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Annwyl Jenny Rathbone MS,

Cardiff University's Wales Governance Centre has today published *Prisons and Imprisonment in Wales: 2024 Factfile*. This latest report draws together information on prisons and sentencing published by the Ministry of Justice, including the recent *Welsh Justice Data: Annual Release*, as well as a raft of previously unseen data obtained via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Today's report includes findings that are likely to be of particular interest to the Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee and its previous work on women in the criminal justice system *and* anti-racism. For example, despite the commitments set out in *Women's Justice Blueprint* to reduce the Welsh female prison population, today's report reveals that the number of Welsh women in prison increased for a fourth consecutive year in 2024. The use of remand for women in Wales also increased last year and the number of those sentenced to immediate custody for one month or less rose by 51 per cent. Six years on since the *Women's Justice Blueprint* was first unveiled, the data presented in this latest *Factfile* raise yet further questions over the effectiveness of the Blueprint.

The latest Factfile also shows that individuals from non-White backgrounds in Wales continue to be over-represented in almost all stages of the criminal justice system. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds were once again over-represented among the Welsh prisoner and

probation population, were more likely to be remanded in custody, sentenced to longer prison terms, and required to serve a higher proportion of their sentence in prison.

By continuing to ask searching and far-reaching questions about the operation of the system in Wales, this report hopes to further contribute to political, academic and public debates on Welsh criminal justice. This includes the Committee's own efforts to subject these important areas to meaningful scrutiny.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this report, please do not hesitate to contact me. In the meantime, I hope that this report will be of interest.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Robert Jones