

Principles for the Treatment of Women Sentenced to Imprisonment

A National Report from Sweden



Preface

The overriding goal of criminal justice policy in Sweden¹ is to reduce crime and increase the security of society. The Prison and Probation Service's role is to apply this goal to individual clients' needs and to reduce their risk of recidivism.

During the period in which the sentence is being served, the Prison and Probation Service has the responsibility of ensuring that offenders participate in programmes and other measures that improve their chances of leading a worthwhile life. This often leads to a delicate balance between the need for rehabilitation and security.

Female offenders entering prison are often more *marginalised* than male prisoners in terms of drug misuse, work, housing and relationships. A smaller proportion of women prisoners than of male prisoners have a non-drug misusing partner to return to on their release. Moreover, psychological problems and the placement of their children in care – with all the problems associated with such a measure – constitute a further set of difficult circumstances.

Many women prisoners feel that to a great extent, their lives have been dominated by men and lived on men's terms. They have lived through their men and lived above all to serve men. Many of them identify themselves as someone's woman and have no identity of their own. Many of their relationships have also been of a very destructive type with elements of criminality, and of physical and sexual abuse.

Time in prison often provides women with an opportunity to think through their situation and their own needs. Doing this together with other women in a woman-focused environment creates the conditions for a better life in the future. Research shows that women who have established a relationship of trust with other women during treatment are better able to break the disruptive pattern of their lives with men. In accordance with the UN's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, *to protect women from all forms of violence*, women should be able to serve their sentences in a situation where the risks of sexual or other abuse are eliminated. Likewise, women should be able to avoid the necessity of forming relationships with criminal men.

By an amendment to the Act on Correctional Treatment that came into force on 1 January 1999, it was made clear that women shall not serve their sentences in mixed prisons. There is no inherent value or benefit in having mixed prisons. The risk of women starting relationships with male prisoners and thereby reinforcing their negative self-image is obvious. In addition there is a great risk that women will have to adjust to male conditions in regard both to programmes and other prison activities.

During 1998 the Prison and Probation Administration established guidelines for women in prison. The model requires that staff have special competence relating to women offenders' lifestyles. A gender perspective is necessary. To enhance the skills of staff and to provide better support to women prisoners, a nation-wide consultative network, Consultants for Women Offenders, has

¹ Disclaimer: The designations employed, the presentation of the material and the view expressed in this paper are those of Sweden, and do not necessarily reflect the practices and view of the United Nations in any of these respects.

operated since 1997. Its purpose is to create a chain of care operating both internally and externally and taking the needs of women offenders as its point of departure. The members of the group are drawn from remand prisons, ordinary prisons, probation and therapeutic communities.

We consider that this model benefits women and we therefore wish to recommend it to other countries.

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Summary of the principles

This document results from the overriding awareness of gender in Swedish society and the general implementation of gender equality, together with the realisation that it is essential to safeguard women from the evident risks of a mixed prison environment and an awareness that crime must be tackled from a gender perspective. This has led to the development of certain principles summarised below. These principles are the result of an analysis of the situation of women in Swedish prisons, but have some general applicability.

- Women sentenced to imprisonment shall be placed in prisons intended only for women or in wings that are separated from those housing male prisoners.
- Women's needs and issues should be addressed in a woman-focused environment that is safe, trusting and supportive.
- Hospital and psychiatric facilities suitable for women shall be provided.
- Women whose sentences include expulsion orders shall be dealt with taking their special circumstances into account.
- Visiting apartments shall be provided.
- Visiting rooms adapted to the needs of children of different ages shall be provided at all prisons housing women.
- Programme activities and premises shall be designed taking into account the special needs of women prisoners.
- Staff shall be trained to deal with crime from a gender perspective.

Introduction

Women prisoners constitute only a small proportion of the prison population in Sweden. While this is a positive feature from the perspective of general criminal policy, it often has negative organisational consequences since the number of prisons provided for women are few and Sweden is a large country. This means that the distance from home communities is often considerable and it is difficult for women prisoners to maintain contact with their relatives and general social network.

One of the main purposes of the 1974 reorganisation of the prisons was to facilitate precisely this kind of contact. Proximity to the home community enables family relationships to be maintained and, at the same time, the ordinary social services of the community may be used by prisoners in the same way as ordinary citizens. A number of new neighbourhood prisons were constructed in order to make it possible to implement the ideas on which the reorganisation was based. In each of these neighbourhood prisons, which could accommodate 40 inmates, two places on average were reserved for women prisoners, on occasion somewhat more.

For many years there was only one prison that was reserved exclusively for women and was able to run activities that took account of the special needs of women. In more recent years (1989, 1996 and 1999), three further prisons have been reserved exclusively for women. Because of the small number of women prisoners it has not been possible to initiate activities which take as their starting point the special needs of women, perhaps most importantly proximity to the home community and thus also family relationships, above all with children. In order to satisfy the proximity principle women prisoners have generally served their sentences in prisons intended for male prisoners. This has meant that women have lived in prisons under conditions suited to men, since activities have largely been adapted to the needs of male prisoners.

During 1997–1998 a trial with intensive supervision and electronic monitoring² was carried out in Sweden. Since 1999 this system has been a permanent alternative to serving a prison sentence. This innovation has markedly changed the prison population. The percentage of those convicted of serious crime and sentenced to one year or more has risen. The number of women prisoners has been reduced by about 250–300 per year. This number will increase if the present upper limit for the use of intensive supervision with electronic monitoring is raised to include those sentenced to more than three months imprisonment.

Having regard to the way in which intensive supervision would change the character of the female prison population, but also in order to further improve the content of the prison sentences implemented in accordance with the needs of women prisoners, a project group was requested by the Director-General of the Prison and Probation Administration to elaborate guidelines for women prisoners. Its task was limited to estimating the number of future places that would be needed, the desirable location of women's prisons, and the need for

² Information in English: Swedish Prison and Probation Administration, SE-601 80 Norrköping, Sweden, order no 9179, 9180.

special prisoner accommodation or special security categories; presenting proposals for programme activities which take the special needs of women prisoners as their point of departure; and providing information with a bearing on the desirability of single sex prisons as opposed to mixed sex prisons.

Women sentenced to imprisonment: Statistics

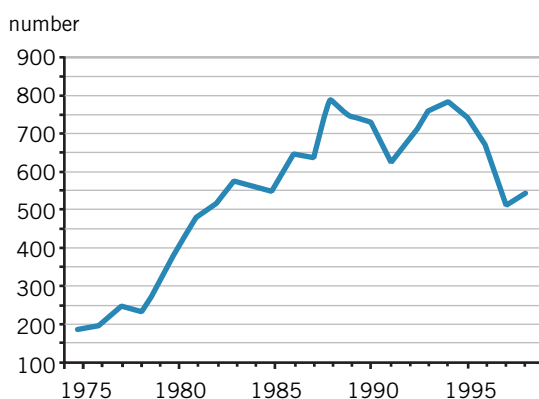
Prison population trends

Over the last twenty years the number of women prisoners received into Swedish prisons has shown an increase both in terms of absolute numbers and as a proportion of the total prison population. In the middle of the 1970s women prisoners made up nearly 2% of the total prison population. During the following years a steady increase ensued and by 1998 the proportion had risen to 5.7%.

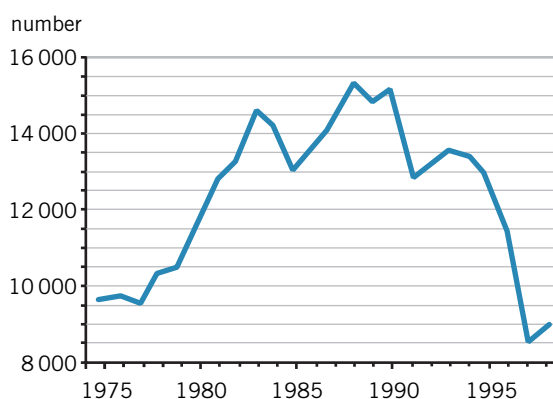
The first of the diagrams below shows the number of women prisoners entering Swedish prisons during the period 1975–1998. The lowest figure was recorded in the middle of the 1970s when the number of female receptions was 186. There then followed an almost linear increase until 1988, when a peak of 784 receptions was recorded. During 1996, a total of 661 women prisoners were received. This figure decreased to 501 in 1997 and 541 in 1998, mainly due to the use of intensive supervision with electronic monitoring.

The trend noted for women prisoners is substantially similar to that for male prisoners. The second diagram shows that a peak was reached with 15 314 receptions in 1988. During 1996 a total of 11 462 male prisoners were received into the prisons. This figure decreased to 8 611 in 1997 and to 8 956 in 1998, also due to intensive supervision with electronic monitoring.

Female receptions 1975–1998



Male receptions 1975–1998



Type of offence

The following table shows the proportional distribution of principal offences committed by female and male prisoners respectively for the years 1975, 1985 and 1995.

Principal offence	1995 per cent		1985 per cent		1975 per cent	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Drunken driving	28%	25%	23%	25%	28%	35%
Theft, excluding robbery	25%	20%	20%	20%	16%	15%
Drug offences	14%	7%	18%	6%	19%	4%
Fraud, embezzlement	10%	8%	15%	8%	15%	4%
Causing public danger, offences against public order, misuse of office, etc	8%	7%	2%	7%	0.5%	12%
Offences against life, health, liberty and peace	6%	19%	4%	9%	3%	8%
Other traffic offences	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Robbery	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%
Sexual offences	0.1%	2%	0%	1%	0.5%	1%
Miscellaneous	4%	7%	15%	20%	13%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When the years 1975 and 1985 are compared with 1995, it is apparent that drunken driving, theft, drug and fraud offences are the dominant crimes committed by women prisoners; however, the proportion of fraud and drug offences has diminished somewhat during the period, while the proportion of thefts and violent offences (i.e. offences against life, health, liberty and peace) has increased somewhat. Due to intensive supervision with electronic monitoring the picture has changed during 1997 and 1998. The most frequent crimes committed are theft and drug offences (27% and 20% respectively), while drunken driving has decreased to nearly 10%.

Drunken driving and theft are the commonest crimes among male prisoners. When the year 1975 is compared with 1985 and 1995, a reduction in drunken driving and an increase in offences against life, health, liberty and peace can be seen. The proportion of drug offences is higher among female prisoners than among male prisoners. The reverse is true of violent offences (i.e. offences against life, health, liberty and peace). As in the case of women, intensive supervision has had an influence on the composition of the male prison

population during 1997 and 1998 in terms of crimes committed. Theft and offences against life, health, liberty and peace are the dominant crimes (25% and 18% respectively), while drunken driving has decreased to 13%.

Length of sentence

The majority of prisoners, both women and men, are sentenced to short terms of imprisonment. The proportion of women sentenced to less than four months imprisonment had increased in 1995 compared with 1975 and 1985. The converse is true for male prisoners.

The proportion of those sentenced to long terms of imprisonment – four years or more – had increased in 1995 in comparison with the years 1975 and 1985. There is no great difference between female and male prisoners in this respect. However, in absolute numbers the difference between the sexes is considerable. During 1995 some 20 female offenders with sentences of four years or more were received into the prisons. The corresponding figure for male offenders was 300.

Sentence length	1995 per cent		1985 per cent		1975 per cent	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
<4 months	60%	57%	57%	63%	54%	73%
4-<12 months	24%	28%	25%	23%	23%	18%
1–3 years	13%	12%	17%	12%	23%	9%
4–6 years	2%	2%	1%	1%	0.5%	0.3%
7 years –	1%	1%	–	0.3%	–	0.01%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Due to the use of intensive supervision, the proportion of inmates with short sentences decreased during 1997–1998 compared to 1995 and the proportion sentenced to one to three years imprisonment increased.

Foreign citizens

Over the most recent five-year period, the proportion of female prisoners with foreign citizenship has varied between 17 and 19%³ per year, while the corresponding proportion for male prisoners has varied between 19 and 23%.

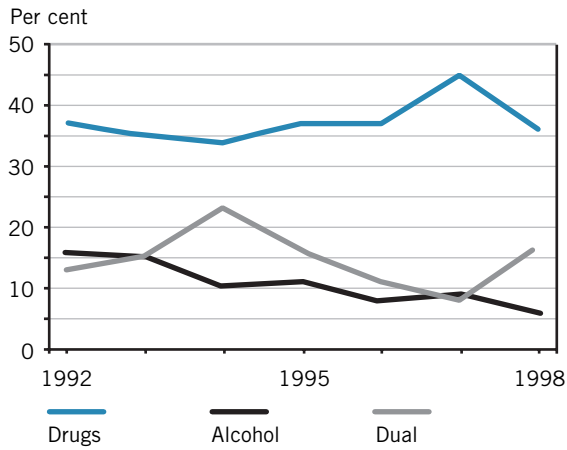
Drug misusers

The proportion of drug misusers in the whole prison population is just over 50%. However, the proportion of drug misusers is higher, and that of dual drug

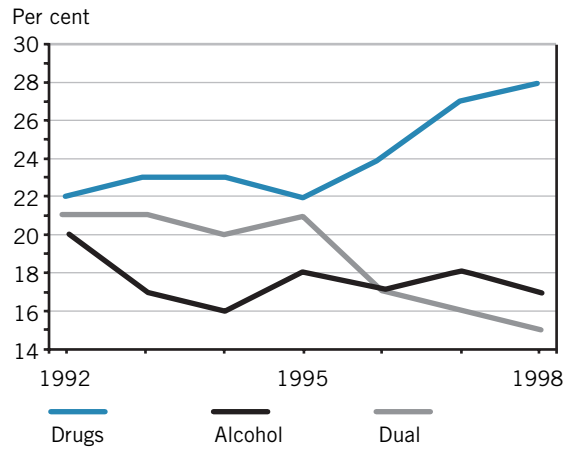
³ Swedish Prison and Probation Administration Official Statistics, 1998.

misusers is lower, among female prisoners than among male prisoners (see the diagram below, and note that the definition of what constitutes a drug misuser was changed in 1997 from a person who used drugs 3 months before the sentence served to 12 months before).

Drug misuse, women



Drug misuse, men



Intensive supervision with electronic monitoring

During the period 1997–1999, between 3 000 and 4 000 offenders per year with a sentence of, at most, three months imprisonment, applied to serve their prison sentences in the community under intensive supervision. Almost 90% of these applications were granted, including applications from between 200 and nearly 300 women per year. Intensive supervision was discontinued for three per cent of the women in 1997 and about ten per cent in the following years. The corresponding figures for men were six per cent each year.

Mixed prisons or prisons for women only?

The question of whether female prisoners prefer mixed or single sex prisons has been explored in two studies, one using a questionnaire⁴ and the other interviews⁵. An overwhelming proportion of the women respondents, and especially those with experience of both types of prisons, stated that they prefer to serve their sentences together with male prisoners⁶. A strong reason for this preference was that intrigues and maliciousness occur more often in the single sex prisons than in the mixed sex prisons. In consequence, it was thought harder to live with women only. In addition, the respondents considered that a pleasanter and gentler atmosphere prevailed when prisoners of both sexes were together. Some disadvantages of mixed sex prisons were, however, also mentioned. There was a risk of women prisoners, especially younger women, being sexually exploited. Emotional attachments and jealousies between couples could give rise to difficulties but were not thought to be a major problem. The majority of women respondents thought that it should be possible to serve their sentences in mixed sex prisons.

The project group met with representatives of the prison staffs' professional organisations in order to learn about their experience of working with female prisoners.

The majority of the participants were of the opinion that single sex prisons were preferable to mixed sex prisons. A large proportion of women prisoners are serious drug misusers and have a negative social situation with few social contacts other than in groups where drug misuse and criminal behaviour are frequent. They have often been convicted of offences in which men were also involved. It is important for women to use their time in prison to build up their self-confidence, deal with their drug problems, improve their social situation, and acquire a better perspective on their personal relationships, especially with men. Living in a mixed prison often makes it easier for female prisoners to avoid confronting the difficult aspects of their lives, instead becoming involved in ill-considered relationships with male prisoners. A number of the participants thought that when men and women prisoners were together in prison, the women lived under conditions decided on by the men. In addition, the women prisoners were exploited sexually or required to bring drugs into the prison.

Research which has been conducted over the last twenty years on drug-misusing women is also of relevance for women sentenced to imprisonment. The same kinds of problems are described: the use mainly of narcotic drugs but also of alcohol and medical substances, eating disorders, and, often, problems of dependency in relationships with men.

⁴ Somander, L.: Women Prisoners, Research paper No. 4, Swedish Prison and Probation Administration, Norrköping, 1994 ISSN 1102-5891.

⁵ The interviews were conducted in the framework of the present project.

⁶ The Swedish mixed sex prisons provided for separate night accommodation for female prisoners. Daytime activities were undertaken together with male prisoners.

The Norwegian researchers Vaglum and Ravndal⁷ have shown that women who established a trusting friendly relationship with another woman in the course of treatment in a single sex group were better able to break a destructive pattern in their relationships with men. These researchers have also pointed out that the women had been exposed to sexual abuse, both physical and mental, to a far greater extent than men.

The author of a Swedish study⁸ also describes how many of the women she met in treating drug misusers had been physically assaulted and exposed to sexual abuse. She writes: *Where men set the norms for medical as well as psychological research and treatment, women will in consequence be considered deviant and difficult to understand. And this can mean that even in the future, women will have a tough time in institutions.*

In the report "Treatment planning for drug misusers"⁹, the author maintains that women who have experienced physical or psychological abuse by men should not be treated in male-dominated institutions. For a treatment institution to function adequately if it contains individuals of both sexes, at least one third of those treated should be women. Furthermore, the treatment of drug-misusing women offenders often means taking account of their children. This is not an aspect that comes to the fore in the treatment of drug-misusing male offenders, in part because of the woman's role as the parent with the main responsibility for children. Many treatment institutions are still male-dominated with little room left for paying attention to women's special needs.

After having heard the views of inmates and staff on single as opposed to mixed sex prisons, studied the European Prison Rules¹⁰ and considered the results of relevant research, the project group was of the opinion that women prisoners should serve their sentences completely separated from male prisoners.

⁷ Referred to in Trulsson, K.: Kvinnorummet – vision, verklighet, vardag (The woman's room: vision, reality, everyday life), 1993.

⁸ Nyrén, I.-B.: Normbrottet – det kvinnliga perspektivet i missbruksvården (Norm violation: the female perspective in the treatment of drug misusers), 1995.

⁹ Melin, A.-G.: Behandlingsplanering vid missbruk, 1994.

¹⁰ Council of Europe Recommendation R (87) 3, The European Prison Rules, Part II, Rule 11.2: *Males and females shall in principle be detained separately.*

The provision of places for women prisoners

Number of places and security categories

The average daily population of women prisoners is about 200. A majority come from the three largest cities in Sweden. There is a total number of 226 places for women at six prisons. Experience and documentation suggest that there is little risk of any external liberation of women prisoners¹¹. Very few women escape directly from prison. In accordance, therefore, with the principle that the enforcement of the sanction shall take place under the most open conditions that are realistically possible, the view taken has been that there are no grounds for providing a Category I prison for women¹². The degree of security to be found at the largest prison for women (89 places), Category II Wing, has been assessed as fully satisfactory. Three more prisons, with a range of 20–47 places, are reserved solely for women prisoners. Furthermore, in two prisons there are special female units, with 10 and 30 places, completely separated from those for male prisoners.

Special places

In order to meet the medical and psychiatric needs of women prisoners in the same way as the needs of male prisoners, a national resource centre was provided at the largest prison for women during 1999.

Long term prisoners and prisoners facing deportation

For many years, work at the largest prison for women has included dealing with long term prisoners and prisoners who are to be deported on completion of their sentences. This work will continue. However, an assessment of special needs and security classification will also be provided similar to the one for male prisoners at the Reception Centre in the largest prison for men, Category I¹³.

¹¹ Of the total yearly prison population (9 497) 2% escaped directly from prison during 1998. In over 80% of these cases the escape was from an open prison. There have been no escapes from the largest prison for women since 1993.

¹² Category I prisons are designed to be secure both against escape and external liberation attempts.

¹³ This reception centre providing documentation on long-term male prisoners is an innovation which started operations during 1997.

Visiting rooms

The Preamble to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁴ emphasises that the family is the basic unit of society and is of special importance for the welfare and development of the child. The child's need of, and right to, both its parents is a recurring theme in the Convention, as is the responsibility that parents have for their children. Even children whose parents are in prison have a right to regular and personal contact with them. Article 9.3 of the Convention reads as follows:

States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.

(A child is defined in the Convention as a person who is under 18 years of age.)

With the exception of information derived from the abovementioned special study of women prisoners, there are no routine statistics on the number of children cut off from their parents on account of the latter serving a prison sentence. Experience suggests that more women than men prisoners have the care of their children and that children whose fathers are in prison in the main stay with their mothers.

In the study on women sentenced to imprisonment referred to above, it was found that relations with children were the most difficult aspect of the time in prison. To be removed from the responsibility for, and influence over, the family, especially the children, was felt to be an extra punishment to which they were subjected. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise the point of departure for the Convention on the Rights of the Child: the basis for ensuring that contacts between children and parents are possible should be the child's needs and best interests.

With a view to facilitating and improving the possibilities of contact with children and relatives, visiting apartments have been made available during 1999 in three of the six prisons for women. Furthermore, apartments will be provided in two of the other prisons for women during 2000. In addition, visiting rooms designed bearing in mind the needs of children of different ages are to be provided at all prisons where women are serving sentences.

¹⁴ The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989 and ratified by Sweden in the following year.

Pregnancy and children in prison

It occasionally happens that women prisoners are pregnant on reception into prison. No regular statistics on this are kept, but staff assert that pregnancy on arrival is not a common phenomenon and this view is supported by the occasional studies that have been made. There is thus no basis for providing special units for pregnant women. Routines and preparedness for the possible occurrence of pregnancies must be elaborated at a local level for each prison containing women prisoners.

Under section 41 of the Prison Treatment Act, women prisoners can have babies with them in prison. "Babies" are considered medically to include those up to the age of twelve months. In the course of a year, 15–20 babies may be found in prison, where they stay on average for two or three months. The social welfare board of the prisoner's home municipality has responsibility for the child's welfare and is required to place the child wherever is deemed best for the child. The prison services can usually deal adequately with the medical and general care that is necessary for the mother and child. Problems arise when the child has to be separated from the mother because she is serving a long prison sentence.

A short prison sentence can be served under intensive supervision with electronic monitoring in the community but even then problems can arise if the intensive supervision is breached. In every case, therefore, where a woman sentenced to imprisonment is responsible for the care of a young child there must be a preparedness for dealing with the child in the event that the intensive supervision is interrupted.

The whole question of children in prison has been studied as part of an investigation which the Prison and Probation Service carried out in collaboration with the National Board of Health and Welfare, at the request of the Government, during 1998¹⁵. Swedish criminal justice policy is directed towards avoiding custodial sentences as far as possible due to the harm they cause. Alternatives to prison are therefore sought as a matter of high priority. Children who have committed crimes are almost never committed to prison. Therefore, the opinion of the Government, as well as of the Prison and Probation Service, is that children should only live in prison in exceptional cases. This is doubly so for innocent children.

¹⁵ Barn med frihetsberövade föräldrar (Children of Prisoners).

Structured programme activities

Programmes for women prisoners, like those for men, shall include work, education and special programmes that address criminality and drug-related problems. These programmes must satisfy the criteria that have been drawn up for such programmes. Programmes that address criminality and drug misuse will in most cases be carried out as information giving and motivating programmes in accordance with the minimum requirements for such programmes¹⁶.

In principle these programmes are similar for both men and women. However, the women's programmes will place special emphasis on the particular needs of women prisoners that have been revealed in the research literature and in the results of interviews and questionnaires involving women in Swedish prisons. Four main areas can be distinguished: work and education, parenthood, achieving an independent life, and maintaining good health.

The programmes offered to women prisoners will also include those who are facing deportation, taking into account their special needs and opportunities.

The special needs of women prisoners

Work and education

The majority of women prisoners were unemployed at the time of entry into prison¹⁷. Their main sources of income were social insurance benefits, sick pay, pensions or unemployment benefits. Their desire for meaningful, vocationally oriented and marketable working skills and for opportunities to gain access to more advanced education than elementary schooling, has been reflected in various interviews and other studies.

The aim should therefore be to provide good opportunities for vocational training in collaboration with the various labour market agencies. Such training should be adapted to the demands of the labour market while at the same time taking into account the women's capabilities and needs. Vocational training should thus contain both a theoretical component and practical training that can be put to direct use in the prison's activities. In accordance with the Government's Adult Education Initiative¹⁸ the attempt should be made to provide education at least up to upper secondary level.

¹⁶ See in this connection the special manual for such programmes available in English under the title "Know-how and Requirements", 1997, Swedish Prison & Probation Service (appendix 2).

¹⁷ Krantz L., Somander L., Gustavsson J.: Kriminalvårdens anstaltsklienter (The prison clientèle), Prison & Probation Service, Report 1994:1.

¹⁸ This programme is described in a Swedish governmental report, SOU 1996:27, En strategi för kunskapslyft och livslångt lärande (A strategy for knowledge enhancement and lifelong learning).

Parenthood training

Half of the women prisoners received into prison have young children.

Two-thirds of these women have charge of the child. A number of research studies of women prisoners show that those who are mothers find relations with their children the hardest part of serving the sentence. To have responsibility for, and influence over, the family – especially the children – taken away from them is especially hard for women sentenced to imprisonment.

Parenthood programmes that have been developed for use in prisons will be offered to women prisoners. The programmes emphasise child development in all its various stages and how relationships can be maintained during imprisonment.

An independent life: programme addressing criminality

Many women, especially those who are drug misusers, have stated in interviews that to a considerable extent, their lives have been run by men and made to conform to conditions dictated by men. They have lived through their male partners and tried above all to please their men. The identity they experience is that they are someone's woman and they often express the lack of a sense of personal identity. Many of their relationships have been of a destructive type, containing elements of criminality and various kinds of abuse.

Most of the women with children state that they feel themselves to be in poor shape psychologically due to their inability to cope with their lives. They experience feelings of guilt and shame because they have failed and harmed their children. Those who have handed over their children for voluntary placement in foster homes think that this was the best thing to do and that they had no other choice.

In order to build up the self-confidence of women prisoners and give them a sense of their personal identity as women, the following questions should be taken up in programmes addressing criminality, over and above those questions that are more directly crime-related:

Family planning, contraception, pregnancy

Gender roles, women's history

Family violence, victims of sexual abuse and assault

Conflicts and conflict resolution

Guilt, shame and atonement

Living together and divorce

Finance

Positive relationships/communication

Planning for a positive future: finding, getting and keeping a job and somewhere to live.

Programmes addressing health issues and drug misuse

Interviews with women prisoners reveal that many are concerned about their body weight and appearance. During certain periods they will often overeat, only to follow this with panic slimming. A large proportion misuse drugs or alcohol or both. The constant quest for drugs, or rather the money to provide drugs, is a regular feature of daily life. In order to improve their general state of health it is important that programme activities focus on:

Proper diets, eating disorders

Exercise

Alcohol and drugs

Sexually transmitted diseases.

Staff competence

Over and above the formal requirements that apply to the various categories of staff and the minimum competence demanded for the purposes of the various programmes addressing criminality and drug misuse, the staff working with women prisoners should be knowledgeable about:

- the special needs of women from a biological, social and psychological point of view
- the role of women and mothers
- criminality and drug misuse by women prisoners
- women as victims of sexual, mental and physical violence.

Basic staff training should include a module providing opportunities for gaining knowledge about the special problems faced by women. A further point of equal importance is that staff working with women prisoners should receive training that enables them to learn about the results of contemporary research on women. This would promote an understanding of a gender-based conceptual framework and make for a qualitative development of staff work. Recurring training for staff in the topics mentioned above should be provided through seminars, conferences and collaboration with other professionals both within and external to the Prison and Probation Service.

Collaboration with other professionals

Research studies have shown that female offenders entering prison are often more *marginalised* than male prisoners in terms of drug misuse, work, housing and relationships¹⁹. It is less common for women prisoners than male prisoners to have a non-drug misusing partner to return to on release. Moreover, psychological problems and the placement of their children in care – with all the problems associated with such a measure – constitute a further set of difficult circumstances. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Prison and Probation Service begins to build a social assistance network for women prisoners at the very outset of their term of imprisonment. This needs to be done in collaboration with other agencies, in particular the various social welfare bodies.

In 1997 a nation-wide consultative network, Consultants for Women Offenders, was set up. Its purpose is to create a chain of care operating both within the Prison and Probation Service and outside it, taking the needs of women offenders as its point of departure. The members of the group are drawn from remand prisons, ordinary prisons, probation and therapeutic communities.

¹⁹ Bergmark, B. et al: Bakgrunds-och uppföljningsstudier vid §34 institutioner inom narkomanvården (SWEDATE-undersökningen), 1989 (Background and follow-up studies of therapeutic communities receiving drug misusing prisoners for sojourns under Section 34, Prison Treatment Act).

Appendix 1

The task of the present project group

In the Work Plan of the Prison and Probation Service for 1997, the position of women in prison was noted as being a question to which special attention should be given. The Client Operations Division was instructed to initiate a project group and provide leadership in working out principles for the treatment of women sentenced to imprisonment. The specific tasks defined included:

assessing the number of places needed and the geographical location of women's prisons

reviewing the security classification of prisons for women, assessing whether the special places provided for male prisoners should also be provided for women prisoners

providing a basis for determining whether the prisons should take male or female prisoners only, or should be mixed

making recommendations for programme activities based on the special needs of women prisoners.

Appendix 2

Know-how & Requirements

Concerning Programmes
to Reduce Re-offending and Drug Abuse

Quality Areas

The idea behind the Know-how and Requirements (K&R) described here is that a programme will probably have a better quality both from the offender's point of view as well as that of the Prison & Probation Service, if it fulfils the criteria given in these K&R. The criteria that have a special significance for programme quality are described here.

1. Incorporation in the unit's annual work programme

Any adopted programme should ordinarily be included in the offender activity plan. The programme obtains therewith legitimacy as an ordinary, fully-fledged, properly financed official activity with entitlement to adequate resources. In addition, inclusion provides a guarantee that the need for, and utility of, a proposed programme is thoroughly analysed in advance and consideration is given to possible co-ordination with other programmes and collaboration with external resources.

2. Programme manager, programme leader and staff resources

In order to ensure that a programme receives legitimacy and that integration and a holistic approach are protected, a specific person should always be appointed who has the ultimate responsibility for the programme. This is the programme manager. This person should be educated in behavioural science and ordinarily be a member of the particular prison or probation office managerial staff. He or she should be empowered to take decisions on any aspect of a given programme. The programme leader is the contact person for a given programme and is primarily responsible for the programme's content, execution, monitoring and quality. It is important that the programme leader is given sufficient room for manoeuvre within his or her ordinary service function to be able to adequately fulfil his or her function.

The programme manager and the programme leader can be one and the same person. If they are different persons it is essential that their respective responsibilities are described and made clear.

NOTE! In order to make the programme less vulnerable to discontinuity and in order to guarantee programme development it is highly desirable that several persons/staff members collaborate in, and take responsibility for, the programme.

3. Duties in office and official conduct

It is essential that the programme is carried out in such a way that it cannot in any respect be perceived as threatening the personal integrity of the offender or staff participants. The activity must be characterised in all its aspects by fully ethical conduct.

4. Offender activity plan¹

The various efforts that are to be given priority in the activity plan should be carefully considered and weighed in the light of the offender's needs and personal resources. It is, therefore, important that his or her problems in relation to criminality and drug misuse are carefully analysed and that eventual participation in a programme, need of after-care, etc., are minutely examined as part of the activity plan (motivation and treatment programmes).

5. Target group

The aim is to ensure that the offender shall derive benefit from participation in a programme, that is he or she should be allocated to the "right" programme (matching). A target group is a clearly defined and delineated offender group which the programme is primarily intended to help.

6. Programme objectives

Both for ethical as well as practical reasons it is important that the aim of the programme – its objective or objectives – is clearly formulated for the participating offenders, staff and other helpers. The participants should know what the programme is expected to help them achieve in terms of knowledge, skills, insights, changed attitudes, and changed conduct and behaviour. In addition, programme objectives should be so formulated that they are susceptible of being monitored.

7. System objectives

System objectives are those objectives and measurable attributes of a programme which indicate the importance accorded to it by a particular prison or probation unit, for example, the number of offenders who are expected to enter and complete a programme, the number of hours assigned to it, its costs, etc. System objectives are normally described in the annual work plan.

8. Individual offender goals

Among other things, the various efforts to prevent re-offending are described in the individual offender's offender activity plan. It is, therefore, desirable that there should be clear goals for these individually adapted measures and these should certainly be stated for any programme intended to reduce re-offending or drug misuse. Individual goals are normally drawn up together with the offender in terms that state what new knowledge, skills, insight and changes in conduct he or she will have/have achieved after the programme has been completed.

¹ By law, an activity plan for each offender entering the prison and probation system must be drawn up promptly after entry and revised as necessary. The purpose of the plan is to assess the level of risk presented by the offender, survey their particular problems and arrive at suitable helping measures.

9. Monitoring and evaluation

All programmes should have stated aims and be designed and administered in such fashion that they may be relatively easily described, monitored and evaluated. (See in this connection the K&R section on monitoring and evaluation). NOTE! To monitor programmes with questionnaires, interviews etc. so that attention is given the individual participant and his/her views are obtained, is an important way of trying to realise individual offender goals.

10. Plans for documentation, monitoring and evaluation

In order to ensure high quality in planning, executing, monitoring, describing and evaluating a programme, it is important that plans are made before its start for how it shall be documented and monitored.

11. Methods, work procedures

For reasons of legitimacy and professionalism each programme should make use of a manifest describable method. The term “method” refers to work procedures or to a theoretically based method derived from a school of thought. Methods and aims must be congruent.

12. Content

Every programme should have a carefully thought out, clear, describable and pedagogically designed content in relation to its aims and methods. By “content” is meant what the various component parts of the programme deal with and seek to achieve. Programme content should be susceptible of being presented in easily understood form for the participants and any other person involved.

13. Form of the programme / programme structure

Every prison and probation office should give careful consideration in the light of its own circumstances to the question of how best to carry out a particular programme. Among other things, this means giving attention to whether the programme should be carried focused on individual offenders or on a group. If it is carried out for a group, then thought must be given to whether the group should be open or closed and whether the target group contains sub-groups for whom there may be particular goals, for example, participants sentenced for different kinds of violent offences and offences involving relationship breakdown.

14. The size of groups

The number of participants in a group and their composition should be regulated so that the chosen work procedures, methods employed and pedagogical design offer the best possible pre-conditions.

Quality areas should be used as indicators of a programme's quality

15. Programme timetable

For various reasons, not least those related to the use of resources and monitoring, all those involved with a programme should be informed on the number of hours, weeks, etc. that a programme will continue and the times at which it will be operated.

16. Competence

It is of great importance that those working with the programme, whether they be prison or probation staff or drawn from other sources, have sufficient competence to carry out the programme. Competence embodies the total knowledge, experience and skills that they make available to the programme. Obviously this includes the competence of the programme manager and the programme leader in their respective roles. It is important to clarify the responsibilities and roles carried by any professionally qualified persons engaged in the programme.

17. Internal and external collaboration, networks

It is important to consider the needs and possibilities of continued treatment and other forms of help to offenders at the planning stage of a programme. For this reason the need for collaboration with other parts of the Prison and Probation Service, and other administrations, organisations, groups and external individuals should be given careful thought.

The needs of offenders and their families for help and support through social networks should also be considered.

Collaboration is also of value for the exchange of ideas and experience between, for instance, programme leaders. Useful knowledge may possibly be obtained by constructing networks. It can also be of benefit to the programme leaders of other administrations or agencies to take part in the task of assessing programme quality, often called collegiate evaluation.

18. Technical supervision of prison and probation staff

The quality of a programme can be entirely dependent on the fact of the staff having the right kind of competence, on receiving feed-back on their work procedures, and that there exists a forum and possibility for reflection and inspiration.

It is therefore, important, especially concerning personal change programmes but also for motivation programmes, that the prison and probation staff involved in such programmes receive continual technical guidance on the methods used and the processes that arise.

19. Instructional aids

The use of instructional aids should always be considered as these can be expected to improve the quality of a programme. Learning situations shall as far as possible be congruent with the learning capacities of the participants.

Programmes must be professionally executed

20. Premises

A programme which has been well prepared should not need to be carried out in poor premises. Work environmental and pedagogic reasons require that programmes be carried out in rooms that are suitable for the purpose, that is, they are properly equipped, suitably located, suitably spacious and adequately ventilated.

21. Finance

Before any decision is taken about carrying out a programme, a programme budget should be drawn up. Alternatively and desirably, several budgetary possibilities should be presented representing different levels of ambition for the programme. Such alternative budgetary proposals should be justified and documented. Where, for example, an external agency's collaboration is sought, it should be ascertained to what extent financial resources can be made available by that agency.

22. Offer to supply services at specified prices/tendering

Where it has been decided that a programme shall be wholly or partially subject to external tendering, the Act on Public Tenders must always be observed, and, where necessary, a signed contract must be made. When requesting tenders, requirements shall be in accordance with the standards and norms laid down in K&R.

23. Computer system registration

In order that a programme description shall be available to the entire Prison and Probation Service, all programmes must be registered in accordance with instructions for the Service Programme Forum, the Prison Placement System for remand and ordinary prisons and such other systems as may become appropriate.

24. Ensuring programme quality

The aim should be at all times to try as far as possible to secure better quality in programmes. There must, therefore, always be a plan to guarantee the quality of each and every programme. Ensuring quality can be shortly described as continually assessing the quality of a programme with the help of K&R, inter alia by ascertaining the appraisals of both participants and workers, gathering objective information on the numbers entering and completing programmes, drawing conclusions from the assessments made and making any necessary modifications to the programmes.

Programmes should be focused on measures that are known, or can be presumed, to lead to a life without crime

Information Programmes

Quality Areas

Basic Know-how and Requirements

1. Incorporation in the unit's annual work programme	Programme activities to be part of the work programme approved by the head of the prison or probation office
2. Programme manager, programme leader and staffing resources	Must be designated
3. Duties in office / official conduct	Ethical aspects shall be heeded in all parts of the programme
4. Place in offender treatment plan	Offender participation in the programme need not be included in the plan
5. Target group	Target groups shall be defined and motivated having regard to the aim of the programme
6. Programme objectives	The new knowledge to have been assimilated by participants on completion of the programme must be stated
7. System objectives	Local system objectives must be stated
8. Individual offender goals	Not obligatory
9. Monitoring / evaluation	System / programme objectives to be monitored. Programme process assessment to be carried out. Outcome evaluation is desirable but not obligatory
10. Documentation and monitoring plan	How the programme shall be monitored and documented to be decided before start
11. Method / work procedures	Must be stated. They shall be constructed on the basis of a relevant theory
12. Content	To be subject to a broad description and pedagogically designed
13. Form / how drawn up	To be stated
14. Size of group	To be stated with rationale
15. Programme period and time	The length of the programme and a timetable to be stated
16. Competence requirements	Specialised knowledge and some pedagogical expertise/experience
17. Internal / external collaboration, network assistance	To be considered

Information Programmes

Quality Area

Basic Know-how and Requirements

18. Technical supervision of prison/probation staff	Desirable but not obligatory
19. Instructional aids	To be used if appropriate to the chosen learning situation
20. Premises	The programme must be carried out in suitable premises
21. Financing	The programme to be budgeted for and financing assured
22. Contacted help/tendering	The law on tendering must be followed. K&R should be used for specification of requirements
23. The computerized systems such as the Prison & Probation Service Forum, Prison Placement System etc.	The programme must be registered and recorded on completion in accordance with current instructions
24. Quality	The programme must be subject to ensured quality with any modifications documented and justified

Motivation Programmes

Quality Area

Basic Know-how and Requirements

1. Incorporation in the unit's annual work programme	Programme activities to be part of the work programme approved by head of prison or probation office
2. Programme manager, programme leader and staffing resources	Must be designated
3. Duties in office / official conduct	Ethical aspects shall be heeded in all parts of the programme
4. Place in offender treatment plan	Offender participation in the programme shall be included in the plan
5. Target group	Target groups shall be defined and be congruent with the aim of the programme
6. Programme objectives	The programme shall comprise knowledge and methods with the aim of giving participants insight in their offence/drug problems. They shall have such insight on completion of the programme
7. System objectives	Local system objectives must be stated
8. Individual offender goals	The offender shall attain insight through the programme participation into his/her offence/drug problem with the aim of starting a personal change process
9. Monitoring / evaluation	System/programme objectives to be monitored. Programme process assessment to be carried out
10. Documentation and monitoring plan	How the programme shall be monitored and documented to be decided before start
11. Method / work procedures	The method/work procedures must be stated and built upon a theory-based method
12. Content	To be subject to a broad description and pedagogically designed
13. Form / arrangements	To be stated and susceptible of explanation
14. Size of group	To be stated with rationale
15. Programme duration and times	The length of the programme and a timetable to be stated

Motivation Programmes

Quality Area

Basic Know-how and Requirements

16. Competence requirements	Basic requirement is for specialised knowledge, experience of group discussion and some pedagogical knowledge/experience
17. Internal/external collaboration, network assistance	Always to be considered
18. Technical supervision of prison/probation staff	Guidance on methods required. Guidance on process desirable but not obligatory
19. Instructional aids	To be used if appropriate to the chosen learning situation
20. Premises	The programme must be carried out in suitable premises
21. Financing	The programme to be budgeted for and financing assured
22. Contracted help/tendering	The law on tendering must be followed. K&R should be used for specification of requirements
23. The computerized systems such as the Prison & Probation Service Forum, Prison Placement System etc.	The programme must be registered, and recorded on completion, in accordance with current instructions
24. Quality	The programme must be subject to ensured quality with any modifications documented and justified



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