

Appendix: Campaign Organizations against Women's Imprisonment

While this text is derived primarily from research conducted with women in prison in the North of Ireland, it is important to acknowledge the important intellectual campaign and support work conducted by women's organizations dedicated to the decarceration of women in advanced democratic states. Their work, often involving women with direct experience of jail, has been central to a more profound public understanding of women's incarceration, ensuring that the isolation endured by women and girls in prison is challenged. Their campaigning has continued to provide an oppositional force to punitive state institutions and to liberal reformism that assumes that prisons can be 'healthy' and rehabilitative environments.

Women in Prison (The United Kingdom)

Women in Prison supports and campaigns for women affected by the criminal justice system. It assists women with advice on housing, education, mental health, legal rights, work, benefits, debt, domestic violence and more. Women are often incarcerated miles from their homes and families – they lose their homes, their relationships with their children and their mental health in the process. Better outcomes for women mean a reduced use of prison and an increased use of community alternatives. Prison does not work. The best way to cut women's offending is to deal with its root causes.

Women in Prison
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INQUEST (England and Wales)

INQUEST was founded in 1981. It is the only organization in England and Wales that provides a specialist; comprehensive advice service to bereaved people; lawyers; other advice and support agencies; the media; MPs; and the wider public on contentious deaths and their investigation.

Its casework priorities are deaths in custody (police, prison, immigration detention and deaths of detained patients) with particular concerns about the deaths of women, black people, young people and people with mental health problems.

This reflects a commitment to challenging discrimination in terms of the treatment and care received by the deceased where they were in custody and the experience of bereaved relatives following the death.

INQUEST develops policy proposals and undertakes research to lobby for changes to the inquest and investigation process, reduce the number of custodial deaths and improve the treatment and care of those within the institutions where deaths occur.

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Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (Canada)

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) works to

- increase public awareness and promotion of decarceration for women;
- reduce the numbers of women who are criminalized and imprisoned in Canada;
- increase the availability of community-based, publicly funded, social service, health and educational resources available for marginalized, victimized, criminalized and imprisoned women;
- increase collaborative work among Elizabeth Fry Societies and other women's groups working to address poverty, racism and other forms of oppression.

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Ottawa
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Sisters Inside (Australia)

Sisters Inside is an independent community organization, which exists to advocate for the human rights of women in the criminal justice system and to address gaps in the services available to them. It works alongside women in prison in determining the best way to fulfil these roles.

Sisters Inside
PO Box 3407
South Brisbane
Queensland
Australia 4101
Telephone: 617 3844 5066

Flat Out Inc. (Australia)

Flat Out is a state-wide advocacy and support service for women who have had contact with the criminal justice and/or prison system in Victoria. Flat Out leads and participates in research and community education, seeking to inform the community and other service providers about the issues that occur for women in the prison system. Through community involvement and education, advocacy and research, Flat Out works towards having a strong voice in the prison abolition movement in Australia, in the hope that eventually prisons will not be seen as a legitimate arm of the justice system, but will be viewed as an antiquated, cruel and ultimately ineffective institution.

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Critical Resistance (The United States)

Critical Resistance seeks to build an international movement to end the prison-industrial complex (PIC) by challenging the belief that caging and controlling people makes us safe. We believe that basic necessities such as food, shelter and freedom are what really make our communities secure. As such, our work is part of global struggles against inequality and powerlessness. The success of the movement requires that it reflects communities most affected by the PIC. Because we seek to abolish the PIC, we cannot support any work that extends its life or scope.

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