



## National Guarantor for the Rights of Persons Detained or Deprived of Liberty



## National Preventive Mechanism under the OPCAT

### *The National Guarantor in the context of Covid-19 outbreak*

Rome, 26 March 2020

This afternoon, the National Guarantor's premises will be sanitised. This is the reason why our today's bulletin is somehow a bit shorter.

#### **Prisons**

The situation of contagion in prisons is almost stable (a new case resulted positive and the person was immediately sent to the local civil hospital).

The preventive health care isolation wards arranged climbed up to 138 in 102 prisons and house 257 prisoners. However, the typology of structures varies a lot among the different prisons — sometimes they do not even correspond to the isolation prospect for which they were set up. For example, one ward has five rooms: four three-bedded rooms and one two-bedded for a total capacity of 14 people.

The National Guarantor is going to monitor all places and will always stress on the need that isolation wards are arranged to effectively quarantine people who might have been in close contact with somebody tested positive. To this purpose, they should offer plenty of space, which the actual situation is not capable to grant due to the still densely packed conditions inside prisons. This afternoon, the number of prison population counts 58,243 prisoners, 136 less than yesterday.

The Guarantor of the region Piedmont (north of Italy) reported the National Guarantor his concerns about some problematic conditions inside the prisons under his jurisdiction: issues have been raised on the effective availability and use of means of communication alternative to contact visits. The National Guarantor forwarded the regional Guarantor's claims to the regional prison Directorate and to the central Department so to help the regional Guarantor to open a direct and profitable dialogue with the penitentiary Headquarters and give best solutions to the problem referred.

Meanwhile, TIM has got in contact with the Department for Youth Offenders and offered 35 tablets which are to be delivered to the 17 Youth Offender Institutions, to compensate the impossibility to receive individual visits.

Contacts with the Authorities concerned to develop strategies and policies related to prisons and Immigration Removal Centres are ongoing.

#### **Immigration Removal Centres (CPRs)**

As reported in the press, a person was tested positive in the CPR in Gradisca d'Isonzo (Gorizia – North of Italy). The person has been asymptomatic, but once tested positive he was isolated from the rest of the CPR's population. The National Guarantor had contacts both with the Prefect and the Minister of the Interior to evaluate the situation. It received assurances on the measures implemented to protect the rest of the population from the spread of infection.

### **The European and international networking**

The European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services (EuroPris) has collected procedures issued by prison and probation national administrations towards the emergency of the corona spread. Information are updated to March 19<sup>th</sup>. Up to now, the prison administrations which have sent their information are Italy, France, Spain, Belgium, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Israel. We are developing a comparative table that we will be presented tomorrow.

The UN Subcommittee for the Prevention of Torture (SPT) has published a document on the pandemic in places of deprivation of liberty. The translation in Italian, elaborated by the National Guarantor in collaboration with SPT, will be available tomorrow on our website.