



Programme area n°19

Correctional Services and Pre-trial Detention

OBJECTIVE

Improved correctional system

AREAS OF SUPPORT

- > Correctional service systems and mechanisms
- > Support to prisoners, including their rehabilitation and preparation for release
- > Measures stimulating the beneficiary countries to meet international standards on correctional services and detention, including the Council of Europe's European Prison Rules, recommendations of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and case law of the European Court of Human Rights
- > Alternative sanctions to alleviate overcrowded prisons
- > Education and training for prison and probation staff
- > Support to vulnerable groups (in pre-trial detention, prison and probation)
- > Strengthening the implementation of agreements on the transfer of sentenced persons and EU framework decisions
- > Justice chain cooperation and networking between justice institutions (courts, prosecution services, police and correctional services)

SUGGESTED MEASURES

- > Developing policies and national strategies, including measures to increase transparency and insight, and reviewing sentencing policies
- > Improving organisational and managerial structures in and outside prisons, such as an efficient and functioning National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs), in line with CPT recommendations
- > Improving preparations for release and reintegration, including cooperation with public services and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- > Improving conditions for prisoners and detainees, including facilities to maintain family and community ties in preparation for release from prison
- > Establishing detainees' legal avenues to challenge the legality and conditions of their detention before a competent national authority
- > Reducing overcrowding in places of detention (including pre-trial) by seeking alternatives to prison, such as community-based sanctions and measures
- > Increasing competence and professionalism among staff through education and training focused on ethics, values and security culture
- > Small grant scheme(s) for NGOs
- > Improving conditions, methods and staff competence on the treatment of vulnerable groups, including women, juvenile offenders, LGBT-people, drug addicts, non-nationals, physically and mentally-ill prisoners
- > Strengthening cooperation between criminal justice authorities to enable transfer of prisoners to their country of origin
- > Establishing and strengthening networks of cooperation within the penal and judicial systems

RELEVANCE OF SUPPORT

Many beneficiary countries face serious problems with their prison systems, including growth in the prison population and overcrowding, inadequate health care, mental disorders, subcultures and sexual abuse. In addition, the rising number of prisoners with drug addiction problems is of growing concern. Poor infrastructure, lack of qualified personnel, insufficient sanitation and accommodation, and shortages of meaningful activities for prisoners are also common challenges.

The report “State of democracy, human rights and rule of law in Europe” by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (April 2014) recommends measures to address chronic prison overcrowding and to improve prison conditions.

As in the past, the EEA and Norway Grants help to address these problems. A number of successful prison projects and professional partnerships have already been established under previous periods of the Norway Grants.

Over the years, the United Nations and the Council of Europe have developed specific standards in the prison field. These can be found in recommendations, conventions and protocols, as well as in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. The observations of the UN Committee against Torture (CAT) and the reports of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) document a wide range of problems and concerns in places of detention in Contracting States. They also provide concrete and detailed recommendations to each member state on how to improve the situation and adapt their laws and policies.

After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has increasingly taken account of matters in the prison field by issuing framework decisions such as on transfer of prisoners and probation and alternative sanctions. Adherence to relevant recommendations in European and international monitoring reports and jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights shall be ensured.

PROGRAMME AREA SPECIFICS

- > Improvement of material conditions in prison shall only be supported alongside rehabilitation and reintegration measures
- > A maximum level of funding available for infrastructure (hard measures) shall be identified in the memorandum of understanding or exceptionally in the programme’s concept note
- > Priority shall be given to juveniles in prison

BILATERAL INTEREST

Exchange of knowledge and sharing of experience should be encouraged through bilateral cooperation between donor and beneficiary countries.