019. Photo: Seb McAteer

Priority 3: Our Organisation

Ensure IPRT is a sustainable, well-resourced, respected and collaborative stakeholder in penal policy in Ireland.

Strategy & Governance

IPRT is committed to transparency and accountability around how we work, achieving the highest standards of governance and compliance.

Strategy

As the only organisation in Ireland dedicated to penal reform, there is a high level of importance placed on IPRT achieving its goals. To ensure that we are consistently making progress on our strategic priorities, operational plans for each year are developed and kept under regular review to ensure maximum effectiveness. At end June 2019, a review conducted at the mid-point of IPRT's *Strategic plan 2017–2021* shows that IPRT has made concrete progress, with more than half of our strategic objectives already achieved. This is a tremendous achievement for a small team. IPRT plans to undertake an external evaluation in 2020, to inform the development of our next Strategic Plan in 2021.

Governance

As an organisation that seeks to hold the State to account, it is crucial that IPRT itself maintains the highest levels of governance and accountability. In May 2019, as a recipient of State funding, IPRT was audited by the Department of Justice and Equality. All aspects of organisational governance, planning, controls and compliance with relevant legislation and policies, including GDPR, were examined. We are delighted to report that the audit identified no significant issues, with a low number of useful recommendations to implement. It is a tribute to the work of the Board and staff of IPRT that the process was so successful, with particular mention for the important day-to-day work in this area by our Membership and Administration Officer Lorraine Whitty.

IPRT is registered with the Companies Registration Office (CRO Number 21844) and with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CHY Number 11091) and meets all requirements to file returns to the Register of Lobbying. We are committed to complying with the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.

Ongoing reviews of governance and accountability structures are important to us. In 2014, IPRT achieved full compliance with the Governance Code – a Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland. During 2019, the Board of IPRT is ensuring compliance with the new Charities Regulator Governance Code, and we are well on track to demonstrate compliance with the code by the Charities Regulator's 2020 deadline.

General Data Protection Regulation

IPRT undertook a comprehensive review and enhanced our risk management and data protection procedures in advance of the implementation of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in 2018, and we continue to ensure ongoing compliance with GDPR. During the period, IPRT moved to an EU-based, GDPR compliant server; completed a full transfer of contact data to the CRM; and developed all relevant documentation, including a Data Subject Access Request form and data breach log.

Board of Directors

Our Board members bring a broad range of skills and sector knowledge to the work of IPRT, such as: social policy, advocacy, research, strategic planning, legal expertise, finance, education, youth justice, community health, and drugs policy.

At the AGM in September 2018, Dr Séamus Taylor, Kevin Gregory and Eddie D'Arcy retired from the Board and stood for re-election as permitted by the Memoranda and Articles. Dr Suzi Lyons was co-opted to the Board on 12 December 2017 and this was confirmed by our membership at the 2018 AGM.

Patrons

President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, is Patron of IPRT. Our work is also supported by IPRT Advocates: poet Paula Meehan, author and director Peter Sheridan, Senator Ivana Bacik, and former Governor of Mountjoy Prison, John Lonergan.

Staff and Volunteers

After 5 years at the helm of IPRT, Executive Director Deirdre Malone left her post in early February 2019. Fiona Ní Chinnéide filled the role of Acting Executive Director until her appointment as Executive Director, following an external recruitment process, in early April.

Lorraine Whitty continued in her role as Membership and Administration Officer, Michelle Martyn as Senior Research & Policy Projects Manager, and Eoin Delap in his role of Development Manager. After 2 years with IPRT, Pamela Drumgoole will leave her role as Campaigns Officer for a new position with Merchant's Quay Ireland in mid-July 2019.

In late 2018, IPRT paused our Policy and Advocacy internship placement in order to review the programme. During this period, we continued to be joined by students on placement as part of a structured degree programme. Following the review, IPRT launched a new Volunteer Programme in June 2019. IPRT is grateful to all of our volunteers for their assistance and dedication. Our work would not be possible without them.

IPRT Office

IPRT ensures that robust levels of organisational systems, structures and practices are in operation to ensure a sustainable organisation and a high-quality place of work for staff. During the period, IPRT staff took part in a variety of training and development opportunities in areas such as: leadership, communications, Salesforce reporting, GDPR, and more.

During the period, improvements to the office included new hardware, health and safety reviews (including a Health and Safety Statement), and new external IT support. The new CRM system introduced in 2018 has increased IPRT's administrative and membership capacity. Over the course of 2018/2019, this system was further personalised to ensure the most efficient experience for IPRT both staff and supporters.

Finance

IPRT is committed to ensuring that the organisation's finances are managed to the highest standard, and in line with established accounting practices.

Since 2015, IPRT has produced FRS 102 SORP compliant accounts. The FRS 102 requirements relating to the trustees' annual report, fund accounting, the format of the statement of financial activities and additional disclosures are aimed at providing a high level of accountability and transparency to donors, funders, financial supporters, and other stakeholders. The 2017 accounts, prepared by Best Practice Accountant – Chartered Accountants (Mary-Louise O'Loughlin ACA) were approved at the IPRT AGM in September 2018 and submitted to the Companies Registration Office. The 2018 accounts are for approval at the IPRT AGM in September 2019.

An independent audit is conducted each year by the auditors who bring to the attention of the Board any matters of concern. The auditors found the 2018 financial statements to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of IPRT and of its resources, and have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014. IPRT's registered auditors are Anne Brady McQuillans DFK. DFK is authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and with the Irish Taxation Institute and PCAOB (Public

Company Accounting Oversight Board). The auditors are also invited each year to the AGM of the IPRT.

In 2019, IPRT updated its Financial Policies and Procedures (available on request) in relation to the respective roles of Finance Committee, Executive Director, and Treasurer; the handling and management of petty cash, donations and membership, and grants; pay-roll and tendering processes; and retention of financial documentation. In line with the IPRT expenses policy, all expenditure must be vouched for and approved by the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director's expenses must be approved by the Chairperson. The Finance Committee of the IPRT Board consults in advance of each Board meeting, and updated management accounts are disseminated to whole Board at each meeting.

Fundraising and Sustainability

IPRT is deeply grateful to our funders for their belief and support; their contributions have enabled us to undertake the work described in this report. IPRT's continuing independence is recognised by all funders as essential to the integrity of our work.

Sustainability

The past 12 months have been an important period for the future of IPRT. With all of our key grants concluding in 2019, we have been working hard to consolidate funding sources for existing work and develop new revenue streams for the years ahead.

As part of the Fundraising & Sustainability Strategy for 2018–19, a Development Manager was recruited to lead our income generation and sustainability work. Eoin Delap joined the IPRT team in June 2018 and led the developments detailed in this section of the review.

The Funding & Sustainability Subcommittee meets in advance of IPRT Board meetings, and continues to support our work toward achieving sustainability beyond 2019.

Fundraising Strategy

In autumn 2018, IPRT completed a fundraising consultation phase. Our objective was to determine a strategy to strengthen our organisation and secure the long-term sustainability of our mission. During this process, we spoke with many friends, supporters and stakeholders – a diverse group of people who share our commitment to progressive change. Following this process, a Consultation Phase Report was drafted, informed by these insights. The Report envisages an ambitious strategy for growth that will solidify our role and enable us to expand our impact. The Board of Directors adopted the Report's recommendations in November 2018 and we are now implementing this strategy. Special thanks to everyone who participated in the Consultation Phase for their insights and advice.

Our Funders

In May 2019, IPRT was awarded Pobal funding under the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) in the Community and Voluntary Sector for 2019–2022. In July 2019, IPRT also secured multiannual grant funding from the Department of Justice and Equality for a further three years. This combined funding represents an annual core grant of approximately €220,000 per annum and covers the core costs of the organisation, including core staff and office costs. Combined, these funds are essential to ensure we continue to be a vibrant and independent voice for change in our penal system.

The Community Foundation for Ireland continued to be a close partner in IPRT's work. The Foundation, through its own generous commitments and donor-advised funds, has helped us to realise ambitious initiatives that are transforming our penal system – including the ground-breaking *Progress in the Penal System* (PIPS) project, and IPRT's successful work promoting accountability in the penal system.

We also wish to acknowledge kind support from the St. Stephen's Green Trust, and Saint Patrick's Cathedral Community Fund.

www.communityfoundation.ie
www.stpatrickscathedral.ie

Our financial statement is available as an appendix to this report.

Project Funding

In September 2018, IPRT was awarded a research grant from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Human Rights and Equality Grant Scheme of €20,000. This will fund a research project aiming to raise awareness of intersectional discrimination and human rights breaches against people with disabilities in detention, build capacity among civil society organisations and state bodies to recognise and address challenges and eliminate discrimination, and ensure individuals with severe disabilities receive appropriate care in alternative rehabilitative settings. We look forward to publishing this research towards the end of 2019.

Friends and Members of IPRT

IPRT's Members are integral to our organisation and make an important contribution to our work. We wish to acknowledge and thank them for their part in our achievements last year. Their belief in and commitment to penal reform is a driving force for our organisation.

Thank you to the Friends of IPRT, a dedicated group of supporters who have placed a high value on IPRT's mission. IPRT Friends are asked to contribute €250 or more, with many pledging to give over three years. In the year of our 25th anniversary, we are asking everyone to consider becoming a Friend of IPRT to ensure that we can together achieve our vision for change.

Financial Statement

Supplementary information relating to the financial statements.
Schedule 2: charitable activities and other expenses.

	2018(€)	2017(€)
For the year ended 31 December 2018		
Income		
Department of Justice & Equality	102,579	102,579
Pobal	89,625	89,625
Membership	2,180	2,135
Donations	12,669	6,941
European Commission Projects	—	4,666
Research Services	123,392	139,375
Miscellaneous	185	61
Total incoming resources	€330,630	€345,382
	2018(€)	2017(€)
Expenditure		
Wages and salaries	226,044	177,329
Social security costs	24,284	18,830
Staff pension costs	894	3,991
Staff training	2,648	1,604
Human resources	3,475	—
Rent and utilities	7,907	7,907
Insurance	1,383	1,224
Office equipment	2,044	972
Cleaning	694	368
Stationery	1,366	1,295
Postage	1,598	988
Courier	31	200
GDPR implementation and training	988	—
Marketing and advertising	541	—
Website and social media	2,497	2,589
Prisoner engagement and building alliances	996	986
Commissioned research	—	750

	2018(€)	2017(€)
Expenditure		
Events	706	—
Sponsorship and awards	—	100
Telephone and broadband	2,959	2,010
Computer hardware and software	936	1,105
IT support	1,500	1,951
Human rights in prisons expenses (CFI)	12,191	11,932
Making Rights Real for those with Disabilities in Detention expenses (IHREC)	90	—
Prison Litigation Network expenses (EC)	—	936
Solitary confinement expenses (IHREC)	(90)	18,927
Spent convictions expenses (CFI)	—	8,550
Care and Criminalisation expenses (CFI)	8,005	90
Impact expenses (CFI)	24,896	27,995
Publications and reports	13	—
Staff travel	1,084	1,924
Other staff expenses	993	441
Meetings	438	252
Volunteer and intern expenses	1,102	405
Legal and professional	—	799
Accountancy	5,432	4,056
Audit fees	3,764	3,764
Bank charges	230	262
General expenses	18	363
Membership and subscriptions	862	708
Surpluses/deficits on disposal of property, plant and equipment	310	—
Depreciation	1,678	595
Total	€344,507	€306,198

Communications

We use our professional media and communications expertise in the pursuance of each of our strategic goals. While communicating our vision and mission has remained in the forefront, 2018/2019 has been a period of change for our organisational communications.

In late 2018 IPRT commissioned an independent qualitative evaluation of our communications. The recommendations arising from this review will build on our reputation, and inform the development of a new IPRT Communications Strategy, to be drafted in 2020.

Media

IPRT sustained its strong media profile during 2018 and 2019. Media engagement included interviews on RTÉ's Drivetime, Radio 1 News, Today with Seán O'Rourke, and Morning Ireland; Newstalk FM's Breakfast Show, The Hard Shoulder, and Newstalk News; Today FM's The Last Word; along with regional radio stations ranging from Waterford to Castlebar, Kerry to Louth. IPRT comment appeared in *The Irish Times*, *Irish Examiner*, *Irish Independent*, and *The Times (Ireland edition)*, along with regular inclusion in online news outlets TheJournal.ie and Irish Legal News.

Our commentary and debate included:

- Online articles: 100+ (excluding syndicates)
- Radio interviews: 32
- Print publications: 24
- Press releases: 11

Website and Online Presence

IPRT's website is maintained as a central source of information and updates on penal reform for media, policy-makers, researchers, and other key stakeholders.

In tandem with the qualitative review of our communications, a broad evaluation in quantitative measures, including digital media, was undertaken internally. This included a review of our digital communications against key performance indicators, and the collation of user feedback on the IPRT site. The findings from this were used to inform a website redevelopment project.

To mark IPRT's 25th birthday, we will be unveiling IPRT's new website and branding following our AGM in September 2019.

- www.iprt.ie
- www.twitter.com/iprt
- www.facebook.com/irishpenalreformtrust
- www.flickr.com/photos/irishpenalreformtrust

E-bulletins

5 editions of the IPRT E-bulletin were issued during the period, keeping our subscribers, members and Friends up-to-date with our work and developments in penal policy.

To sign up to receive our Ebulletins, please visit:

www.iprt.ie/subscribers/signup

Media Releases

IPRT has established a reputation for contributing to reactive discussions on crime and punishment in Ireland as they arise. As well as this, IPRT is proactive in putting items on the agenda of media through our traditional media work. Key releases from over this period include:

- *Ratification of torture prevention treaty will bolster Ireland's position on international stage (6 July 2018)*
- *Momentum for prison reform must be maintained (27 September 2018)*
- *Significant improvements on Oberstown Campus welcome but inadequate monitoring of 'restrictive practices' on children must be addressed (10 October 2018)*
- *Second annual report on standards in Ireland's penal system finds little progress in key areas (26 October 2018)*
- *IPRT calls on key bodies to work together to conduct thorough investigation of alleged covert surveillance in prisons and prisoner transport (22 November 2018)*
- *IPRT urges renewed focus on reform on appointment of new Director General of the Irish Prison Service: IPRT welcomes appointment of Caron McCaffrey as DG of the IPS and emphasises remaining critical areas for reform (13 December 2018)*
- *IPRT Executive Director Deirdre Malone to leave post (20 December 2018)*
- *Systemic issues in Garda response to children deemed "unsuitable" for diversion must be addressed (17 January 2019)*
- *IPRT survey demonstrates need for expanded rehabilitation law (5 February 2019)*
- *IPRT publishes report on children with care experience in criminal justice system (26 February 2019)*
- *Chronic issues in Ireland's female prisons demand urgent government action on community-based alternatives (13 March 2019)*
- *Parole legislation must be progressed with urgency to ensure clear, transparent and fair system for everyone (5 June 2019)*
- *Irish Penal Reform Trust welcomes increase in use of community service as a response to offending (17 June 2019)*
- *IPRT responds to annual report from Irish Prison Service (24 June 2019)*

Research and Policy

IPRT's advocacy work is informed by our comprehensive research and evidence-led policies. Our published research and policy papers are available at: www.iprt.ie/research-centre

Policy Submissions

- IPRT Submission to Mental Health Reform on a 'Vision for Change', for submission to the Chairperson of the Oversight Group (August 2018)
- IPRT Submission to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Consultation on Strategy Statement 2019–2021 (October 2018)
- IPRT participation in the Department of Justice and Equality's consultation on the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy (November 2018)
- IPRT Submission on the Irish Prison Service Strategic Plan 2019–2021 (March 2019)
- IPRT Feedback on Draft Oberstown Children Detention Campus Rules and Supporting Policies (April 2019)

Oireachtas Submissions

- IPRT Submission on Parole Bill 2016 [Report Stage] (February 2018)
- IPRT Opening Statement on Bail (Amendment) Bill 2017 (December 2018)
- IPRT Briefing on Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill 2018 (February 2019)
- IPRT Submission on Parole Reform and the Parole Bill 2016 (June 2019)

Submissions to International Monitoring Bodies

- IPRT Submission to the UN Working Group on Women deprived of liberty (October 2018)
- IPRT Submission to the UNCAT on Ireland's one-year follow-up to its second periodic report under CAT (61st Session) (November 2018)

Research Reports

- *Progress in the Penal System: A framework for penal reform 2018* (October 2018)
- *Statement of Principles on Legislation to Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture* (November 2018)
- *Care and Justice: Children and Young People in Care and Contact with the Criminal Justice System* (February 2019)

Alliances and Engagement

Our vision for the penal system cannot be achieved alone. We continue to build strategic links and alliances with others in order to strengthen our overall capacity for creating change.

We increase our impact through working in partnership and in alliance with other organisations to achieve common policy goals. To demonstrate our support for common human rights issues, in 2018/2019 IPRT was an active organizational member of Mental Health Reform, Children's Rights Alliance, the Association of Criminal Justice Research and Development, and the National Women's Council of Ireland.

Constructive Engagement

Over this period IPRT has maintained longstanding relationships with stakeholders, as well as developing new alliances in order to support specific shared goals. IPRT engaged directly with the following stakeholders (among many others) on IPRT positions and consultations:

Civil Society

Children's Rights Alliance; Prevention and Early Intervention Network; Mental Health Reform; EPIC (Empowering People in Care); National Women's Council of Ireland; Saol Project; Cork Life Centre; Travellers in Prison Initiative; Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders; Pathways Centre; Jobcare; Irish Council for Civil Liberties; Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice; Care After Prison; SOLAS; Extern; Public Interest Law Alliance; Irish Deaf Society; Irish Refugee Council; and NASC, the Irish Immigrant Support Centre.

Statutory

Office of Inspector of Prisons; Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission; Ombudsman for Ireland; Ombudsman for Children; Press Ombudsman; and the Charities Regulator.

State

Irish Prison Service; The Probation Service; Irish Youth Justice Service; Department of Justice and Equality; Department of Children and Youth Affairs; and Oberstown Children Detention Campus.

Legislature

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs; Minister for Justice and Equality; Joint Committee on Justice and Equality; TDs and Senators.

Academia

University College Cork; Dublin Institute of Technology; Trinity College Dublin (PRILA); Maynooth University; UCD and University of Warwick 'History of Prison Health'; University of Nottingham; and Dundalk Institute of Technology.

International

UN Committee against Torture; UN Working Group on Women deprived of liberty; European Committee for the Prevention of Torture; Prison Reform Trust (UK).

Presentations

During the period, IPRT delivered numerous presentations to key groups and diverse audiences, ranging from policy stakeholders to students.

Highlights included: regular presentations to Recruit Prison Officers on our work, key current issues, and the importance of accountability and penal reform for the prison system; presentation to Prison Officers selected to work in the VDP unit; presentation to a 'Living with Life' life-sentenced prisoner group in Midlands Prison; information session on the work of IPRT with life-sentenced prisoners in Wheatfield Prison; presentation on sentencing and alternatives to custody to Maynooth University students; presentation on children in detention to the Dundalk IT Society Research Group; a presentation to FLAC UCC on 'Human Rights and Human Wrongs: Where to next?'; a presentation on the progress of penal reform in Ireland at the launch of History of Prison Health's 'Living Inside' exhibition; presentation as part of the Howard League Scotland 40th Anniversary conference event; and much more.

Consultations

IPRT continued to participate on the steering committee of the Travellers in Prison Initiative (TPI) during the course of 2018/2019.

IPRT staff attended many stakeholder events over the course of the year, using every launch, lecture and roundtable as an opportunity to further the penal reform agenda and to gather knowledge about broader issues in the criminal and social justice landscape to inform our work. This included participation at the Department of Justice and Equality's LGBTI Strategy consultation in November 2018, participation at a meeting with key support services at Loughan House in March 2019, and attendance at the Department of Justice and Equality's *Youth Justice Open Policy Forum* (May 2019)

IPRT was also consulted as an expert reviewer for several research instruments used by the PRILA project at Trinity College Dublin to examine public perceptions of the prison system and also attitudes to external prison oversight.

Prisoners and Prisoners' Families

Through our qualitative interviews for research, our annual prisoner member survey, prison visits and other engagements, IPRT regularly engages with prisoners and their families. These engagements inform our strategic priorities and can provide impetus for further action, investigation or research.

A significant gap continues to exist in terms of individual advocacy services for prisoners and their families. Although IPRT are not service providers, we regularly receive queries from prisoners and prisoners' families regarding legal or administrative concerns about the prison system.

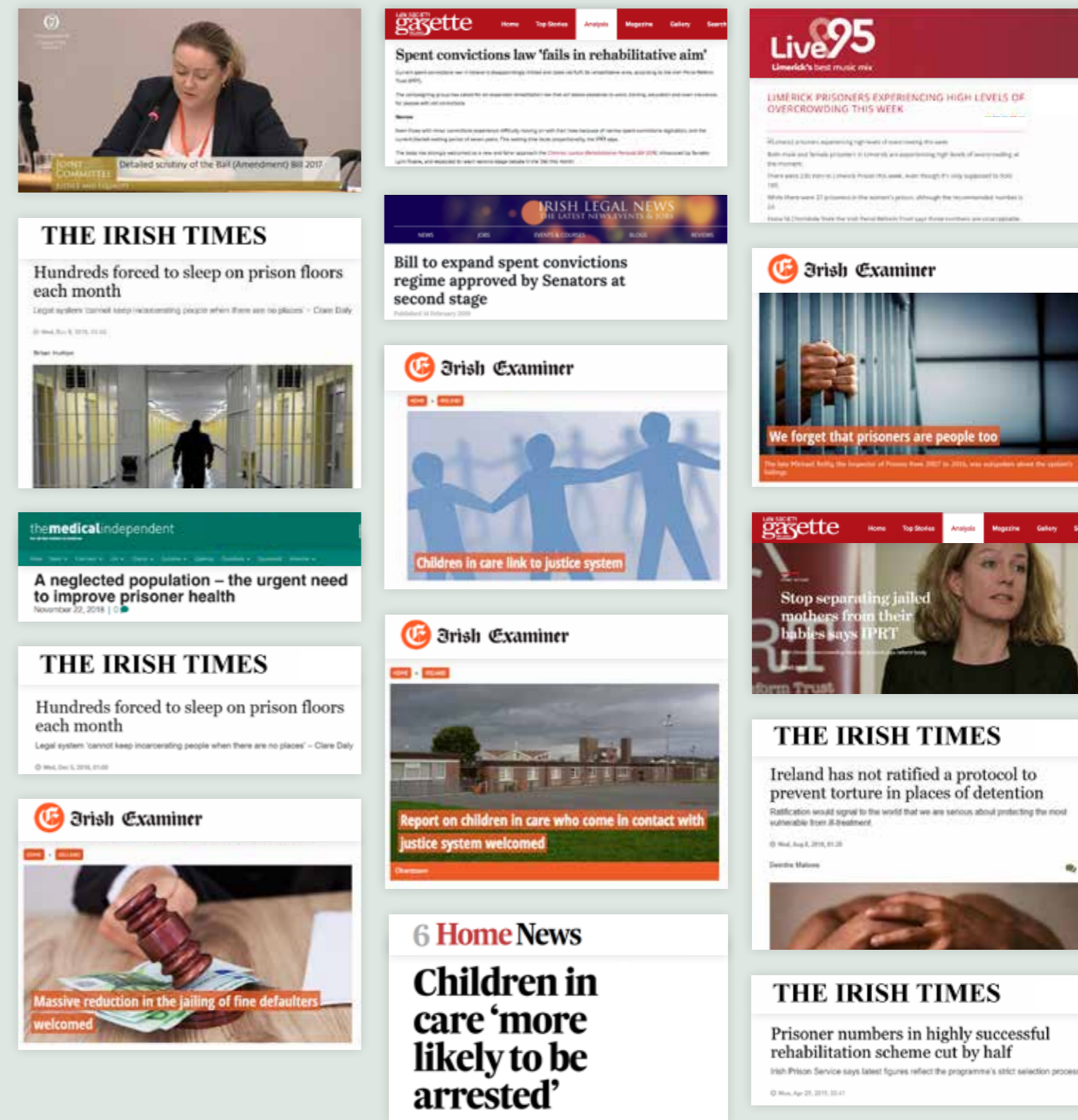
IPRT continues to receive a vast number of queries by phone and email related to people with previous convictions. This highlights both the continued lack of official information available, and also the number of people affected. Following the official launch of the *Criminal Justice (Rehabilitative Periods) Bill 2018* and the wide dissemination of our survey on the impact of a convictions history, the number of queries increased. Although callers usually have concerns about the limitations of the current spent convictions legislation in relation to accessing certain college courses, insurance, and traveling, the majority of callers have concerns about the potential impact of disclosure of old convictions to future/current employers.

Further queries raised by prisoners and their families in 2018 and 2019 include: the complaints system for prisoners in Irish prisons; access to temporary release and open prisons; access to healthcare; access to education and services; supports (both financial and psychological) for children and families of prisoners; prison visiting conditions; parole; access to rehabilitation /drug treatment; and access to supports and accommodation on release.

The key issues raised by people currently in prison, by way of the Annual Prisoner Member Survey, will be presented at the 2019 AGM.

IPRT Media Coverage

IPRT works hard to keep human rights and penal reform issues on the public and political agenda. Just some of the headlines from 2018 and 2019 are included here:



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CHY No. 11091



Supported by:



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality