



Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas

Information for Media

Background

The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) was established by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1985 in response to serious concerns regarding the number of Irish men and women in British prisons. ICPO is a charitable organisation which provides information, support and advocacy to Irish people imprisoned overseas and to their families. Through its offices in Maynooth and London, ICPO works with approximately 600 Irish prisoners overseas, the majority of which are in Britain. ICPO is funded by the Irish Bishops' Conference, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

Aims and Objectives

The ICPO works for all Irish prisoners wherever they are: it makes no distinction in terms of religious faith, the nature of the prison conviction or of a prisoner's status.

Our work involves:

- Identifying and responding to the needs of Irish prisoners abroad, and those of their families;
- Researching and providing relevant information to prisoners on issues such as deportation, repatriation and transfer;
- Focusing public attention on issues affecting Irish prisoners
- Engaging in practical work in aid of justice and human rights for Irish migrants, refugees and prisoners at an international level;
- Visiting prisoners and assisting families with travel and accommodation.

Information for Media

- Media queries should be directed to Mr Brian Hanley, Coordinator of the ICPO. Contact details: Tel: + 00 353 (0) 1 505 3155 | Email: icpo@iecon.ie | Postal address: ICPO, Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co Kildare.
- General information about the work of ICPO can be found on our website <http://www.catholicbishops.ie/prisoners-overseas>
- ICPO is available to discuss the many issues facing Irish prisoners overseas, the hardships they face and the burdens faced by prisoner's families.
- Owing to the unique vulnerability of those with whom we work, our paramount concern is to act in the best interests of our clients at all times.
- In keeping with the strict confidentiality requirements under which we operate, the ICPO does not comment on individual cases or clients.
- The ICPO cannot assist in the identification of Irish citizens, whether currently or previously in detention abroad. This policy also extends to prisoners' families.