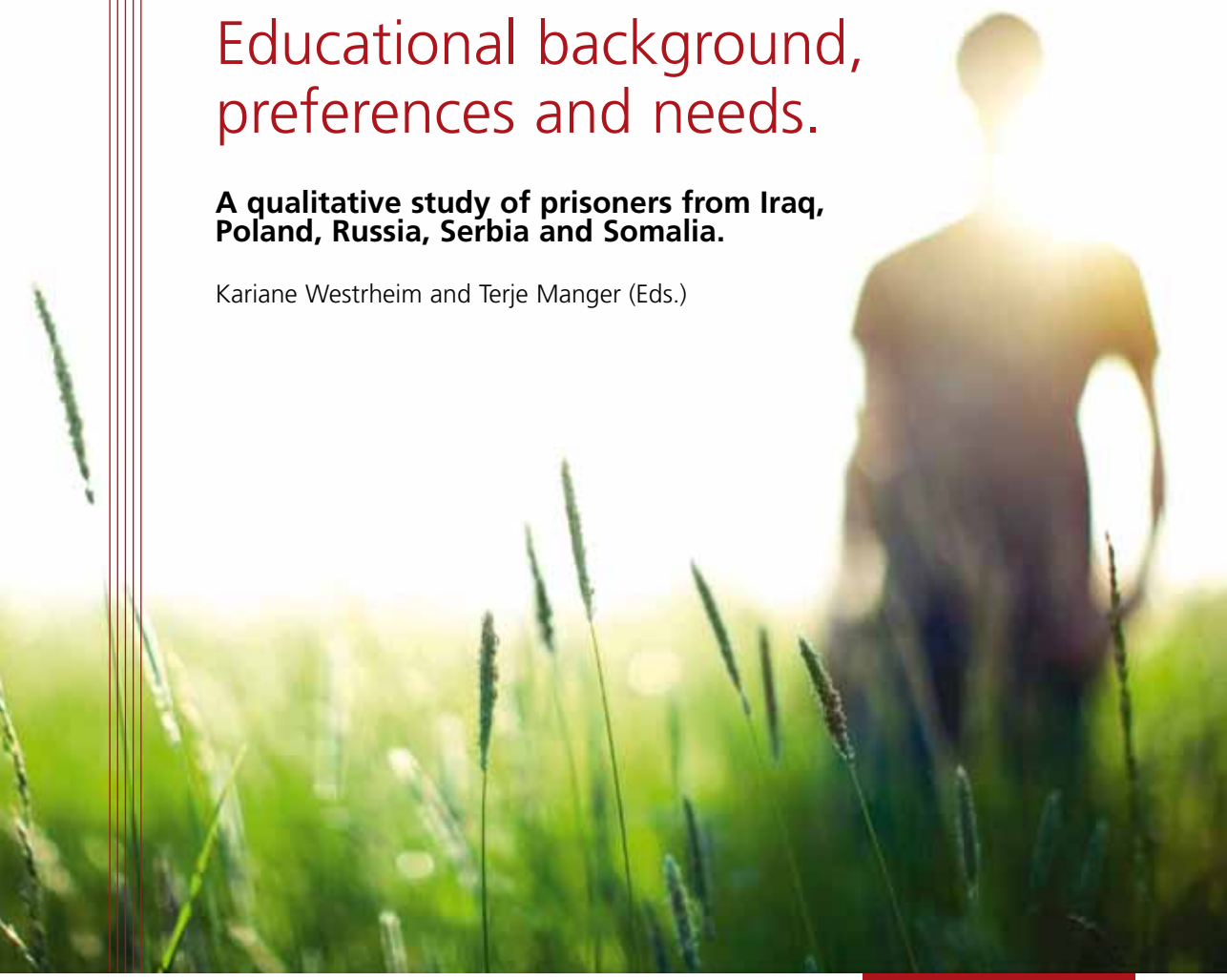
Fylkesmannen i Hordaland

Education in prisons

Educational background, preferences and needs.

A qualitative study of prisoners from Iraq, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Somalia.

Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger (Eds.)



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Ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons

Educational background, preferences and needs

A qualitative study of prisoners from Iraq, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Somalia

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2013

Educational background, preferences and needs

Foreword from the Nordic Prison Education Network

The Nordic Prison Education Network was formally established on 1 January 2006. The network has been building on an informal collaboration between the Nordic countries ever since the 1970s. Today, the network consists of key people within correctional care facilities and education authorities with particular responsibility for prison education in the Nordic countries.

The network is made up of the following representatives:

- Morten Bruun Petersen, Danish Prison and Probation Service, Denmark
- Karoliina Taruvuori, Finnish Criminal Sanctions Agency, Finland
- Erlendur S. Baldursson, Icelandic Prison and Probation Service, Iceland
- Suzanne Five, Norwegian Correctional Services Central Administration, Norway
- Gøril Vikøren Nøkleby/Paal Chr Breivik, County Governor in Hordaland, Norway
- Lena Axelsson, Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Sweden.

Education for prisoners is central to international conventions and recommendations, whilst legislation is not equally clear in all the Nordic countries. Knowledge of the prisoners' educational background and educational needs in a Nordic perspective is illustrated through joint Nordic surveys organised by the Nordic Prison Education Network in 2001 and 2006. These surveys have been crucial for better facilitation of the education and training offered in the Nordic countries, for example, we see a clear shift towards more focus on vocational training in prisons in accordance with the wishes and needs of the prisoners.

In all the Nordic countries, the composition of the prison population has changed in recent years. One sees a huge increase in prisoners of foreign nationality and this can present challenges for the education and training provided in prisons. The Nordic Prison Education Network wanted to know more about the educational background and motives for education for foreign nationals in order to learn more about how each country's education system can better meet the education and training needs of the prisoners.

The Nordic Prison Education Network took the initiative to conduct a qualitative study of educational background and motivation of different nationalities in Nordic prisons. This project is a collaboration between the Nordic Prison Education Network and Alfarådet (the Alfa Council) (a Nordic network with responsibility for developing training for adults with or without brief formal education and who do not have the Nordic languages as their native language). The prison network contacted research groups in the Nordic countries, and a joint Nordic application for financial support for the study "Educational background, wishes and needs – a qualitative study of prisoners from Iraq, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Somalia" was sent out to the CIRIUS Nordplus Adult programme in Denmark. The feedback on the research project was positive and support was granted for the preparation of a joint Nordic interview

guide and a joint Nordic report. Each of the Nordic countries has conducted a qualitative study of a group of prisoners of a selected nationality:

- Sweden has interviewed Serbian prisoners
- Denmark has interviewed Somali prisoners
- Norway has interviewed Iraqi prisoners
- Iceland has interviewed Polish prisoners
- Finland has interviewed Russian prisoners.

This has led to national reports in each of the Nordic countries, which form the basis of this Nordic report.

Based on a qualitative approach, this Nordic study has provided knowledge about the educational background and needs of a variety of prisoners with non-Nordic citizenship, in Nordic prisons. Such an immersion into each individual respondent's background, does not just paint a picture of that person's history, but also shows how war, unrest and changes in social structures outside the Nordic region, affect how our education and training, should be organised. An important finding of the study is that the primary motivation for many to participate in education and training in prisons is to be able to support themselves and their families through employment upon release. The study also shows the importance of information in language that the prisoner understands, not only information about the educational provision in prison, but also information about the procedures, rights and obligations of a prisoner in a Nordic prison.

The network would like to thank the Alfa Council and the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) for the excellent cooperation in connection with the project. We would also like to thank the CIRIUS Nordplus Adult programme for their financial support for implementing the project. Throughout the entire process we have had excellent cooperation with the Nordic research group, which has prepared and undertaken the work in each individual country – many thanks to you all. Jacob Als Thomsen, Line Seidenfaden, Henrik Lindeborg, Gudmundur B. Kristmundsson, Hilde Hetland, Anna-Lena Eriksson Gustavsson, Ole-Johan Eikeland, Terje Manger and Kariane Westrheim. Special thanks to Associate Professor Kariane Westrheim and Professor Terje Manger of the University of Bergen who have been academically responsible for the Nordic report.

This report is a translation of the first edition in Scandinavian languages published in December 2012.

Bergen, August 2013

Paal Chr Breivik

Contact person for the Nordic Prison Education Network

www.fengselundervisning.net

Foreword

Close cooperation has developed over many years between administrative bodies bearing national responsibility for prison education in the Nordic countries. This led to the formal establishment of the Nordic network for prison education on January 1, 2006. The Nordic network has always been concerned with the further development of cooperation with regard to prison education on the basis of expertise and research. Therefore the network has sought cooperation with researchers in all the Nordic countries. This led to a common application in 2006 to the Cirius Nordplus Voksen programme to carry out the quantitative research project "Mapping of educational background, educational rights and motivation in inmates of Nordic prisons." A common Nordic report from this project was published in 2008, and in 2009 an English-language version of the report was published.

The current report is a follow-up to the previous Nordic reports, but this time the Nordic countries have collaborated on an investigation of the selected ethnic minority groups' educational situation with the help of qualitative methods. The background to the project is cooperation between the Nordic network for prison education and Alfarådet, a Nordic network for adult learners. This cooperation resulted in an application in 2009 to Cirius Nordplus Voksen (Nordic Council of Ministers) for support in developing a mapping tool for a group of prisoners who speak minority languages. Furthermore, there was an application to the educational and justice ministries in the individual Nordic countries regarding support to carry out national surveys and we applied to Cirius Nordplus Voksen to devise a common Nordic report based on the national surveys. The Nordic network for prison education coordinated the common Nordic applications and both these applications and the application to the national authorities received support. The research projects summarized in this report are administratively coordinated by the Hordaland County Governor on behalf of the Nordic network for prison education. (The Governor has national responsibility for training inmates in Norwegian prisons on behalf of the Ministry for Education.) Professional coordination of the common Nordic report was carried out by the Faculty of Psychology, Department of Education and Department of Psychosocial Science at the University of Bergen.

We would like to express our gratitude to Cirius Nordplus Voksen for supporting the project. We would also like to thank the Prison and Probation Service (Denmark), the Criminal Sanctions Agency (*Brottspåföljdsverket*) (Finland), the Justice Ministry (Iceland), the Hordaland County Governor (Norway) and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service for their initiative and support for the national projects. We would also like to thank senior consultant Torfinn Langelid who in the start-up phase coordinated the work and applications regarding support for the Nordic report. Langelid also read drafts of the report thoroughly and provided important input for further work, especially the practical consequences of the survey's findings. Thanks also to senior consultant Gøril Vikøren Nøkleby for her excellent coordination of further work.

We are also grateful for positive cooperation with our research colleagues in the five Nordic countries and for the interesting chapters they wrote for the Nordic

report. We would also like to express our gratitude to the project's scientific assistants, Nora Kolkin Sarastuen and Beate Buanes Roth. Last but not least, we would like to thank all employees of the prison services and schools who facilitated the survey and the inmates who answered the questions willingly and enthusiastically during the interviews.

The editors and writers of the individual chapters are responsible for the content in the report and any errors.

Bergen, November 2012

Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger

Editors

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Summary

Studies

All prisoners are entitled to education and training. Rights are regulated by international conventions and recommendations. However, the UN and the Council of Europe's member states are committed to implementing the conventions and recommendations to which they are parties. The Nordic countries have therefore incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into their legislation.

In 2006 and 2007 the prison population's educational background and preferences were mapped through comprehensive questionnaires in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The results from the surveys were compiled in a common Nordic report published in 2008. An English-language version was published in 2009.

The current report is a follow-up to the previous Nordic report. This time the Nordic countries have cooperated in investigating the educational background, preferences and educational requirements of some of the selected groups of ethnic minority prisoners. Many ethnic minority prisoners have educational deficiencies for a wide variety of reasons. It has also been documented that the proportion of foreign citizens in Nordic prisons increased considerably after the last survey.

This report builds on the findings from the national studies carried out in the different Nordic countries within a set time period in 2011. The study is based on qualitative method and carried out using structured and semi-structured interviews. It has also been supplemented by a shorter questionnaire on a lesser selected topic. The countries selected the inmate groups they wanted to interview themselves.

In Denmark 16 interviews were carried out with Somali inmates, 15 men and one woman. The Finnish study interviewed a total of 11 Russian-speaking inmates, two women and nine men. In Iceland, a total of eight Polish male inmates took part in the study while in Norway 17 inmates from Iraq, all male, were interviewed. Inmates from Serbia were interviewed (10 men) in Sweden's study.

Background information

A total of 62 inmates with foreign backgrounds in different Nordic prisons were interviewed. Of these, only three were women. Gender division corresponds with quantitative research which shows that between 94 and 95 per cent of people in prison are men. Respondents were aged between 17 and 60 and had different lengths of residency in the Nordic countries. Most were born in a different country from the one in which they were serving their sentence and in the same country in which their parents were born. The inmates had to a large extent had their school and training in their home country or in a transit country. Denmark was different in that most of the respondents had had their schooling and education there. Most inmates in all countries began school aged 6-7. Of a total of 62 respondents, only 14 inmates had education beyond upper secondary school level. In the Finnish material, the respondents' parents seem to have had more and a higher level of education than

the other inmate groups. Respondents seem to have had a predominantly positive experience of their previous schooling, regardless of the contextual circumstances in their country of origin.

Education and work

The respondents as a whole say that they are motivated to undergo education and training, but this varies somewhat in the Danish study. The inmates' educational activity seems to be concentrated on language courses, ICT training and vocational training, which corresponds well with their educational preferences. There is also a reasonable correspondence between their educational preferences and the future they envisage for themselves. On the other hand, it also emerged that many inmates considered the desire for education and training more a dream than a reality. Several respondents maintain that the prison stay in itself reduces their faith in the future, particularly among inmates facing deportation.

They are particularly concerned with the barriers that prevent them from receiving education in prison. This applies particularly to structural obstacles and framework conditions – a recurrent theme among groups of inmates in the various countries. Barriers mentioned frequently are a lack of information about educational opportunities, long waiting times to get into educational activities, a lack of places within individual training and course offers, too little variety in educational offers and interruptions in educational and training courses due to transfers between prisons. There are also barriers related to insecurity among prisoners with deportation orders and uncertainty about their legal rights to education.

Most respondents have previous work experience, but of unskilled work, work of short duration and of a random nature. A couple of respondents in the Icelandic study have had work requiring special expertise corresponding to their education. Most respondents feel they need more education to be able to make an impact on the labour market. They would like more educational offers and a shorter waiting time to be able to get into different educational and training activities.

ICT, language and language training

Respondents generally have good basic digital skills. Respondents to the Danish study have somewhat better skills. There is a general desire for more use of computers in education and training and otherwise. Most respondents would like education and training in their mother tongue, with the exception of those who have lived for a long time in the country where they are serving their sentence, who speak the language, and have had all or parts of their education abroad. Understanding and use of the language in the country where they are serving their sentence varies according to varying periods of residency in the Nordic countries. Most function better in oral situations than in writing. When returning to society the ethnic

minority prisoners' command of the language is important for their financial, social and political participation and makes it easier for them to exercise their democratic rights.

Practical implications

The findings of this Nordic study show clearly that both the prison and probation services and the educational authorities are facing challenges associated with ethnic minority prisoners and their educational rights. In the report's final chapter, we summarize and discuss the study's findings. In the conclusion to this chapter we list the practical consequences we feel the findings should have for the prison and probation services and prison education.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

by Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger

The Nordic prison population's educational backgrounds and preferences were mapped using comprehensive questionnaires in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in 2006 and 2007, In the former four countries, all of the inmates were in the target group and received the form, while in Sweden every fifth male inmate and half of the female inmates participated. Results from the survey were published in national reports and summarized in a joint Nordic report (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008), which was also published in English (2009).

This report is a follow-up of the previous Nordic report, but this time the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, have cooperated in studying selected foreign groups' educational situations by the use of qualitative methods. Each country has carried out a national study and the Nordic report is based on these findings. Since this report, as opposed to the previous studies, has a qualitative foundation, we have chosen to substantiate and describe this method of approach relatively thoroughly. This also applies to the methodological implications and ethical dilemmas the researchers encountered while carrying out the field work and in using the questionnaire. If we look at the international literature with regard to prison research, methodical approaches and ethical consequences are frequently discussed. Since there has been relatively little qualitative research on prisoners' educational situation in Norway, it is important to pay attention to international research as well as our own experience.

The purpose of the national studies and the Nordic reports has been to investigate the educational background, preferences and requirements for education in some selected groups of ethnic minority prisoners. The selection criteria were that the group constituted a relatively large group among ethnic minority prisoners, or because the group had particular challenges associated with it. The groups of ethnic minority prisoners in this report have backgrounds from Somalia (Denmark), Russia (Finland), Poland (Iceland), Iraq (Norway) and Serbia (Sweden).

Right to education

Prison inmates have the same rights as other citizens to education and training. These rights are regulated by international conventions and recommendations and this also applies to foreign citizens in Nordic prisons. In Denmark, Norway and Iceland national legislation stipulates that inmates are entitled to education. This right is not legally enshrined in Sweden and Finland. However, UN and Council of Europe member states are committed to implementing the conventions and recommendations to which they are parties. The Nordic countries have therefore incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into their legislation. It is stated in the first protocol, article 2: "Nobody will be denied the right to education"

(cf. Høstmælingen, 2004, p. 313). There is no exception for ethnic minority prisoners in the conventions and recommendations. This legislation also safeguards the right to education of those who are serving sentences in other countries' prisons. The Council of Europe adopted a recommendation in 1989 regarding "Education in prison" which states that prison authorities should pay particular attention to the education of inmates with special difficulties such as problems with reading and writing (Council of Europe, 1990). Later in 2006, the Council of Europe adopted a revised edition of the European prison regulations from 1987 (Council of Europe, 2006). In article 1, it states that people who have been imprisoned must be treated with respect and with consideration for human rights. The revised European prison regulations also include a separate paragraph about education (28.1 – 28.7). This states amongst other things that priority is to be given to inmates with reading and writing difficulties, difficulties with arithmetic and numeracy problems, and to inmates who lack basic vocational skills (28.2). It also states that the education of young inmates and inmates with special needs will be given particular attention (28.3). According to the same European prison regulations, all inmates will be informed on arrival and/or as often as possible, in writing and orally, in a language they understand, of the prison regulations as well as their rights and obligations as inmates (30.1). The European prison regulations also have a separate section on ethnic minority prisoners (Foreign nationals, article 37.1 – 37.5). It states that ethnic minority prisoners must immediately be given information regarding their rights to have contact with their own country's ambassador or consulate. The right conditions must also be in place to facilitate this. There is also a section dealing with ethnic and linguistic minorities, which stipulates that the correct facilities must be in place to ensure that the special needs of ethnic and linguistic minorities are met (38.1). As early as 1984, the Council of Europe made a recommendation regarding ethnic minority prisoners (1984) where it emerges clearly that they should have access to education and vocational training on an equal footing with other prisoners. If ethnic minority prisoners obtain a place on a course that would improve their educational and vocational qualifications, making special adaptations for them in accordance with their needs (§5) should be considered. The right to education also applies to ethnic minority prisoners resident in the country illegally, which is emphasized by the UN Economic and Social Council (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment no 13 1999, referred to in Høstmælingen, 2004).

The UN has adopted a range of recommendations with which member states are obliged to comply. In line with a development where more children and young people are being imprisoned, the prison and probation services must comply with the The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Children's Convention, 1993), which includes the right to education (article 28). In UNESCO's recommendations for adult education the right to education (the right to learn) is assessed as one of the pre-conditions for being able to develop as an individual and citizen (UNESCO, 1995). Overall, it emerges from the legislation that both Nordic and ethnic minority prisoners have the same rights to education as other residents of the country.

As well as the legal reasons for education and training in prison, there are humanistic reasons. All members of every society should receive education because education has its own intrinsic value. It develops the whole personality, provides experience of mastering skills and protects a person's dignity. A person's opportunity to receive an education is an indication of how democratic a society is. There is a serious threat to democracy inherent in the exclusion of individual groups within society from the education system and if they are marginalised or in any other way prevented from being educated or participating in training. A sustainable democracy is conditional on knowledge and participation (Westrheim, 2012). In order to achieve this, everybody must participate on the basis of their circumstances including those who are serving a prison sentence. The humanistic justification for inmates' entitlement to education was well summarized by Kevin Warner, former coordinator of prison education in Ireland, in his contribution to the eighth conference for European directors and coordinators for prison education in Lucerne, Switzerland, in 2010:

> The importance of thinking of clients in prison as they are: peoplewith faults like the rest of us, but also with richness of personality and undeveloped potential (in other words, as «whole persons» rather than just as «offenders»).

The humanistic ideal has governed our Nordic legislation and international conventions and recommendations. The humanistic and legal grounds for education are often downplayed when compared with the more obvious justification, which is that education may reduce return to criminality, or recidivism, and facilitate adjustment to the workplace. Of course the latter reasons are important and a range of studies (for example, Chapell, 2004; Steurer & Smith, 2003; Wells, 2000) show that education has a significant and positive effect on recidivism. If however, in the worst-case scenario, it emerged that the effects of education on recidivism were slight, the humanistic argument still maintains that education and training in prison is a right in every society.

Nordic cooperation on prison education and research

Nordic cooperation, particularly between administrative bodies with national responsibility for education and training in prison and probation services, has resulted in clear improvements of offers to inmates. The Nordic Council adopted a recommendation in 1999 regarding prison education in a Nordic perspective. The intention was to clarify the possibilities for cooperative projects regarding education. As a result of this initiative, we published a comparative overview of prison education in Nordic countries carried out by a Nordic project group, made up of representatives from the prison services and the educational authorities. The report, which came out in 2003, was later (2009) translated into English and Georgian amongst other languages (Langelid, Mäki, Raundrup, & Svensson, 2009).

The report showed that prison education in the Nordic countries is organized in accordance with different models. In *Denmark* the main part of prison education is provided by full-time teachers employed by the Ministry of Justice. Over half of the teaching in the jails is provided by prison teachers and the rest by locally employed temporary teachers. In *Finland* the responsibility for prison teaching is divided over three parties: Teaching is mainly provided by teachers at the local educational institutions. In three institutions, teachers are employed by the Ministry of Justice and some teachers are also employed on contract. Prison education is organized in the same way in *Iceland* and *Norway*. The Education and Culture Ministry (Iceland) and Ministry for Education (Norway) is responsible for education and teachers in prison are employed in a normal upper secondary school. In *Sweden*, the prison and probation services employ the teachers. The prison and probation service is a national authority with six regions each with a head teacher employed by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The head teachers are responsible for the teachers and the training activities in their region. This applies to the theoretical teaching, adult education and preparatory studies for higher education. School inspectors ensure that education is compliant with the applicable Swedish legislation on schooling and the educational system's regulations on formal adult education. The labour and welfare authority (NAV) is responsible for vocational training in the prisons and employs teachers.

The report's recommendations emphasize amongst other things that there is a need to further develop cooperation on a knowledge-based basis, which requires documentation and research. The Nordic research report which was published in 2008 (Eikeland et al., 2008), and this report, is a follow-up of these intentions and a link in strengthening the knowledge-based foundation for Nordic prison education.

Even if Nordic cooperation has borne fruit in the form of more research-based knowledge and improvements in prison education, there is no room for complacency. Work on prison education in the Nordic countries must be ongoing in a continuous research and development process with contributions from all levels within the system, from the political and bureaucratic level to prison and probation services, prison education and research environments.

Ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons

The Nordic report from 2008 (Eikeland et al, 2008) showed that Finland clearly had the lowest proportion of foreign citizens in their prisons (7.4 per cent). In Iceland, the percentage was 12, in Norway 14.4, in Denmark 15.7 and in Sweden 25.4 per cent. In other words, Sweden, according to this study, has a prisoner population with a larger number of foreigners than the other Nordic countries. The data on which the Nordic report is based were collected in 2006 and 2007. Later the proportion of foreign citizens in Nordic prisons increased considerably, and a new survey of all Norwegian prisons in 2009 (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2010) showed that in the week the data was collected 27.8 per cent of inmates had foreign citizenship. This percentage increased further later and in 2011, 30 per cent of inmates in Norwegian prisons had

foreign citizenship (Norwegian Prison and Probation Services 2012). The most recent Norwegian survey shows that inmates from Africa and Asia most often lack primary schooling and African inmates are also those most often undergoing this type of prison education. However, it is also worth noting that inmates from Nordic countries apart from Norway, as well as from the rest of Europe, Africa, Asia and the United States have more often had higher education than Norwegians. People completely without education and people with relatively high educational levels also come from these same regions.

Surveys from 2006 and 2007 regarding the educational background and requirements among inmates in Nordic prisons (Eikeland et al, 2008), showed that there were three main reasons for inmates not participating in educational activities. One was that the prison did not have suitable educational offers for the prisoners. The other reason was that the inmates did not get sufficient information regarding educational offers and the third was that they themselves were not interested in education.

Findings from the five national surveys on which the 2008 Nordic report is based show clearly that ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons, independently of background and nationality, are motivated to receive education and training. This also applies to inmates with deportation orders. The biggest obstacle appears to be a lack of information or inadequate information in their mother tongue. We will return to this in the section on the reports' findings.

We will provide a detailed description of the qualitative approach to studies and the reasons for them in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER 2

Methods

by Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger

The purpose of the national studies that form the basis for the Nordic report was to map the educational background, preferences and requirements of inmates form Somalia (Denmark), Russia (Finland), Poland (Iceland), Norway (Iraq), and Serbia (Sweden). The common research question is: *What educational backgrounds, preferences and educational needs have ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons?* The question assumes a qualitative, empirical oriented study. As referred to in the introduction, mainly quantitative studies were carried out in Nordic prisons (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008, for example). This has provided valuable and necessary knowledge regarding prisoners and education and valuable information to assess future measures for prisoners' education. Sometimes an interview form raises more questions than it can answer and there is a requirement for a critical analysis of findings (Larsen, Alver & Munthe, 1984). We cannot assume that a quantitative study can provide the answer to all of our questions. It is also the case that a quantitative study sometimes uncovers requirements necessitating a more in-depth review of the relevant problem areas or phenomena. A qualitative approach to the problem seems to be the correct one. Many questions regarding ethnic minority prisoners remain unanswered. Reasons for this are that contextual relationships and linguistic, cultural and political problems may be unclear and challenging. A qualitative approach may provide a supplementary answer to our questions. A qualitative study provides for the possibility of a deeper understanding and discussion of the inmates' experiences, preferences and requirements within the educational field. This may supplement existing knowledge, but may also generate new knowledge for this research area. This approach may be useful to the ethnic minority prisoners themselves, first and foremost, but also for the politicians and bureaucrats, prison and probation services and for teachers and other key professionals within prison education.

Qualitative research in prison – what does the methodology literature say?

Prison is a complex and in some respects a difficult place to conduct research and ethnographic research in particular (Waldram, 2009). Questions about methodological approaches and challenges in this field of research have been discussed for a long time in the research literature. Field work and qualitative interviews in prison have been viewed as problematic (Liebling, 1999). Referring to their own experiences, several researchers describe the complexity of conducting field work in prison and the problems and dilemmas that can arise when the researcher carries out qualitative interviews with prisoners (cf. Achermann, 2009; Bosworth, Campel, Demby, Ferranti & Santos, 2005; Liebling, 1999; Lowman & Palys, 2001; Newman, 1958; Quina et al., 2007; Schlosser, 2008; Waldram, 1998; Waldram, 2009).

Many research projects in Nordic countries require the external approval of an ethical committee. Even if it is often just a case of a duty to report, the project will still be reviewed by an ethical authority. When the project gets the start signal, there will still be challenges related to the actual execution of the study (Schlosser, 2008, s. 1501). One example of such challenges is obtaining a pass to gain entry into the prisons and access to respondents. It can be particularly difficult if one doesn't have previous experience of such qualitative research and doesn't have a "gatekeeper" who can function as an intermediary or door opener between the researcher and the prison system and between the researcher and the respondents (Schlosser, 2008; Waldram, 2009). The experience of actually being in a prison may be a challenge in itself. Achermann (2009) maintains that the prison is a special arena with its own logic and rules.

This Nordic report is about ethnic minority prisoners and Achermann (2009) points out that ethnic minority prisoners represent a particularly stigmatised and vulnerable group. It is important to take this into account when devising the questionnaire. For example questions related to guilt and the reason for breaking the law in the first instance should be avoided if the respondent does not raise the question himself. The questions must be clear, transparent and easy to understand (Quina et al., 2007). Roberts and Indermaur (2008) remind us that certain questions may be of a sensitive nature particularly for ethnic minority prisoners. They recommend in certain cases that the researcher consults psychologists when assessing the extent to which individual questions may be too sensitive for the inmates to answer:[1]

> Perhaps most importantly interviewers should have access to a suitably trained psychologist or counsellor to discuss issues which arise in the conduct of the research which may be sensitive or cause distress in prisoners. It is quite possible that some questions which were, at the outset considered innocuous are highly sensitive and their necessity should be reviewed. This is particularly important in the context of a cross cultural interview. (p. 321)

It is particularly important in the case of ethnic minority prisoners that the interview guide and consent form is in the language in which the respondent is most fluent and the language the respondent wants to use is used in the interview. The researcher must also use an interpreter if the respondent considers it desirable or necessary. Newman (1958) emphasizes that the interview must provide inmates with a clear account of the purpose of the research and that the respondents are given adequate information about the project in order to avoid misunderstandings and mistrust. To ensure that the respondent gives his or her informed consent, information about the

[1] The researchers behind this study have backgrounds in professional disciplines like psychology, pedagogy and sociology, possessing a combined expertise that allows them to assess the sensitivity of and the consequences of the questions the respondents are asked.

project must be presented in such a manner that the respondent understands what he is participating in and the possible implications of participation (Schlosser, 2008; Quina et al., 2007).

The respondent must also have been made aware that the interviewer cannot influence the respondent's case and that the interview, report or any research article afterwards will not influence the prisoner's case. The researcher must be clear about what he or she is going to do and what he or she cannot do (Achermann, 2009; Quina et al., 2007). Schlosser (2008) raises the challenges related to digital recording of the interview and anonymity. Schlosser (2008) emphasizes awareness of how one dresses and behaves while Newman (1958) recommends that the interview is conducted in the most neutral place possible. Openness about such conditions is primarily about establishing confidence between researcher and inmates, something that is raised by several researchers (Liebling, 1999; Waldram, 2009). Establishing confidence is fundamental throughout the entire interview process. Achermann (2009), who has conducted research among ethnic minority prisoners in Swiss prisons, points out that ethnic minority prisoners are a marginalised group. Not many talk about their cases and interests. On the one hand, they may be suspicious and critical of what the researcher will achieve by talking to them. But on the other hand, many inmates will also be pleased to speak to the researcher. It is a break in prison routine, and provides a welcome opportunity to talk to others about their background and situation. A good relationship and trust between researcher and respondent is also important in ensuring the validity of the findings (Roberts & Indermaur, 2008).

Interviews with inmates may be an emotional stress both for the respondent and for the interviewer (Quina et al., 2007). The researchers must be aware that the interview may bring potentially traumatic memories (secondary victimization) to the surface and he or she must be able to handle this in a reasonable manner if it arises. The respondent must also have the opportunity to talk about it if they find the situation distressing. A practiced interviewer manages to follow the interview guide, has control over the interview, maintains focus on the areas to be investigated and at the same time is in a position to safeguard the respondent in the best manner possible (Achermann, 2009). It is about being prepared for the unexpected and unforeseen (Westrheim & Lillejord, 2007). Roberts and Indermaur (2008) emphasize that when unexpected things happen during the interview, such as when unexpected reactions arise, the researcher must also have a plan for how he or she can best safeguard the respondents following the interview:

> Given the potential of research to be relevant to prisoners' psychological issues, researchers have a responsibility to ensure that prisoners have access to support services following the interview should this be required. (p. 320)

In encountering people with extremely difficult life situations, it is not easy to maintain the distant researcher role advised by the methodology literature, whereby the researcher remains in his role and does not act as advisor to the respondent or suggest alternative ways for the respondent to live his life (Quina et al., 2007, p. 135). Gelsthorpe (1990) maintains that female interviewers to a greater extent than men enter into the role of advisor to the respondent during interviews with prisoners. This may of course be the subject of discussion, but several researchers including Liebling (1999) document that the age and gender of the interviewer plays a role in how the interview unfolds.

When it comes to interviewing inmates, Schlosser (2008, p. 1516) considers that the researcher must watch out for what she calls "*identity moments*". These are situation-specific, contextual "life-changing phenomena of moments". These are moments the respondents (or researcher) experience as so momentous that they represent a sort of turning point for identity or personal experience. Such an identity moment will probably seldom occur if the respondent and researcher are not in dialogue with each other. Therefore the conversation between the respondent and the interviewer is dependent on both parties trying to get closer to the other.

Researchers who have conducted field work in prison experienced that interviews with inmates may be emotionally fraught for both parties. Liebling (1999) describes this in his field note.

> Prisoner (and staff) occasionally shed tears, or became choked, or struggled with the question. Our research participants did not want to be 'subjects' but acted as agents. They participated, made choices, drew us into relationships with them, and involved us in their world. They would return to a topic, change their first response – go deeper, and become fluent, trusting, more open, as the interview unwound. (p. 158)

How will such feelings influence the analysis? Liebling (1999) argues that neutral research in every environment and particularly in prison is impossible and that the feelings of inmates, employees and researchers should also be a source of valuable data:

> It is an enterprise made complex by the human nature of the researchers and the researched. It is an intense, risk-laden, emotionally fraught environment. It makes demands on fieldworkers witch are at time barely tolerable. The risk of 'going native' is high –particularly when long periods of time are spent with staff and prisoners in 'the deep end' of prison life. Without this exposure, in the intimate 'place' and 'time' of prison world, the research is superficial. (p. 163)

Liebling says the following: "So, I'm a criminologist? Yes, I'm also a human being, and any methodology approach which asks for separation between these two features of our lives or work is deeply flawed" (Liebling, 1999, p. 166). Maybe the best data come out of studies where both the researcher and the inmates step a little out of their "roles".

In an interview, the researcher runs the risk of receiving information about law-breaking, such as the inmate's previous breaches of the law, or crimes they plan to commit in future. Both Schlosser (2008), Roberts and Indermaur (2008), Newman (1958) as well as Lowman and Palys (2001) discuss the ethical problems in research associated with the handling of information regarding future crime. Here the research might enter into a dilemma between the confidentiality obligation and the need for further information about conditions. Newman (1958) maintains that there are no clear rules for how one will handle this type of situation and that each individual situation must be treated on its own merits:

> The issue he [the researcher] then faces is whether to ignore the information, inform prison or police authorities, or to personally discourage any inmate who reveals such information from actively participating in the illegal or disruptive activity. (p. 132)

Whether to give the confidentiality obligation or the obligation to report most weight will also be a major dilemma for the researcher if he ends up in this situation (for a more detailed discussion of this dilemma see Lowman & Palys, 2001).

In all cases the researcher must be aware that this type of information may emerge and that it can affect the research and whoever is being interviewed if it is made public (Achermann, 2009). An understanding of the law and how the study is designed can reduce the chance of the research having access to potentially sensitive information (Lowman & Palys, 2001).

Bosworth et al. (2005) have looked at inmates' experiences as respondents in the research project. Their research is concerned with the emotional aspects of being interviewed, the meaning of confidence and dialogue and the reasons the prisoners consented to participating in the research project. It emerges from similar studies that the respondents were grateful for the opportunity to voice their opinion and be heard (Liebling, 1999). The research literature raises the question of what the researcher will give to the respondents after the interview. This question is not new, but will perhaps be more accentuated when interviewing exposed and vulnerable groups. Achermann (2009) chose to send thank you letters and gave a telephone card to everybody who participated in the study. He concluded however that the most important thing he could give the prisoners was respect, recognition and interest.

Attitudes, prejudices, understanding and inmates' viewpoints can be a barrier to the validity of the research (Waldram, 2009). Some may question if one can have any confidence at all in prisoners as respondents in the research project. This is a usual

question in all types of interview research, but Achermann (2009, p. 53) reminds us that this type of qualitative research is not about hunting after the truth, but confronting life's complexity.

Selection of respondents in the five national studies

Each Nordic country selected the groups of inmates they wanted to interview themselves. This means that we obtained rich and interesting data about ethnic minority prisoners' educational background, preferences and requirements in the Nordic countries. In this context, we can draw some careful comparisons and also see how the different prisoner ethnic minority groups differ from each other. In the following we provide a short description of the study in each of the five participating Nordic countries, as well as the selection of respondents.

In *Denmark* 16 interviews were carried out (15 men and one woman) with Somali prisoners aged from 18 to 41 (five were older than 25), who were in three prisons. Most of their parents were also born in Somalia. Therefore there was a preponderance of younger respondents. Nine out of 16 respondents were on remand. All of the respondents came to Denmark as children. Questions relating to education and work in Somalia were therefore irrelevant for most. Three were younger than five on arrival, seven were between five and eight and four were between 10 and 14 years old (two did not give information about their age). Since prisoners remanded in custody are not covered by the "employment obligation", their education and training is on a voluntary basis. The offer to prisoners on remand includes basic mathematics and Danish, whilst other prisoners have a broader educational offer.

The data were collected in the period from May to September, 2011. Since most of the respondents have lived in Denmark since they were small children, an interpreter was required in only a few cases. In Denmark, Somalis are the 10th largest ethnic minority group and are one of the latest emigrant groups to arrive. Around half of all Somalis aged between 16 and 64 had some education before they arrived in Denmark and a little under half had primary school education when they arrived. We still see that Somali men have the second highest incidence of criminality amongst emigrant groups, also for violent crime and other violations of the Penal Act. Danish Somali men make up 25 per cent of all homeless people in Copenhagen's shelters.

Finland interviewed a total of 11 Russian-speaking inmates in Finnish prisons. Amongst these were two women and nine men. The youngest was 24 years old and the eldest was 59. The average age was 34. Eight of the respondents were described as Russian-Estonian and three were described as Russian-Finnish. Of those with Russian-Estonian backgrounds, five were born in Estonia; two were born in the former Soviet Union and one in Latvia. Three had lived for a long time in Finland where one had both Finnish and Russian citizenship. The respondents' backgrounds were described as uniform, and all had a feeling of being an "outsider" based on their ethnic minority background. The largest ethnic minority prisoner groups in Finland have Estonian or Russian as a first language. In 2011, 14 of the 37 Russian-speaking inmates who were sentenced were Russian citizens. The Russian-speaking prisoner group is made up of different nationalities, but most are assumed to have

lived illegally in Estonia before they arrived in Finland. Since there isn't a systematic or general review of the inmates' educational background, it is difficult to make any general statements about this.

The *Finnish* study was carried out in a period from May to August 2011. The selection was made by the contact person with the prison and probation services and consists of prisoners who consented to participate. A Russian-speaking interpreter was used for all the interviews.

In *Iceland* data was collected in April and May of 2011. A total of eight inmates from three Icelandic prisons consented to taking part in the study. All respondents were under 40 and the youngest was 17. The youngest came to Iceland as a 17-year-old. The others came to Iceland as adults and had not been in the country for a long time. All the respondents were born in Poland to Polish parents.

People with Polish backgrounds make up the largest emigrant group in Iceland. This was a decisive element in the choice of prisoner group. The Polish population in the Icelandic study is aged between 20 and 40. Most of them have gone through obligatory schooling in their home country up to and including upper secondary school. The inmates in the study also had access to schooling in their home country and had between eight and 15 years of education. Interpreters were used for the interviews and questionnaires were translated into English and Polish.

Iraqi prisoners were selected in *Norway.* Prisoners from Iraq were selected because they make up a relatively large group in Norwegian prisons and because more knowledge about this group was wanted. Respondents had different ethnic backgrounds. A total of 17 inmates (all men) were interviewed. Six were under 25, six were aged from 26 to 39, and five were over 40. The respondents were born in Iraq and have parents who were born in the country. Nine of the respondents came to Norway on their own initiative and four came with their families. Two of the respondents went to school in Norway. One completed compulsory schooling and the other completed preparatory studies for higher education at upper secondary school.

The Iraqi prisoners grew up and had their schooling in a country where there was war and political conflict and many had their schooling interrupted or it never got started. Data were collected in three Norwegian prisons from February to April, 2011. Most respondents and their parents were born in Iraq. One respondent grew up and went to school in Norway. Interpreters were used during all interviews and the Norwegian interview guide was translated into Arabic, Sorani (Kurdish) and Badini (Kurdish).

In *Sweden's* study 10 inmates from Serbia were interviewed in three different prisons, one open and two high-security prisons. Respondents state the former Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo as their country of birth. Respondents were men aged between 40 and 60 years old that had lived in Sweden for between 10 to 30 years. All respondents had completed 12 years of primary school and upper secondary studies with the exception of one respondent. Seven respondents had certificates from vocational training at secondary school and two had completed general A-levels. Five respondents also had higher education. The interview guide was translated into Serbian and an interpreter was used for all the interviews.

Data collection and analysis

As referred to above, the data basis of this study was collected with the help of a qualitative interview, which covers both the structured interview and a semi-structured interview. The interview guide is structured because it is planned. The interviews are recorded in prison with the aim of collecting data at the respondent's location. The interview guide is also semi-structured as in addition to structured questions it also includes more open and flexible questions (Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein, 1997) which can follow up the respondents' explanations. The Nordic study could be called an in-depth study because its goal is to probe deeper into the respondent's understanding of the world (Hatch, 2002, p. 94-95) in order to gain more understanding of his or her thoughts regarding education and educational preferences and needs.

The interview guide is divided into topics where some questions are open to the respondents' telling of their stories if they so desire. As referred to below, the groups of ethnic minority prisoners and the individual respondents have been selected in advance, known as a purposive sample in qualitative research. Several educational researchers (cf. Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Hatch, 2002; Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2007; Silverman, 2001) points out the value of such handpicked or purposive samples because they can provide answers to what one actually wants to investigate. Respondents are chosen then in a manner that is purposive with regard to being able to answer the questions and subsidiary questions of the study. This study is purposive in that some groups have been chosen with a definite purpose, for example because there are many inmates from the actual group or there is a requirement for more knowledge about the actual group. Apart from this, the respondents in each of the groups consist of prisoners who finally consent to taking part in the study.

The project's aim was to interview inmates in Nordic prisons with an ethnic background in Somalia, Russia, Poland, Norway and Serbia. Respondents come from different training and educational systems. Some groups come from countries where the educational system is essentially different from the Nordic educational model. The purpose of the interviews was therefore to get as close as possible to the inmates' description and experience of previous schooling and education (or lack thereof), as well as their preferences and motives regarding education while serving and after their prison sentences.

Data collection and conducting interviews in each of the Nordic countries occurred without any particular problems. Knowledge of the group being researched is crucial in gaining a good interview. Researchers in the five countries have conducted thorough preparatory work in order to immerse themselves in the background of the group of prisoners in question. The context may be the educational system in the country they come from, their migration history relationship to the labour market, criminality and familial relationships. The Danish study also looks at religion, homelessness and substance abuse in relation to people with a Somali background.

In all studies, the researcher interviewed the respondents. In the Swedish study the researcher carried out the first two interviews along with an educationalist and interpreter. After that they took over the two remaining interviews, but had

a conversation with the researcher after each interview was carried out. In all the national studies, the respondents seem to have a predominantly positive attitude towards being interviewed, and many were enthusiastic during the conversation. If one sees the five national studies as one, there were only a few prisoners who withdrew on the grounds that they didn't want to participate in the study after all or that they didn't want the interview to be recorded. Despite the predominantly positive experiences during field work, there were still some common experiences worth referring to.

The Danish study mentions that the respondents were not adequately informed of the survey's goals prior to the interview. A consequence is that the researcher must use some of the time set aside for the interview to ensure that he respondent gives his informed consent before the interview starts. However, this seems to have worked well in the four other countries. In the Norwegian study, all respondents said that they were well informed, but some had forgotten what the purpose was and had to be informed through an interpreter before the interview could begin.

Preparation of the interview guide

The five Nordic countries have used the same interview guide as a basis for the national study. Editions of the interview guide rotated between researchers, who made contributions and corrections. It was also tested by a panel of adult pupils with different foreign language backgrounds at a Norwegian centre charged with language teaching for emigrants. Further revisions were then carried out. The interview guide is structured with several open questions. This was a conscious choice since it could also be applied to each of the five Nordic countries, but also provided limited possibilities for ad hoc questions, or for following the respondents' own thoughts and stories. A common experience is that the interview guide was not adequately contextualised. Therefore some of the questions emerged as relatively meaningless for the respondents and at times of little relevance. For example, this applied to questions about the relevance of their education to the workplace in the actual country they were in or whether work experience from their home country was useful in getting work. The interview guide could also have had more open questions, of which there is a tradition within qualitative research. The interview guide does not ask questions or make statements that relate to the respondents' everyday situation in the country in which they now live. This would have provided important information about the inmates who arrived to the Nordic countries as children and young people. How did the inmates experience schooling in the country in which they now live? How was their interaction with fellow pupils? What was heir relationships with teachers like, did they feel included, how did they manage the different subjects – did they need support? The interview guide assumes that everyone is coming directly from the home country and that they have all their schooling from there. This doesn't take into account that some of the prisoners have also been to school in the country in which they now live. This is something which could also have influenced their view of education, their preferences and requirements in prisons and in the future.

The interview guide contains structured questions (item) ordered according to topic. On page 1 of the interview guide (the front page) the researcher/interviewer notes the gender and age. The interview guide consists otherwise of two parts: Page 2 to 6 contains open questions. The questions are asked by the interviewer and the answers are noted by him/her. First questions are asked by the inmates' background connected to education, educational preferences and work, then teaching language and teaching preferences. In this part, there are several open questions regarding educational background and educational preferences, so that the variation between countries, regions and cultures is better captured. The questions are open so that the respondents may answer based on their own background.

Pages 7 to 10 contain structured questions. The first page of structured questions (p.7) is a follow-up of the open questions connected to language. The next page (p. 8) is about ICT skills while the last two pages (p. 9-10) are about social and cultural capital. The structured questions (p. 7-10) and the inmates' alternative answers can either be put/noted by the interviewer or read/written by the respondent – all according to the inmates' preferences and ability. Even if these questions are structured, it will still be important to note the respondent's thoughts and stories relating to these questions if he/she is willing. Quantification of these questions that emerge in the tables in some of the countries' chapters are not intended to provide a representative picture of the actual population, but are meant to provide an indication of the issue under investigation.

Some researchers needed to add or omit questions in their national studies so that the interview guide matched the respondent group as well as possible. The researchers were open to the fact that the respondents could supplement or expand the questions with information that is important for them to share with the researcher. In some national studies, this information was used actively in the analysis and discussion of the material. In the Icelandic study, such elaborations were emotive comments, for example, feelings of guilt or an expressed wish to pull themselves together and find honest work. This additional information was only used if it supplemented the original question.

In all the national studies, apart from Denmark, the researcher was accompanied by an interpreter. In the Danish study, the respondents spoke Danish since the majority had lived in Denmark since they were children. Use of an interpreter was a positive experience in the four national studies and meant that the researchers were able to approach the topic in a more in-depth manner. The significance of having contact people who function well is emphasized in the Finnish study. The contact people are key people (gatekeepers) in the prison system (prison and probation services or prison education) who contact the inmates and inform them of the study's goals and who motivate them to participate. A good interpreter also works as a key person and cultural "translator". Use of trusted contact people, key people or interpreters can prevent the feeling of mistrust and suspicion that is often directed towards prison and probation services and outsiders. A research interview may easily be understood as a hidden police interrogation if trusted people cannot explain the difference.

Each country's chapter contains a more detailed description of methods and analysis. The researchers have placed major emphasis on getting the respondents' subjective perceptions regarding their educational background, preferences and requirements for education and they have, albeit to varying degrees, allowed for the respondents' stories even if they were outside the framework of the interview guide. While the researchers in the Finnish and Norwegian analysis utilised qualitative data programmes (NVivo9 and ATLAS 5) in addition to manual analysis, the Danish, Icelandic and Swedish study has used manual qualitative analysis to sort, categorise, analyse and visualize qualitative data.

Conducting of the interviews

Knowledge of the group being researched is crucial in getting a good interview. The national studies report that the individual interviews lasted from one to two hours. Everybody, with few exceptions, consented in writing to sound recording and gave the impression that it was a positive experience for them to speak about a topic they so rarely engaged with. Most respondents seemed to have good control over the situation. Throughout, the researchers have described the contextual frameworks surrounding the respondents both from the home country and the country in which they live.

A special characteristic of qualitative research methods is considered reflection on ethical implications and dilemmas and the principle of safeguarding respondents in the best possible manner throughout the entire process (Kvale, 1997). The fact that the respondents to this study belong to an ethnic minority and are at the outset a vulnerable group makes thorough reflection and consideration regarding these questions even more important.

According to Madison (2005), it is important for the researcher/interviewer to reflect on the ethical implications or dilemmas that may be associated with the conversation with the respondent, the stories respondents tell and answers they give. The manner in which the respondents are represented has consequences for how they are perceived and treated. The researcher is therefore responsible for the consequences of presentation or representation (Madison, 2005), and thereby has a particular responsibility for who is being studied or interviewed. The work must not damage the respondent's dignity or private space. This Nordic study has some fundamental ethical implications associated with it. The respondent's living situation indicates that unexpected ethical dilemmas may arise during the interview situation (Silverman, 2001), particularly when it comes to the open questions where the respondents are encouraged to explain. Some respondents may have little or no schooling/education and have thereby a limited opportunity to make themselves familiar with the written material and even shorter written passages may be complicated in such cases (Westrheim, 2009). Researchers' experience is that both the interview guide and the information letter were too complicated linguistically. The project's possibilities or potential risk lies in the respondent's linguistic competence.

In studies such as this, the respondents have of course fundamental rights such as the right to autonomy, the right to give informed consent, the right to be able to safeguard their personal integrity, confidentiality and information regarding possible consequences of the study (Kvale, 1997). Respondents in vulnerable or marginal circumstances often do not fully recognize their own rights, which can lead to them consenting to something which they would not have consented to under different and more controlled circumstance. All of these are conditions that the researcher/interviewer must relate to. The fact that the respondents are given adequate insight into such conditions is crucial to being able to give informed consent. To make the respondent familiar with this takes time, and pre-supposes that the researcher/interviewer enters into a dialogue with and negotiates on this with the respondent (Kvale, 1997; Madison, 2005). It is also important to discuss with the respondent how best they can contribute to the project. Thus respondents are partners in the project more than research objects. For the same reasons, it is useful to spend time establishing trust in advance of the interview.

There is a particular ethical challenge associated with the use of an interpreter as in the case of the Nordic study. Some respondents have sufficient language skills in Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian or Swedish to be able to read and questions without the help of an intermediary. People from areas with war or political conflict may in some cases be sceptical or suspicious of a third party from the same country if the respondent has not chosen the interpreter themselves or if the respondent already knows the person of if other trusted parties vouch for the interpreter. This may be related to political background or conflicts hidden from the researcher/interviewer. In the national studies, the researcher had a conversation with the interpreter in advance. The interpreters' tasks were to translate the interview guide, the information letter and the consent declaration into the various languages. We risk losing valuable information if the respondent is suspicious about or has a hostile attitude to the interpreter, an attitude that may be easily transferred to the interviewer. Good information and the feeling of being in control in the interview situation is decisive to attaining trust and thereby a good interview. The respondents ticked a box themselves indicating if they wanted to have an interpreter present during the interview. The Norwegian study showed that respondents, who chose not to have an interpreter at first, still chose to use an interpreter for questions that were difficult to understand, or which required a more nuanced answer. Language is a strong bearer of identity and therefore it was important for us to give the respondents the opportunity to express themselves in the language they felt comfortable with and with which they identified. This is also about showing respect for respondents.

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CHAPTER 3

Somali prisoners in Denmark

by Jacob Als Thomsen and Line Seidenfaden

Introduction and background to the study

The overall objective of the study is to investigate the educational background, preferences and needs of prisoners with Somali ethnicity in Danish prisons. The study is focussed on prisoners with non-Nordic citizenship. It is based on a desire to study whether the Nordic countries provide the conditions in prisons which enable prisoners to avail of their educational rights pursuant to international conventions.

The study is part of a Nordic collaborative project aimed at improving prison education. In order to have an informed basis on which to work, a study of education in Nordic prisons was carried out in 2008: *"Inmates in Nordic prisons. Education, educational preferences and motivation"* (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008). The survey was based on quantitative data and this study aims to contribute to more qualitative knowledge and is focussed on prisoners with foreign citizenship, e.g. because the number of ethnic minority prisoners has increased considerably in recent years.

The study is particularly focussed on investigating how spoken and written language hinders or promotes schooling and education during prison sentences. The Danish part of the study investigates educational background, preferences and motivation for education among prisoners of Somali origin.

What is the study based on?

The study is based on 16 interviews with inmates in Søbysøgård State Prison in Årslev, the state prison in Nyborg and Western Prison in Copenhagen. The interviews were carried out in the period from May to September 2011. The Danish Prison and Probation Service has taken care of recruitment of respondents to the study and Als Research carried out the interviews. The data collection is covered by the Danish Prison and Probation Service's general licence from the Danish Data Protection Agency.

The interviews are carried out on the basis of an interview guide that was prepared in connection with the joint Nordic research project. All questions were asked in person directly of the prisoner and the answers were recorded by the interviewer from Als Research.

Background – Somali people in Denmark

The purpose of this section is to describe the significant characteristics and circumstances of Somali people in Denmark, thereby explaining why prisoners of Somali ethnicity were selected as the target group for this study. For this purpose

statistical data is primarily used to create an overview of circumstances such as migration history, education, connections to the job market, family circumstances, criminal history, religion, homelessness and substance abuse with respect to the Somali ethnic minority in Denmark.

Danish Somalis are the tenth largest ethnic group in Denmark and there are 16,831[2] Somalis living in Denmark, of which just under two thirds are refugees or here for family reunion and just over a third are second generation. A large majority of second generation Somalis are under 15 years of age.

Danish Somalis are one of the latest arrivals among minority groups in Denmark. In 1989 civil war broke out in Somalia and the number of Somalis who fled to Denmark started increasing and reached a peak in 1996, after which immigration from Somalia to Denmark fell drastically. Somali people in Denmark are mostly from Mogadishu or other large cities (Bjørn, Agerlund Pedersen & Kofoed Rasmussen, 2003).

Danish Somalis live in Copenhagen and the larger provincial towns

Danish Somalis live mainly in the larger towns and in Copenhagen, Århus, Odense, Aalborg and Kolding, which are home to over 70 per cent of all Somalis living in Denmark. Among Somali immigrants, more than four in five lived in a multi-storey building in 2010, while the same is true for only one in four people with ethnic Danish origin.[3]

Danish-Somali involvement in the job market

Somalis have the least involvement with the job market among the main groups of refugees and immigrants in Denmark.

- In 2009 the employment rate[4] for Danish-Somali men was 43 per cent compared to the average employment rate of 60 per cent for men for other refugee and immigrant groups. For Somali women the employment rate is 33 per cent, compared to the average employment rate for other minority groups of 49 per cent (Statistics Denmark, 2010).

[2] The figure is from January 1, 2010 (Ministry for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, 2010).

[3] Multi-storey residences typically provide cheaper rental accommodation, which are concentrated in areas of high density of ethnic minorities (Statistics Denmark, 2010).

[4] Employment rate is defined as the number of employed people as a percentage of the entire population. The employment rate is thus the portion of a given population group that is employed.

- The unemployment rate for Danish-Somali men and women was 28 per cent overall in 2006 but about twice as high as for other ethnic minority groups, for which the unemployment rate is between 9 and 18 per cent (Ministry for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, 2007). Unemployment among Danish-Somali men was in 2004 seven times as high as it was for ethnic Danish men, while for women it was six times as high as for ethnic Danish women (Jagd, 2007).

Generally the employment rate among immigrants from non-Western countries increased considerably from 2001 to 2008. The greatest increase has been among men from Somalia and Afghanistan (Ministry for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, 2008). Employed Somalis are primarily waged workers and many have work within the cleaning industry and business services, industrial activities, abattoirs, etc. Somali women are typically employed in social institutions and care work (Jagd, 2007).

Education

Many Danish Somalis have had an education before they came to Denmark. According to key figures from Statistics Denmark from 2004, 4073 out of 8732 (47%) of Danish Somalis in the ages between 16-64 years had a previous education (Jagd, 2007). Of these, 43 per cent had elementary school. The figure for prior education is uncertain, as many Somali refugees came to Denmark without documentation of their education. The researchers consider that it was the best educated Somalis that were able to flee to Western Europe, including Denmark. Researchers considered that more people in the Danish-Somali group had prior education before they arrived than refugees and immigrants from Turkey and Lebanon (Larsen, 2000). 2,368 Danish Somalis have completed a Danish education. Of these, 83 per cent have completed elementary school and 8 per cent have completed vocational training and the main education programme. 4.5 per cent have completed education at upper secondary level. In total, 4 per cent have completed a short, intermediary, bachelor or higher education programme of longer duration. It must be recognised that the figures only provide an indication of the level of education since the educational background of 26 per cent of the Danish-Somali group is unknown. In relation to how many are currently in education the key figures show that Danish-Somali women are better represented in elementary school and introductory education programmes and upper secondary level education than Danish-Somali men, while the men to a larger extent are represented at the vocational further education programmes and all further education programmes (Jagd, 2007).

Higher crime index among men with Somali origin

Among ethnic minority groups in Denmark, men of Somali origin have the second highest crime index of 240. The highest crime index is among men from Lebanon (278) and similarly high indices are found among men with backgrounds from

Pakistan (201), Turkey (219), Yugoslavia (225) and Morocco (227). Men of Danish ethnicity have an index of 93 (Statistics Denmark, 2010). With regard to violent crimes and other breaches of the Penal Code, men with backgrounds from Somalia, Morocco and Lebanon have the highest crime indices for penal code violations. Their index for violent crime is 3.5-4 times higher than the average for all men.

Higher divorce rate for Danish-Somali people than for all other married couples from non-Western countries

More than half of the Danish-Somali couples married in the period 1988 to 1990 were divorced after 18 years and the divorce rate among Danish-Somali people is significantly higher than for other minority groups (Statistics Denmark, 2010). There are many reasons for divorce, but one explanation is that Somali women typically seek a divorce from their husband because he doesn't help out with practical tasks in the home and with the children, but instead spends a lot of time outside the home and in many cases has a khat habit (Statistics Denmark, 2010).

Religion and culture

In ethnographic studies the Somali population is described officially as Sunni Muslims. However, among Danish Somalis there are big differences in whether and how their religion is practised and whether events are interpreted on a religious basis or in terms of more secularly based convictions. Among Somali women there is a tendency to be pragmatic in relation to interpretation of Islam in everyday life and in the workplace, and there is a greater acceptance of divorce than in other Muslim minority groups (Jagd, 2007).

Homelessness among Somali men

At the beginning of 2004 it was estimated that 25 per cent of all homeless people in Copenhagen's hostels were Danish-Somali men. Other studies estimate that Danish-Somali people are the largest ethnic minority group in Copenhagen's hostels (Pedersen, Jessen & Sørensen, 2006). Homelessness is considered to be an obstacle to the individual's job search and linguistic education and is likely to cause further social problems.

Drug abuse – Danish-Somali people are overrepresented in the statistics relating to khat abuse

Somali people have a long tradition of chewing intoxicating khat leaves, which is the most common drug habit. A more extensive survey of the khat consumption among Danish Somalis shows that 16 per cent of the women among the respondents and 48 per cent of the men had chewed khat within the previous month. Some of these are heavy consumers, which means they chew khat 2-3 or 4 times or more per week.

Among all the Danish-Somali women, 6 per cent are heavy consumers and among Danish-Somali men 29 per cent are heavy consumers. So there is a large group of men and a smaller group of women who are active users of khat. Khat is much more common among Danish Somalis who are not in education. Generally among Danish Somalis there are only a small percentage who has tried other intoxicating substances such as alcohol, cannabis and other intoxicants (Als Research, 2009). The survey also showed that more than half of Danish-Somali people do not chew khat and have never tried it.

Discrimination – media campaign against Danish Somalis in the 1990s

Danish Somalis received bad press in the Danish media in the mid-1990s. This produced an image of Somalis as a particularly troublesome and difficult group to integrate. This stigmatisation is changing to a degree, chiefly because of increased focus on success stories among Danish-Somali women, who in recent studies are described as independent and active in education, joining the labour force, etc. (Jagd, 2007). A 1999 study on perceived discrimination shows that Somalis in the 1990s experienced a relatively large amount of discrimination compared to other ethnic minorities (Møller & Togeby, 1999).

The education system in Somalia

In the 1970s, before the civil war in Somalia, there was major investment in education and literacy, and free, compulsory elementary schooling was introduced. When civil war broke out at the end of the 1980s the school system was seriously impaired. In 1990, it was estimated that less than 10 per cent of the population went to school and that three quarters of the population were illiterate – a figure that is expected to have increased since. The country lacks a real education system.[5]

Prisoners in Danish prisons with Somali citizenship

In Danish prisons there are in total 70 men and 2 women with Somali citizenship, as of November 9. Of these, 37 people are in the 18-25 age group and 35 people are over 25.

28 are on remand, while the main crimes of the others are shown in Table 1. The most frequent crimes are theft, violence and drug-related crimes.

[5] Source: *Den store danske.* Gyldendal's open encyclopedia: www.denstoredanske.dk. Search terms: «Somalia» and «Education in Somalia». November 2011.

Table 1. Prisoners in Danish prisons with Somali citizenship, listed as main crime

MAIN CRIME	Number of persons
Custody	28
Murder (with intent)	1
Other violence (with intent)	9
Rape, attempted rape	2
Other sexual crime, including incest	1
Serious drug crime	3
Breach of the Intoxicants Act	4
Robbery/burglary	16
Theft and property crime, handling stolen goods	4
Road Traffic Act violations	1
Other Penal code violations	2
Violation of other special legislation	1
Total	72

For 25 per cent of the 44 people with Somali citizenship who are serving a sentence in Danish prisons, the sentence involves deportation from Denmark. There are a total of 11 people with Somali citizenship who have been issued with deportation orders as of November 2011, in Danish prisons. There are a total of 201 people in Danish prisons who have been issued with deportation orders[6].

The respondents to the study cannot be called representative of the total group of prisoners with Somali citizenship in Danish prisons. The respondents of the study were 15 men and 1 woman in the 18-41 year age group. Age-wise there is an over-preponderance of young people among the respondents. Only 5 respondents are older than 23 years. The ages of the respondents are distributed as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Respondents' ages

Age (years)	18	19	20	21	22	23	26	28	30	41
No. of persons	2	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	1

There is also an over preponderance of people on remand among the respondents, as 9 out of 16 respondents are on remand, while the same is true for only 1/3 of the entire group of Somali ethnic minority prisoners.

[6] The statisitical information in the previous paragraph is based on a selected sample made by the Danish Prison and Probation Service on November 9, 2011.

The high proportion of remand prisoners has significance for the investigation of educational backgrounds, preferences and needs. In Danish prisons there is a duty to work, which means that prisoners serving a sentence either have to work, participate in education/training or participate in programmes (e.g. behavioural change programmes, stopping drug or alcohol abuse) (Eikeland et al., 2008). This duty to work does not apply to remand prisoners, so for them education is voluntary. The educational opportunities on offer are different for prisoners with a verdict and remand prisoners. The educational offers for remand prisoners are primarily Danish and mathematics at a basic level, while for prisoners who are obliged to work there is a wider range of education offers subject to the same guidelines as ordinary adult and further education centres (FEC), as in some places education is offered at Higher Preparatory Examination (FH) level. Prisoners in open prisons can also be allowed the freedom to take part in education outside the prison (Eikeland et al., 2008). This means that the opportunities for education while on remand are more limited than when serving a prison sentence after a verdict has been issued.

Method

Challenges in connection with data gathering

Almost all the respondents in the study have been in Denmark since they were children. The questions regarding their experience of education and the jobs market in Somalia were therefore irrelevant for the majority of respondents.

It has not been possible for the Danish Prison and Probation service to make a deliberate selection of respondents based on scientific criteria, thereby ensuring a certain age distribution, which would have been useful in relation to the study. It is considered that a greater age range with more representatives from older groups, for example, would have resulted in a different outcome of the study. It is likely that prisoners over 25 years of age have more experience with education and work in Somalia before the outbreak of the civil war in 1989, and their socio-cultural situation and needs would therefore be likely to be different from those of prisoners who have grown up and attended school in Denmark. A deliberate selection of respondents was difficult because inmates in prisons are often moved around, for example.

At the same time some of the respondents were insufficiently informed about the purpose of the study before the interview and in one case the interview had to be discontinued because the respondent did not want to or did not feel able to take part when he was informed of the purpose and content of the interviews.

Methodological considerations in connection with interviews

The interviews have generally been conducted without problems and in the majority of cases without an interpreter. The study has been presented in an amended shorter and simpler version because it was considered that the original introduction was unnecessarily long and academic. Furthermore, a question has been added about

the respondent's time of arrival in Denmark, whether they are on remand or have received a sentence, and about the length of their sentence and whether they have been issued with a deportation order.

Furthermore, it is considered that respondents provide a more positive response to questions about their skills – e.g. ICT or language – than what is actually the case. An attempt has been made to address this issue methodologically by asking open questions without attaching value to them.

Findings

The Respondents' backgrounds – growing up, education and work

In this section the respondents' backgrounds are reviewed as this is crucial to understanding the needs and preferences of this group of Somali prisoners regarding education and work.

None of the respondents were born in Denmark. Fifteen were born in Somalia, while one was born in Egypt, and almost all have parents of Somali origin (but 3 respondents have a mother or father from Libya, Ethiopia or Kenya).

Almost all respondents came to Denmark as children. On arrival to Denmark three respondents were younger than 5 years, so they arrived at pre-school age. Seven respondents were 5-8 years and four were between 10 and 14 years. Two respondents do not give their age at the time of arrival.

So 15 respondents have either completed their schooling in Denmark, or they have attended school for a short time in their home country and then moved to Denmark and attended Danish schools since then. Ten respondents have been to school for 10-11 years, two have gone to school for 9 years, while three have 6-8 years of schooling behind them.

However, some respondents didn't start school as children because of the civil war in Somalia. So the civil war and the migration-related problems that follow characterise prisoners with Somali backgrounds rather than specific features of the Somali education system. But it must be noted that several respondents have gone to Koran school in Somalia before arriving in Denmark. One told us about corporal punishment in the Koran school and this was the reason he was absent from school for large parts of his school years.

Education and work

For about 2/3 of the respondents, elementary school represents their highest completed level of education, and they have completed the Danish elementary school to 9th or 10th year. One individual has completed an education at a technical college and one has completed one year Secondary business school and is now studying for higher level preparatory exams. For the others, their education histories

have been characterised by their migration histories, in that they started school in Somalia and then continued in Denmark. Many of the respondents started education in Denmark, but did not complete it. That applies to elementary school for some, but three respondents have started courses at technical college without completing them. Two of them say this was because they got an apprenticeship.

Eleven respondents have had waged work before going to jail. These were mostly unskilled jobs in supermarkets, newspaper delivery or in trades such as bricklayers/ carpenters, mechanics, moving agencies, etc. In most cases they have been short term jobs for six months to one (1) year, while one respondent has worked as a pedagogical assistant for 10 years.

Spoken and written language

In this section the language skills of the respondents are analysed, with respect to what they define as their mother tongue and in what situations they use different languages. As shown in Figure 1, eight respondents consider Danish their mother tongue, and a further two consider themselves to be bilingual in the sense that for them both Danish and Somali are their main languages and of equal importance. Five respondents consider Somali to be their mother tongue. Four out of the five respondents that consider Somali as their mother tongue also speak Danish and say they use Danish in their everyday lives.

Figure 1. What language do you consider your mother tongue?

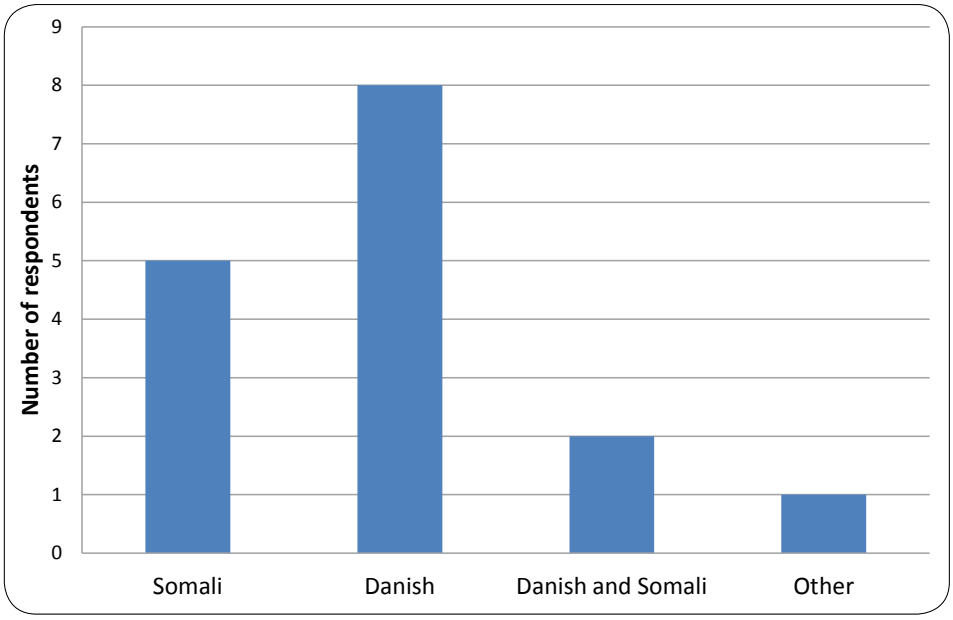
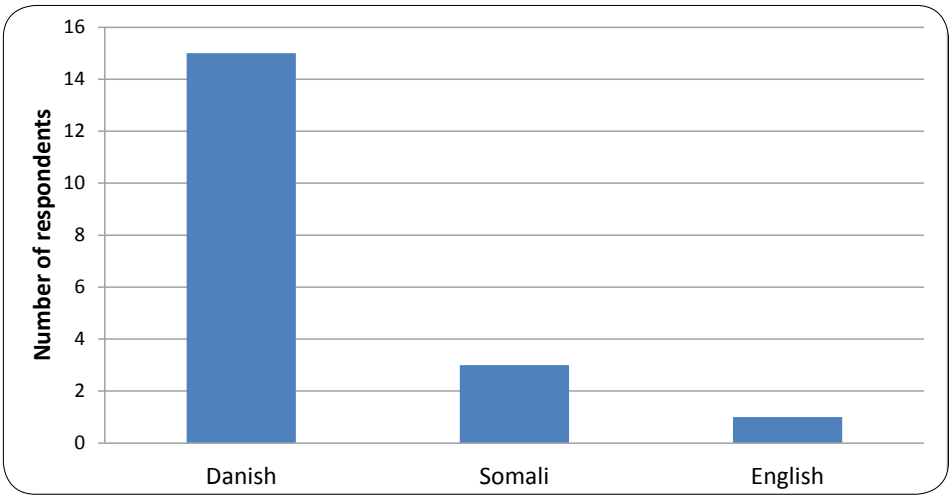


Figure 2 shows that 15 out of 16 respondents speak Danish every day. Three of them say that they use Somali every day and one uses English every day.

Figure 2. What or which languages do you use in your everyday life?



Of the seven respondents who say Somali is their mother tongue (including two who state both Danish and Somali are their mother tongues), four of them can read and write in the Somali language, while three cannot.

Twelve respondents used Danish during their schooling or education and only one respondent would prefer to use Somali if he/she were to embark on a course of education now. Eight of them would prefer their education in Danish while four say that they would prefer to begin an educational course in Danish or English if they were to do so now. Eleven of them prefer to read and write in Danish rather than other languages. Apart from their mother tongue, 14 respondents speak English, 5 speak Arabic and one speaks German. Six of the respondents who consider Danish to be their mother tongue also speak Somali.

So the study shows that the majority of the respondents consider Danish to be their primary language. That means they consider Danish to be their mother tongue, but even among those who consider Somali their mother tongue the majority still use Danish in their everyday lives, just as Danish is the preferred language in connection with education.

Understanding and use of the Danish language in concrete situations

The respondents were asked a series of questions about their understanding of the Danish language in different situations (Table 3). By far the majority of respondents have no problems (the number varies between 11 and 13) with using the Danish language in the different situations.

In conversational situations, 13 respondents experience no problems with using the Danish language – whether it involves friends, shop assistants, bus drivers, teachers or people in public offices.

Problems, to the extent that they exist, are more to do with the written language. With respect to writing letters or postcards or filling in forms for public offices, two respondents say they have *major problems,* and two say they have a *few problems* with reading letters from public offices. The situation with which most – but still very few – respondents have problems is reading newspapers. Three respondents reply that they have a *few problems* with understanding or using the Danish language.

One single respondent answers that he has *major problems* with understanding or using the Danish language in more or less all the situations mentioned. This respondent has been in Denmark since he was about 10 years and calls Danish his mother tongue.

Table 3. I understand or use the Danish language when I… (answers given in absolute numbers)

		No problems	A few problems	Major problems	Don't know	No answer
1	Talking to friends	13	1	1	0	1
2	Talking to shop assistants, bus drivers, etc.	13	1	1	0	1
3	Talking to teachers or people in public offices	13	1	1	0	1
4	Watching TV and films	13	1	1	0	1
5	Listening to radio	13	1	1	0	1
6	Reading letters from public offices	12	2	0	1	1
7	Reading messages on the mobile phone	13	0	1	1	1
8	Reading on Facebook, MSN, etc	11	1	1	1	2
9	Reading signs, posters, etc.	13	0	1	1	1
10	Reading newspapers	11	3	1	0	1
11	Reading books	12	1	1	1	1
12	Writing letters or postcards	11	1	2	1	1
13	Writing messages on the mobile phone	12	1	1	1	1
14	Writing on Facebook, MSN, etc.	11	1	1	1	2
15	Writing e-mails	11	1	1	1	2
16	Filling in forms for public offices	11	1	2	1	1
17	Writing something to do with school or work	12	1	1	1	1

The great majority of respondents do not perceive that they have problems with understanding or using Danish in the different situations, and the level of language skills in the group could be said to be relatively high. In relation to the educational needs of Somali prisoners in Danish prisons it can be concluded that there is no great language barrier, and spoken and written language should not be an obstacle to schooling and education during time in prison. Again, it must be borne in mind that the respondent group is relatively homogeneous in the sense that most are relatively young (2/3 under 23 years) and that many have completed all or part of the Danish elementary school programme.

ICT competence

Part of the purpose of the study is to learn more about the IT skills of Somali prisoners as these skills are considered necessary to be able to complete an educational programme.

The study shows that almost all the respondents (14 out of 16) *know everything* as regards basic ICT skills such as using a computer keyboard, using the mouse, using the internet to search for information and using internet-based search engines such as Google or Kvasir.

Most of them know everything or almost everything about writing, sending and reading email, using the computer for writing letters, downloading and installing programmes on the computer and sending pictures or other attachments by email. The respondents are thus competent with regard to basic communication via email.

With respect to other forms of internet-based communication, the respondents' skills vary more. About two thirds say they know everything about using internet-based chat programmes such as MSN and publishing information on the internet.

The respondents have most difficulties with setting up personal websites. In this regard seven out of 16 say they *know nothing* while five *know a little bit.* Only one single respondent believes he/she knows everything about setting up their own, personal website. Many are unfamiliar with the use of spreadsheets such as Excel – six respond that they know *nothing or a little bit.*

Table 4. "How much do you know in the following areas?" (answers given in absolute numbers)

	Know nothing	Know a little bit	Know a lot	Know almost every-thing	Know every-thing	Don't know	No answer
Using the keyboard on a computer	0	1	0	0	14	0	1
Using the mouse pointer	0	0	1	0	14	0	1
Using the internet to search for information	0	0	1	0	14	0	1
Publishing information on the internet	2	3	0	0	9	1	1
Writing, sending and reading e-mails	2	0	0	1	12	0	1
Sending pictures or other documents by e-mail (as attachments)	1	0	0	3	11	0	1
Creating a personal website	7	5	0	2	1	0	1
Using chat programmes (e.g. MSN)	1	1	2	1	10	0	1
Sending pictures, docu-ments or music by MSN	1	2	1	1	10	0	1
Using the computer for writing letters	1	0	2	0	12	0	1
Using graphics or drawing software	2	3	2	0	8	0	1
Using memory key or CDs with the computer	1	0	1	0	13	0	1
Using spreadsheets (e.g. Excel)	3	3	2	1	6	0	1
Using search engine (e.g. Kvasir or Google)	0	0	1	0	14	0	1
Downloading and installing software on a computer	1	0	0	2	12	0	1
Using electronic dictionaries / spell-checking	4	1	2	0	8	0	1

Needs and preferences in relation to education

The primary purpose of the study is to investigate educational backgrounds, preferences and needs among prisoners with Somali backgrounds in Danish prisons. This section is about the respondents' needs and preferences in relation to education and work.

As referred to previously, most of the respondents arrived in Denmark as children and this influences their answers in this section of the study. Some of the questions are about the respondents' perception and experience from schooling and education in their home countries (Table 5). The answers in this section of the study show that the respondents have limited experience and knowledge of the educational system in Somalia. For example, two thirds of the respondents did not answer the question about whether education is different in their home country to what it is like in Denmark. Similarly, half of the respondents do not answer the question about whether they found it difficult to find work in their home country and if they had many odd jobs and short-term jobs in their home country. The fact that all respondents were born in Somalia and spent a part of their childhood there is reflected in the fact that nine respondents say that they were friends with their schoolmates in their home country.

Two thirds of the respondents respond that it is very true that they need more education to get by, which also suggests that there is a marked need for educational investment in prisons. The respondents' job market experience was dominated by unskilled jobs, which is reflected in the fact that half of them respond that it is very true that it was not necessary to have an education to do the jobs they have done previously. Only one respondent has a lot of work experience, but 6 respondents answer that it is *not true at all* to say they have a lot of work experience and 4 respond that it is a little bit true. The respondents' work experience is limited and the experience they have is of unskilled work.

The respondents were also asked whether they found school subjects difficult. The answers to this question were very varied. To the question of whether school subjects were difficult, 5 answer that it is quite true or very true, while seven say it is a little bit true or not true at all.

One question is about the respondents' need for support teaching to manage their school subjects. To this only three respondents responded that they did not need any support teaching at all, while 11 think they need it to varying degrees.

Table 5. "A bit about my background and my needs" (answers given in absolute numbers)

	Not true at all	A little bit true	Reason-ably true	Quite true	Very true	Don't know	No answer
I need more education to get by	2	0	2	0	10	1	1
Education here is different from my home country	1	0	1	0	2	3	10
I need support teaching to manage the school subjects	3	5	2	1	3	1	1
School subjects have never been difficult for me	3	4	3	3	2	0	1
I was friendly with my school mates in the country I come from	2	0	0	0	9	0	5
I found it hard to find work in my home country	0	1	1	0	2	4	8
I had many odd jobs and short term jobs in my home country	0	0	2	2	1	3	8
I have a lot of work experience	6	4	2	1	1	1	1
It has not been necessary to have an education to do the jobs I have had before	2	1	1	0	7	3	2

The workplace

Despite the fact that many respondents do not have much workplace experience, two thirds consider themselves to a great extent familiar with the workplace and the demands of the Danish job market (Table 6).

However, the respondents are not so optimistic in relation to finding work after their release – 10 of them think, to varying degrees, that it will be impossible for them to get work when they are released. But three of them think that it is not true at all to say it will be impossible for them to get work after their prison sentence. So they have a positive attitude to the question of finding work when they get out of prison. To the question about whether they have gained the knowledge required for getting work, seven think they do not possess any such knowledge, while six think they have some such knowledge to varying degrees. Thus, it must be concluded that there is a need for education and upskilling among a large part of the respondents.

With regard to networks, eight respondents answer that they have got to know a lot of people in Denmark. Thirteen of them answer that it is not true at all to say that they spend time with people from the same background as themselves. This does not necessarily mean that they have adapted to the Danish way of life, but it is a question that the respondents find hard to answer.

Table 6. "A bit about my current situation" (answers given in absolute numbers)

	Not true at all	A little bit true	Reason-ably true	Quite true	Very true	Don't know	No answer
I am familiar with the workplace in the country I am in now	3	1	2	0	9	0	1
It will be impossible for me to get work when I am released	3	0	3	1	6	2	1
The experience I have from school and work is not suited to what is required now	3	1	0	1	4	3	4
I will adapt quickly to the workplace outside prison	1	1	0	1	10	1	2
I have too little experience to get the work I want	1	0	1	2	10	1	1
I have got to know a lot of people in the country I am in now	0	1	0	0	8	2	5
I spend most of my time with people from the same background as myself	13	0	0	0	2	0	1
I have gained the necessary knowledge required to get work	1	0	1	1	4	2	1
I have adapted to the way of life in the country I am in now	1	0	0	1	2	4	8
I manage on my own in everyday life	0	0	1	0	13	1	1
I am familiar with the demands of the workplace	0	0	0	2	12	1	1

Education during the prison sentence

Attitudes to the educational opportunities in prison

The respondents' motivation for educating themselves during their prison sentence varies a great deal. As referred to above, they consider that they have a need and many say that they are motivated. But they have various problems with the educational opportunities on offer and the practical organization of prison education.

The respondents refer to different obstacles to using the educational services in prison. One inmate thinks the course modules are too short and believes that the learning outcome of teaching lasting only one hour is inadequate. He thinks the outcome would be better if the modules lasted longer:

Interviewer: "Would you like to be able to get an education in here?"

Respondent: "Yes. If it were possible."

Interviewer: "Has it not been possible?"

Respondent: "The school system in here is very strange. You are enrolled, for example for Danish or Maths or English. You might go to school on Tuesdays. Then you might have one hour or half an hour. If you went to school for maybe 3 or 4 hours and learnt Danish, Maths and English one after another like in a normal school you might learn something… But when it's just one hour…"

Interviewer: "Why are you brought back after one hour?"

Respondent: "School is finished. You get one hour. One lesson at a time."

Interviewer: "Okay. So you can't really learn anything?"

Respondent: "I don't think so."

Another inmate feels that many prisoners only use the education service because it gets them out of the cell, and then they disrupt the teaching because they are not really interested in learning anything. He also says that the teachers are often absent and he thinks that education generally is not prioritized enough.

Furthermore, one respondent is critical of the fact that educational opportunities for remand prisoners are limited, since it is limited Danish and mathematics classes at a very basic level.

Motivation for education and work

Some of the respondents consider it necessary to get an education in order to find work in Denmark. Many have positive experience of their schooling outside prison and say that when they were growing up they liked school or at least parts of the teaching and the social aspect.

Still, some respondents express a lack of motivation in relation to getting an education and work whether it is during their time in prison or after their release.

Many are motivated for educating themselves in prison, but are very unsure of the educational offers available during their prison sentence. One has been contacted by the job centre[7] and one has heard about the possibility of remote education, but most do not know about the opportunities and their rights in relation to education during their prison sentence.

Many express a lack of motivation because they do not believe that they can get a job since they have a criminal record. Some have experience from previous prison sentences when they found that jobs or apprenticeships that had been promised them before they were imprisoned were no longer available after their release. They are therefore pessimistic with respect to getting a job after their release.

For several respondents the lack of motivation for education is also due to the fact that they consider themselves past the stage in life when one should be in education. A man in his mid-20s who has attended elementary school in Denmark, but not completed 9th year describes it thus:

> "I am 23 now. Then I will go to school for 3 to 4 to 5 years, then I will be 27-28 years old, then I have to start an education and I will be 32-33. Then I have to start building my life up before I have a family and pay back the money I owe. I owe money to the state and I have no chance on earth of getting out of it. My life is and will always be a life of crime. There is nothing … There is no hope. I have been a criminal since I was 11 years old. That is now 12 years. (…) If I had spent these last 12 years getting an education I could have been a bricklayer or carpenter, I would have had a car and gotten far by now.

So his point of view is that it is too late for him to get an education. To the question of what he wants to do when he gets out his answer is that he will sell intoxicating substances (hash and coke).

[7] The job centre at Skelbækgade in Vesterbro makes a particular effort targeting young people in the Western Prison (Vestre Fængsel).

Another reason for lack of motivation is that many respondents found it hard to get work or apprenticeships before they went to prison. Many refer to a connection between an educational programme and a prison sentence. They experienced that educational programmes were interrupted in connection with an arrest/custody/sentence – just as being in prison in it reduces the faith for many respondents that they can get a job in the future.

Deportation orders

At the time of the interviews one respondent had been issued with a deportation order. Out of the prisoners that had not yet received a final verdict, a couple may still receive a sentence involving deportation.

Due to the civil war in Somalia, Denmark does not deport Somalis and therefore people issued with deportation orders after serving their sentence are granted so-called "tolerated temporary residential status" in Denmark. Being granted tolerated residence, provided with temporary shelter, means that one is supposed to leave Denmark, but cannot be expelled forcibly by the Danish authorities. Persons on tolerated residency are supposed to stay at Center Sandholm and foreigners staying in Denmark on tolerated residency cannot work in Denmark. In some cases people with tolerated residency status may be allowed to live with their spouse in Denmark, but this does not usually apply to people who have been given deportation orders as a result of a criminal sentence.

The fact that people with tolerated residency status are not permitted to work in Denmark naturally influences their needs and motivation for education while in prison:

> Respondent: "Me, I don't have much of a future now... (…) If you have a deportation sentence and if they cannot expel you they send you to Center Sandholm. There you get no other opportunities and you have to wait there, you can't work and you can't get an apartment."
>
> Interviewer: "So you can't really use the education for anything, or what?"
>
> Respondent: "No, even if you have an education, you cannot work."

In Danish prisons, 11 people with Somali citizenship face deportation orders at the end of their sentence as of November 2011. When reviewing the educational needs and opportunities of this group, their circumstances have to be carefully considered as their educational and work opportunities are restricted after they serve their sentences.

Future preferences in relation to education and work

Two thirds of respondents would like to get an education during their prison sentence. Their preferences rang from obtaining the elementary school leaving examination to secondary education such as HF and business school courses to vocational training such as that for bricklayers, painters and chefs. There are also many who want to improve their language skills (Danish, English) during their time in prison. However, only a couple of the respondents have actually received teaching during their time in prison and that has primarily been basic Danish and mathematics.

Generally, respondents are unsure of their rights and opportunities regarding education during their time in prison. Those who would like to complete an education do not know what is practically possible while they are in prison.

Similarly, many respondents would like to get an education after they have completed their sentence. Twelve respondents would like to start an educational course when they are released. Their preferences range from vocational training to be chefs, teachers, painters, bricklayers and mechanics to longer higher education programmes such as engineering, architecture, archaeology and business college education.

However, for some respondents these educational preferences are more long-term visions or dreams than realistic educational scenarios within reach.

Interviewer: "What preferences would you have for your future?"

Respondent: "My dream is to become an archaeologist. I would love to be one."

Interviewer: "That is a long education; five years at university."

Respondent: "Yes, it is a long education. But I don't know where I will get it."

Interviewer: "You can get it at the University of [city]. But you would have to take HF or secondary school first. Would you be willing to do that?"

Respondent: "It is… if I wanted to get into it. My interest is only in archaeology. I don't want to go back to school and go through a long strategy to reach my dream goals. I would rather start my education directly and my dream goal, and take it from there."

So this respondent would like to start a long course of higher education but he does not have the same motivation for completing secondary education, which is a prerequisite for going on to university. However, the respondent says during the interview that he dreams about getting any kind of job, and he has almost given up on this ambition because of his criminal record.

This respondent's story can be viewed as an expression of a general need among prisoners for information about educational opportunities during their prison sentence and for a realistic and long-term plan for an educational programme during and after the sentence.

Discussion and brief conclusion

The study shows that most respondents have come to Denmark as children and have had all or part of their education in Denmark, both elementary school and secondary or further education. That means that needs, preferences and motivation in relation to teaching among the respondents of the study are only to a negligible extent influenced by the specific workings and organisation of the Somali education system.

The study also shows that almost all respondents speak excellent Danish and the majority also consider Danish to be their mother tongue and see their future as being in Denmark. But many respondents would still like Danish instruction to improve their Danish language skills. Similarly, almost all respondents have basic IT skills, e.g. using a computer, searching the internet for information and sending and receiving email.

The problems that characterise the needs, preferences and motivation of the respondents in relation to education and employment cannot be considered specific to prisoners with Somali backgrounds. They are related to two other factors: firstly, a general problem with having a criminal record and the difficulties in getting ordinary work associated with this. Secondly, many respondents say they consider themselves "too old" to start a course of education. They have spent the years other people spend in education and work on crime and/or in prison, and they feel that it is going to take a long time for them to get through the education system – especially if they have not completed the final exams of elementary school.

Another problem associated with the group is related to their general migration history. Some respondents only arrived in Denmark as older children and thus they started late in the Danish school system. At the same time some of the respondents have lived through changing situations. They might have lived in Center Sandholm, attended school in a refugee centre or been through several changes of school because the family has moved around. Their national background and the fact that the respondents were selected on the basis of their Somali citizenship is important in the sense that some respondents have been given deportation orders or are awaiting a sentence that may involve deportation. Inmates with deportation orders must be placed in a special category in relation to education in prisons as Somali citizens with deportation orders cannot be deported to Somalia. Therefore they will retain tolerated residence status after their release.

The Somali national, cultural or religious background features very little in the respondents' stories about their situation in Denmark and in prison. But it is possible that this group of prisoners have particular needs in relation to educational opportunities, since they may experience a double barrier in the jobs market in the form of discrimination due to their ethnicity and owing to their criminal records.

So the study shows that it is not necessarily appropriate to organize the education system on the basis of foreign citizenship. On the other hand, in relation to designing educational programmes targeting the group of Somali citizens it is necessary to distinguish between persons who are born and raised in Denmark and have Danish elementary school education, and those who were born and raised in Somalia. It is concluded that educational needs among persons who have come to Denmark at pre-school age and have attended school here are not necessarily different from prisoners with Danish citizenship and ethnic Danish backgrounds.

However, it is considered necessary to make allowances for the group that has grown up and attended school in Somalia. Since the data material indicates that the majority of respondents came to Denmark as children, it is not possible to assess more specifically the needs, preferences and motivation of Somali citizens who grew up and attended school in Somalia.

Essentially, it is considered that linguistic screening of the prisoners and assessment of their level of education on arrival in prison are more crucial to adapting the prison education service than considerations of Somali origin or citizenship.

A large part of the respondents to the study were on remand at the time of the interview. This is significant with regard to educational opportunities in prison and the extent to which the respondents are able to plan an educational programme without knowing what their final sentence is.

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CHAPTER 4

Russian prisoners in Finland

by Henrik Linderborg

Purpose and structure of the study

This study is part of the joint Nordic study. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the education and training needs of prisoners with non-Nordic background. According to agreement, the evaluation of the respective countries is directed at the main group of prisoners. In the case of Finland, the choice was the Russian-speaking prisoner population. The study is designed to provide initial essential background information on the Russian-speaking prisoner population (the situation according to the prison database, living conditions in the home country, the education system in Russia and Estonia). The ensuing text briefly describes how the study was conducted. Finally, we present the results and conclusions.

Background information

On the situation of Russian speakers according to the statistics on prisoners

As a whole, the share of foreign prisoners has more than doubled during the 2000s. According to the Criminal Sanctions Agency's average statistics (1.5.2011) in 2011, the number of prisoners was 436[8]. The largest groups are prisoners with Estonian (101) or Russian (63) as their native language (the Criminal Sanctions Agency's average statistics, 1.5.2011).

The Russian-speaking prisoners are of different national origins. However, a large number of them are of Russian citizenship. In 2011, 14 of the 37 convicted Russian-speaking prisoners were Russian nationals. Eight had Estonian and seven, Finnish citizenship. Five prisoners were without any citizenship (the Criminal Sanctions Agency's average statistics, 1.5.2011). The majority of them are probably living in Estonia without a permit or with a so-called "grey Estonian alien's passport". Around half the Russian speakers in Estonia do not have citizenship (Lindemann & Saar, 2008, p. 96).

The educational needs of the Russian prisoners have not been systematically evaluated. Available knowledge in the prisoner database on educational background (primary and professional further training) and career advancement is also extremely inadequate. This is partly because the plans for the Russian-speaking prisoners have not been prepared as thoroughly as required by the Prisons Act (Act 767/2005).

According to the Prisons Act, a plan for the sentence should be drawn up for each prisoner. The plan should be based on a risk/needs assessment, which also covers educational and professional issues. Due to language difficulties, the Russian speakers' risk/needs assessment is often not carried out even if the sentence plan had otherwise been arranged.

[8] The figure includes all categories of prisoners.

In 2010, 49 Russian-speaking prisoners began serving their prison sentences. Education and training details were only available for three prisoners. Two had only undergone primary school, one had completed upper secondary school and passed the final exam (the Prisoner database, 2011).

However, there was slightly more information about their careers. Job titles varied. The most common were construction workers, students and entrepreneurs (the Prisoner database, 2011) However, the job title alone, is no indication as to whether at all, the prisoners have been active in the registered profession.

On living conditions in Estonia and Finland

Most respondents come from Estonia and Finland. The following describes in brief, the situation of the Russian speakers in these countries.

Estonia has been the main country of immigration for Russians since the end of the Second World War. During the Soviet period (prior to 1990), the social situation of Russians was relatively unproblematic (Leino et al., 2011, p. 1; Lindemann, 2011, p. 2).

The new political and social order following independence (1990) involved a major upheaval for the Soviet-Russian population. On independence, only those, whose forefathers had been citizens of the independent republic before 1940, automatically became citizens. The law reform that restored Estonian citizenship to the country's historical inhabitants meant that most Russian speakers became foreigners in the country that they had previously regarded as their own (Lauristin & Heidmets, 2002, p. 21).

An integration report (Estonian Human Development Report, 2008), published under the direction of Professor Marjut Lauristin paints a rather gloomy picture of the current situation in Estonia for the Russian-speaking population. According to the report, unemployment is more than double that of the Estonians. Where there are jobs, the Russian speakers usually get the lowest paid work.

Despite this, the Russian speakers hold education in high esteem. Russian youngsters do better in school (primary and secondary education) than Estonians. They are also more motivated than the Estonian youngsters are to pursue studies at college and university (Leino et al., 2011).

In Finland, the Russian-speaking minority has steadily increased since the 1990s. Today, Russian speakers make up the largest group of foreigners in Finland (Pietari, 2007, p. 13-14).

Integration of the Russian-speaking population has also been problematic in Finland. In 2009, over 30 per cent of Russian speakers were unemployed whilst unemployment for all foreigners was approximately 18 per cent and within the majority of the population, below 10 per cent (Vähemmistövaltuutettu, 2010, p. 14).

It is difficult to point to any single reason for the poor integration on the labour market. There are various underlying causes. For the most part, the Russian speakers' lives are isolated from the majority of the population, in the same manner as in Estonia. The isolation is partly due to the prejudices of the majority population. It complicates the Russian speakers' opportunities to acquire such cultural knowledge (tacit and unwritten knowledge) required in the labour market and in society in general (Vähemmistövaltuutettu, 2010, p. 19-20).

On the education system

This chapter contains a brief description of the education system in Estonia and Russia where most of the respondents had been educated.

Despite their specific characteristics, the education systems in Estonia and Russia resemble each other in many respects, and in a wider sense, also European schools. So far, education has been based on traditional classroom instruction. The compulsory primary and lower secondary school curriculum includes the essential subjects; mathematics, literature, foreign languages, history, social studies, geography, computer science, natural sciences (biology, physics, chemistry), music and sport. Native language, foreign languages, mathematics and science are of great importance in Russian schools (Estonia's education system, 2011; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010).

Compulsory education in both countries generally starts at 6-7 years of age (Estonia's education system 2011; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010). Compulsory school (primary and lower secondary school) is divided in the same manner as in Finland, in two stages. The lower stage consists of years 1-4 and the upper stage of years 5-9. After the 9-year compulsory primary and lower secondary school, students take the final exams in the key compulsory (e.g. mathematics, languages, literature, native language) and optional subjects (e.g. foreign languages, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history or social studies).

After completing compulsory education it is possible to continue with upper secondary or vocational studies, which, in both countries go by the name, higher middle stage education (Estonia's education system, 2011, p. 11; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010, p. 6).

In Russia, upper secondary school includes (secondary complete general education, *srednee polnoe obschee obrazovanie*) years 10-11 (Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä,

[9] Algkool in Estonia and Nachal´noe obshee obrazovanie (general primsary school education) in Russia (Estonia's education system, 2011; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010).

[10] Põhikool in Estonia and Osnovnoe obshee obrazovanie (general primary/lower secondary school education) in Russia.

[11] Equivalent to upper secondary education in Finland (Suomen ja Viron ammatillinen koulutus, 2007, p. 11).

2010, p. 6). In Estonia, upper secondary school (gümnaasium) comprises years 10-12 (Estonia's education system, 2011, p. 10). After upper secondary school, the students take the national final exam in the compulsory and elective subjects.

The length and scope of the vocational training varies from 1 to 5 years depending on which level the training takes place. The most common level in both countries is the 3-year middle-level professional education (in Russian: *srednee professional´noe obrazovanie;* in Estonian: kutsekeshariduslõppe) (Suomen ja Viron ammatillinen koulutus, 2007, p. 13; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010, p. 6).

University studies in Estonia and Russia are similar to the European. The university studies can be divided into academic and vocationally orientated programmes (e.g. teacher, engineer). Admission to the studies is generally based on the final grade and the entrance exam (Estonia's education system, 2011, p. 10; Venäjän koulutusjärjestelmä, 2010, p. 6).

Implementation of the study

Planning the interviews

The study is based on qualitative interviews. According to Kvale (1997, p. 121), qualitative studies should be planned so as to take into account the thematic and dynamic aspects. The interview can be assessed thematically with regard to its relevance to the research topic and dynamically according to the interpersonal interaction.

Based on the above, the interviews were planned so that there was also scope for follow-up questions relating to the study's topics (Arthur & Nazroo, 2007, p. 124-125). The follow-up questions were designed on the basis of a thematic framework. The framework should complement the assessment instrument's questions and promote a more relaxed discussion within the thematic framework of the study.

The thematic framework is based on a loose outline with three questions. The first question includes the respondent's previous life course. In which country had they grown up and what had their institutional life course been like? The second question concerns the criminal behaviour and its impact on the institutional life. The focus here is on the factors that have contributed to the development of crime. The third question concerns the current life situation and future plans. Important issues here are how the relationship to the criminal lifestyle has evolved and what the future holds in this perspective. Has there been a change, which would justify further study?

Selection of interviewees

The selection of interviewees was made among prisoners who were willing to be interviewed. It was therefore quite literally a "purposive sampling" in that it was necessary to choose those who put themselves forward (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2007a,

p. 76). The sample is therefore not as representative as could be desired. In the main, (length of sentence, gender, age, national allegiance), however, the sample did meet the statistical representativity requirements of the qualitative research.

The aim was to interview 15 prisoners, to be selected by the education, training and rehabilitation personnel. However, owing to various practical problems and obstacles, the final number was 11 interviewees. Was this then a suitable number?

According to Kvale (1997, p. 101-103) the number of interviewees depends on the objectives of the study. Even interview studies that are based on relatively few cases have been shown to make a significant contribution to scientific research. By concentrating on individual cases can therefore also make it possible to investigate in detail any particular type of behaviour in its context. This in turn helps to explain the logic between the individual and the situation in a broader, generalisable context.

This study has the character of a life course study focusing on educational issues (for the life course perspective, see e.g. Giele & Elder, 1998). As such, it is also used for exploratory purposes (Denscombe, 2008). Development of the respondents' educational needs is assessed against a background of the entire life course and changes in it. In the life course theories, individual life courses and structural processes are examined in interaction with each other so that "social structure and process relate to unique biographies and life cycles of individual people" (Atchley, 1975, p. 262). By putting the individual destinies in the right social and historical context, it is possible, with some reservation, to assume the processes to be typical for many in similar situations (Öjesjö, 1992, p. 31).

The discovery of something in common and general and thus typical of the individual cases has also served as a starting point for this study. Given the life course theoretical nature and exploratory purpose of the study, the number of respondents was sufficient. The aim of the study is to create new knowledge about the mechanisms and factors in the life situation of the Russian-speaking population, which explains its educational needs and which can thus also be used in the development of the prisons' educational system and research into it. As Denscombe (2004, p. 184) points out "a case study, when used as a pilot study or exploratory investigation, can provide suggestions for possible concepts and theories that can later be verified in other situations to see if these concepts and theories have a wider application".

The interview process

The interview process was helped enormously by the contact persons with a good knowledge of the respondents and their problems. The contact persons prepared the respondents at the interviews by telling them about the study objectives and by persuading them to be interviewed. This persuasion campaign proved to be extremely important because, as said, many of the Russian speakers were extremely suspicious of the Criminal Sanctions Agency and believed that the interviews would

be some sort of police interrogation. In this way, the contact persons also served as key individuals between the interviewer and the respondents. In criminological and socio-ethnographic research, key persons refers to individuals who may serve as guides, explaining the customs and practices of the alien culture and also occasionally translate the language of this culture (Plummer, 2007, p. 398-399; Hobbs, 2007, p. 211).

The interviews were conducted in May and August 2011. The respondents were informed about the use of digital voice recorders. None of the respondents objected to the interviews being taped. The respondents were assured that sections of text from the interviews would be used in such a way that no one would be recognised.

Prior to the interview, the aim of the study was once again repeated. Kvale (1997, p. 123) calls this creation of context. The respondents had also received prior written information about the study, in Russian. The evaluation instrument and specific theme had also been translated into Russian and given to the respondents at the beginning of the interview sessions.

A Russian interpreter was present at each interview session to relay the interview questions to the respondents in Russian and their response to the interviewer in Finnish. Initially, the presence of the interpreter made the interview process rather slow. However, it didn't take long to get used to the fact that a "third wheel" was always involved in the discussions. Furthermore, it turned out that the interpreter, who was familiar with Russian society and the Russian prison culture could subsequently explain and clarify the respondents' statements so that no serious misunderstandings arose. As an example, one respondent claimed that he had worked as a car mechanic for two years within the police in Russia. After the interview the interpreter explained that in Russia it is possible to be sentenced to carry out work for government authorities, such as the police. In this case, it had therefore been a matter of this type of "work experience".

The interviews lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours, depending on the willingness of the interviewees to discuss educational issues to any great extent. Some of the interviewees could talk at great length about e.g. their previous studies and life course in general. Some interviewees wished to be responsive to the evaluation instrument themes and not discuss much in addition to these. However, on the whole, the interviews were sufficiently informative given the general purpose of the study.

Analysis of the interview material

The analysis was carried out by encoding the interview material using the computer program ATLAS 5. The analysis was implemented in accordance with a hierarchical model as recommended by Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2007b, p. 220-248). The interviews were initially organised according to the central theme (organisation of the material). A summary, grouped into themes, was subsequently made (depiction

of the material). Finally, a synthesis (analysis) was carried out of the central themes to get an idea of how the educational needs of the Russian speakers have evolved and the kind of differences between them.

The analysis and encoding began immediately after the interviews had been printed out. During the analysis, the data-driven theory formation's principle of ongoing comparison, was followed, according to which encoding and analysis run in parallel, as contemporary events (Glaser & Strauss, 1995, p. 101-115). When encoding, a so-called concept index was used to facilitate sorting of the interview material in similar groups (Ritchie et al., 2007b, p. 222). The concept index was developed on the basis of the evaluation instrument and the specific theme.

Results

The following section presents the results of the interviews. The section is divided into two chapters.

It first reports (on the basis of the evaluation instrument's open questions) how the respondents' lives had generally been shaped in a socio-cultural context in relation to significant others (parental home, school etc.) (Vygotsky, 1999). It then describes in more detail how the interviewees' educational needs in different areas (the evaluation instrument's structured part) had been defined, as well as their deficiencies and requirements. For identification, the respondents have been given a code (the letter F and a serial number from 1 to 11). The code number is indicated in brackets after the interview citation.

PART I: Development of educational/training requirements viewed from a socio-cultural perspective

Socio-demographic and criminal background information

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents varied. The distribution across age groups was relatively even, as was the gender ratio, which corresponds to the age and gender composition of the entire Russian-speaking prison population (the Prisoner database, 2011). The youngest was 24 and the oldest 59 years of age. The average age was 34. Two of the respondents were women.

The majority (8) of the respondents had given Estonia as their country of residence at the time the sentence commenced. The rest (3) were living in Finland. The actual national identity varied depending on how long they had lived in their respective countries and what level of citizenship status they had achieved.

Of the eight Russian Estonians, five were born in Estonia and had Estonian nationality. They belonged to the Russian-speaking minority, whose parents had during the Soviet era (before 1990) settled in Estonia for the sake of work. Two

of the respondents were born in the former Soviet Union and one in Latvia. Also, they had immigrated because of their parents' work. Of the latter three, two lived in Estonia with a foreign passport and one with a residence permit, the validity of which had expired.

Three of the respondents had lived for some time in Finland. One of them had Finnish and one, both Finnish and Russian nationality. Both had immigrated after having married Finnish nationals, which according to the studies, is a fairly common immigration factor (Pietari, 2007, p. 24). One of the Russian-Finnish respondents was without citizenship despite the fact that the respondent had lived in Finland since the age of 12. The respondent's family had moved to Finland in conjunction with the Ingrian resettlement programme in the early 1990s (Vähemmistövaltuutettu, 2010, p. 8).

On the whole, the respondents' backgrounds were fairly consistent. Common to virtually all respondents, was a kind of alienation that comes with belonging to an ethnic minority in a country where the national conformity (Finnish or Estonian) constitutes a socio-cultural norm. An Estonian-Russian respondent succinctly described the life-long alienation as follows:

> It has always been more difficult for Russians in Estonia compared with the Estonians (F5).

Home circumstances and socio-cultural adaptation

Surprisingly many described the childhood home as relatively stable with one or two parents. Their parents had grown up during the Soviet period. Work and education were highly valued as is clear from the interview section, where the respondents talk about their parents.

During the Soviet period, the parents had worked in state institutions and enterprises. Some worked as teachers or doctors. After independence, many of those who lived in Estonia had lost their jobs. They had to accept jobs that did not match their qualifications.

> I know that my dad has degrees from two universities and still works as a construction worker, there's a language barrier there too (F8).

Many of the parents had been educated to upper secondary or higher education level. Therefore, they also placed high demands on their children's education:

> My parents have always been very keen on me doing well at school. Both are university educated and my brother also has a degree in maritime studies (F1).

That the children would go on to university was, for many parents, an obvious option as can be seen from the following:

> Therefore, my mother has always been of the opinion that I need as a minimum, a high level of professional education and training and that I should at least aim for a university agree. In fact, I am currently enrolled at a university in Finland but I have had so many gap years that I have never had the time to finish my studies (F4).

Among the respondents there were admittedly also those, whose parents could not support them in their education due to their own difficulties. Parents were often divorced and could also have their own adjustment difficulties. A couple also had a criminal background.

Learning pathway and professional career

Most of the respondents described their entire learning pathway as relatively problem-free. Many of them claimed to be quite conventional in terms of their education. Their goal was to finish school and then seek employment or continue with their studies. For many, aspirations from the outset were rather high. Many of the Estonian Russians in particular, dreamed of a career in business.

The length and form of the learning pathway varied from case to case depending on how extensive the studies pursued by the respondents had been. All had started school in the usual way at six or seven years of age. Almost all had completed the three-year pre-primary school. Including the pre-primary education, school was from 12 to 15 years depending on whether they had continued on to higher intermediate level (upper secondary or vocational training). The length of the learning pathways was also affected by various life changes such as migration to another country. Accordingly, a female respondent ended up in a lower year in the compulsory primary and lower secondary school in Finland even though in Russia, she had already completed lower and intermediate level and should have started in year 8 of upper secondary school. Because of language difficulties, she was however, transferred to year 7 (the first class of upper secondary school).

All had completed compulsory primary and lower secondary school and received their final grades. Those who had gone to school in Estonia and Russia had participated in the national compulsory final exam (comprising compulsory and

optional subjects in accordance with the curriculum) for general compulsory education. Of the 11 respondents, 10 had also continued their studies in upper secondary education after compulsory education. The most common were upper secondary or vocational studies, which had also been combined with each other. The duration and extent of the upper secondary level varied depending on how the respondents' life situation and criminal behaviour had developed.

One of the Estonian-Russian respondents completed his compulsory primary and lower secondary schooling in the young offender institution, after becoming involved in fairly extensive criminal behaviour from the age of 14-15. After having served his two-year prison sentence in the young offender institution, he began serving a new sentence in a regular prison for an offence related to the same series of offences for which he had previously been convicted. Despite the long prison sentence, the respondent wished to go on to upper secondary school. An interest in learning something new was the driving force:

> I have always been keen to gain all kinds of knowledge. Upper secondary school studies were interesting because they were sufficiently general. It was also possible to study independently, which suited me in my then life situation (F5).

During his imprisonment the respondent took the national matriculation examination, which according to the Estonian curriculum, included three compulsory and two optional subjects. All the others, except two of the 10 respondents, had also completed studies at higher intermediate level. Five of them had completed upper secondary studies and attained the matriculation examination. One had completed his upper secondary school studies without matriculating. One had interrupted his upper secondary school studies after two years and started at vocational school, which also had not been completed. Two of the respondents had undergone two or three year vocational training. They preferred practical to theoretical knowledge:

> It's what can be used in practical life that interests me most. I've always been aware that I'm no Einstein (F3).

Six respondents had continued to study at tertiary level. Of these, four had graduated at bachelors or masters level. Degrees had mainly been awarded in technical and financial disciplines. A female respondent had obtained a Master of Science in chemistry at the Technical University and in addition, a piano teaching diploma at music academy in Russia. She had embarked on the chemistry studies at the wish of her parents:

> Both my parents hold Master of Science in engineering degrees. They wanted me to study at the Technical University too. My studies there were quite formal. My heart wasn't really in it. The music studies were a breath of fresh air for me (F7).

After graduating, the respondent worked for a short time within the chemical industry in Leningrad until at the end of the 1980s she moved to Finland after having met and married a Finnish man who was an alcoholic. Her own alcohol and later drug abuse also worsened in Finland and she divorced him quite quickly. In Finland she supported herself with piano lessons and prostitution. Later she started pimping and drug dealing.

The other respondents with tertiary degrees had similarly precarious careers behind them. None of them had obtained work corresponding to their education. The Estonian-Russian respondents in particular emphasised how difficult it was to find a job that would ensure a fair standard of living in Estonia. Switching to a criminal lifestyle was not that difficult when it was not possible to achieve, in a conventional way, the substantive goals that were increasingly appreciated in the new Estonian consumer society. These familiar arguments from Merton's (1938) anomie theory were presented clearly e.g. in the following interview section, where a male respondent tells how his situation was exacerbated following dismissal:

> Then, after the crisis I was laid off. Almost everyone was fired at Salutorget when the company began to cut down on staff. Then I still had a relatively decent standard of living. I could afford the rent and was able to support my parents financially. I also had a new car. Then when I was broke, I was forced to look for new alternatives (F2).

The new alternatives were drug dealing, which had become a lucrative market in Estonia. In 2007 the respondent had completed a bachelor's degree at the business school (equivalent to higher vocational training), but hasn't managed to get a job. Instead, he had short-term contracts and temporary employment as a construction worker and cleaner prior to his most recent job as a guard in the market square. According to the respondent, a lack of job opportunities was the main cause of his turning to a life of crime.

The other respondents with various forms of adult education and training also had a fairly fragmentary work history with all types of short-term work. The motley nature of the work history was clearly linked to the criminal path that started alongside the regular job in a way that is typical of the gradual development of persistent criminal behaviour as described in criminological literature (see e.g. Nagin,

Farrington & Moffitt, 1995; Laub & Sampson, 2003). The interviews testified that for many, a criminal lifestyle as an attractive alternative to occasional low-paid work, had been a prospect from an early age:

> It was the easy money that became increasingly attractive. There would only be a few weeks of work and then several months without a job. Life isn't great on social welfare in Estonia. It's a matter of watching the pennies (F1).

The respondent above had embarked on his criminal career at the age of 15 in Estonia. In his case, the difficulties of getting decent work commensurate with his training had also increased the odds of crime. Building restoration and tailoring training had been of no help to him in the tough job market.

Successful schooling

The schooling that the respondents had followed was based on the established practice of a nine-month school year and a five-day working week. Experiences of schooling varied according to the age of the respondent. The teacher-centred Russian education system was glorified, particularly in the older respondents' interviews, when comparing their experiences with that of the younger respondents.

> It may well have something to do with the fact that young people today are different. In the past, children were more disciplined. When I was young, everything was different. Everyone sat quietly and listened to the teacher. The teacher was a god and emperor all rolled into one (F2).

Generally speaking, the respondents appreciated the education that they had had, and felt that it had provided a good foundation for the future. *I have nothing bad to say about the school, the teachers were great and the teaching was good* as one respondent (F6) put it. Particularly appreciated was the emphasis placed on theoretical and science-based teaching. According to a female respondent, teaching of the natural sciences had been so good that it had greatly helped her in the new school in Finland.

> Knowledge that I had acquired in mathematics, physics and chemistry lasted all the way through to the ninth class in Finland. In mathematics,

> I had come so far in Russia, that as far as I can remember, when I was in the second class at upper secondary school the maths was completely alien to me, things that I hadn't even heard of (F6).

Also, the humanities and general education was held in high esteem with the exception being that many respondents would like to have had more instruction in English. The older respondents, in particular, stressed the excellence of the traditional lectern teaching when it came to e.g. history. Their knowledge of history was significantly better than that of the younger respondents:

> You don't have to go that far back in history. If you for example ask a 15 year old who Lenin and Stalin were, when World War II broke out or about the states that won it, that is events that happened around 50 years ago, these are all matters that these 15 year olds know absolutely nothing about (F4).

However, some respondents had certain reservations about the Russian schooling, which, in their opinion was too classroom-orientated and scheduled. The teaching had left little scope for own initiative and imagination. According to them, what was missing was activating teaching, which should have included recreational activities. Afterwards, the respondents still thought that the hierarchical teacher-driven instruction had more advantages than disadvantages in comparison with the modern autonomous instruction, which, in their opinion, left the weakest students adrift. For them, the teacher-driven instruction set the limits they needed, although they could not appreciate it at the time.

The respondents' success at school varied. Written reports were not available but everyone could remember relatively well how they had been graded in various subjects. The average (on a scale of 1 to 5) was quite good and lay between three and four. The differences became greater when the respondents talked about their favourite subjects in school and at the same time, outlined the difficulties in learning the subjects that were less popular.

It is difficult to provide a consistent picture of the distribution of favourite subjects among the respondents. As expected, the most obvious difference was between the mathematics/natural science and humanities orientated respondents. Interest between different subjects varied within these groups so that individual respondents could choose a variety of subject combinations such as native language and history or physics and chemistry as absolutely the most interesting.

The interest also varied during school years so that some uninteresting subjects in compulsory school were subsequently interesting:

> Take English for example, at the time I couldn't understand what benefit it would be to me. It was only when I was at upper secondary school that I appreciated what use it would be. In half a year I learned more than in nine years of compulsory primary and lower secondary school (F11).

Educational requirements in the current life situation

Language skills

All but one of the interviewees had Russian as their native language. Other language skills varied depending on the extent of the former learning pathway and country of domicile. Almost all knew English. Yet, none of the respondents thought that school English would be good enough in future studies.

> In school we learned mostly grammar. In practice, I haven't had much benefit of it. If I should wish to continue studying, I would have to improve my English (F10).

The exception was a woman who had attained a Finnish matriculation and gained a relatively good grade in English. Despite this, she too was dissatisfied with her knowledge of English.

The respondents' other language skills varied. They were able to master several languages as a male respondent in the following paragraph describes:

> I speak Russian, Latvian and Estonian and also speak Polish and a little English and French (F9).

However, the respondents were dissatisfied with their actual knowledge, even of the lesser-known languages, as a male respondent explains below:

> I'm catastrophically bad at German. I do understand some things but can hardly ever translate or speak it. It's such an ugly language (F3).

The Estonian Russians had basic skills (spoken and written) in Estonian as it had been a compulsory subject in the Russian schools in Estonia. However, the respondents' relationship with Estonian was as equally split as that of the Finns, with the so-called mandatory Swedish in Finland (Myntti, 2010). The language of habitual use throughout the school years was Russian. Russian was also otherwise used in everyday contexts. Relationships with the Estonian majority had been distant. Therefore, there had been no motive to study Estonian more thoroughly.

> Sure, I can read and write Estonian but badly (F2).

None of the respondents needed Estonian in prison. Russian was the most important language for all. Opportunities to speak Russian in prison with staff or in dealings with other prisoners, was however, limited.

> You're forced to speak Finnish. I was corrected in a racist manner, that we are in Finland and here we speak Finnish. If you want to get your point across, you'd better get an interpreter (F6).

Those who were able to, spoke in English with the staff. Russian was used mostly for reading and writing, e.g. as in the following forms:

> I write if necessary but I read more, preferably scientific books and non-fiction, such as history. I love reading history (F1).

The others also enjoyed reading both fiction and non-fiction. However, according to the respondents, there was a shortage of a wide range of recent Russian literature.

> If you're lucky you can find something in the library. But we order a lot of literature and journals from outside. We had a Russian teacher here who had a list of the latest literature (F3).

However, many Estonian-Russian respondents had difficulty understanding the modern Russian written language:

> The problem with the Russian language is that it is constantly evolving. When a new book comes out, I don't even understand half of the content because there are so many new words and phrases. We then ordered a specialist dictionary from Russia. It's difficult to get hold of such dictionaries in Estonia (F5).

On the other hand, they could utilise their knowledge of Estonian in discussions with the staff:

> Of course I do understand some things, since it (Finnish) is similar to Estonian, but I don't understand everything that they (the staff) are saying (F2).

The Finnish-Russian respondents had better knowledge of Finnish. The level of knowledge also varied within this group. One of them was bilingual (Russian and Finnish) and was fluent in Finnish. The two others didn't have such good understanding but were able to speak relatively well in a home environment.

> My children are better at Finnish than Russian, so I speak both Finnish and Russian with them but mostly Finnish (F9).

Opinions were divided when it came to the language the respondents would prioritise for prison education. For obvious reasons, many put Russian in first place. English was the next most popular language:

> Naturally I would use Russian if it were possible to start studying something new, but of course I could also consider English, everyone understands English (F1).

Wishes for education and training

In general, the respondents were motivated to continue their education. The current educational need varied depending on how the life course in general had developed and how the future looked. The respondents' educational needs may be regarded as something that is constantly evolving dynamically in conjunction with the rest of the life course (Elder, 1985).

Relatively few respondents had discussed their educational needs with the study supervisor or with any other similar officer mainly due to the language barrier. Many of them would have appreciated a more detailed discussion with regard to educational opportunities with the staff if there had been the opportunity. Respondents with a practical career would have liked to ask about the possibility of complementing their previous vocational education and training with a refresher course or new practical training, which would help them to find work on release from prison:

> Welders or plumbers would be ok, especially plumbers as there is plenty of work abroad, e.g. in the UK, and I have heard that the pay is good (F1).

In addition to practical skills a couple of these respondents would like to have embarked on language studies. Also, those interested in languages dreamed about starting a new life in a European country where their past would not pose such a burden as in their homeland:

> I have visited many European countries and discovered that it is difficult to live and communicate without English. I would be unlikely to get a job in Europe without knowledge of English. I have no chance of getting a job in Estonia. So, between us, I can say that for a Russian in Estonia with a prison background, it is actually easier to start peddling drugs and then spend another three or four years in prison, than to find a well-paid job (F3).

The respondent also harboured dreams of university studies:

> Here I could add that if the economy were under control, I would continue right up to the highest level, i.e. university. But if you can't afford to maintain a reasonable lifestyle, how would you be able to afford to study on top of everything else (F5).

Common to almost all the respondents, was the fact that money was cited as the principle motive for education and training. Money represented material success and social status. That the respondents dream of quickly becoming rich and famous

is quite common according to the criminological research (see e.g. Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In this respect, respondents in this study did not differ significantly from the rest of the prison population. The road to money and success could go via legal studies:

> If you have completed a course in economics at higher vocational level, law school could be a good idea. Combined with my bachelor's degree in economics, it could be a guarantee of success (F2).

Some respondents also had other than purely financial motives for their educational needs. It could be a matter of specific professional motives. While it could be about motives to do with their general situation, as the female respondent explains below. She was the only one who told me that the study supervisor had become thoroughly involved in her case:

> I had already enrolled on a media assistant course because I want to be a journalist. I have had long discussions with the study supervisor about this possibility. She has given me a lot and helped me to fill in forms, etc. I have also registered my interest in English studies in order to be able to make my case in the European Court of Human Rights. (F6).

The other respondents in this category also had similar requirements, associated with their lack of education:

> I would rather finish my upper secondary education and then possibly go on to university (F8).

In these cases, education could also provide an opportunity for self-fulfilment. Formal education could e.g. be perceived as a formal acknowledgement of one's own world view:

> I would like to take a distance learning course in philosophy to somehow promulgate my world view. I would therefore like to complete a university degree. It's a bit like driving a car. Almost everyone can drive a car but some people don't have a driving licence. I would like to have official confirmation of my knowledge (F8).

Two older respondents stated that they had no specific professional plans for the future. One of them, a female respondent with two degrees, had plans to move abroad after her prison term. A practical profession would help her most:

> I could train to be a hairdresser. They get work anywhere. I don't think I can do it in this prison (F7).

All the respondents would have been happy to fill their days in prison with any form of education and/or training to pass the time:

> Now that you have the time you could study anything to pass the time. Now, it's usually a matter of just sitting and staring at the wall (F2).

PART II: Structured identification of educational and training needs

There follows a more detailed description of the respondents' educational and training needs. This part is based on the evaluation instrument's structured questions. The questions are designed with a 4 and 5 point Likert scale where respondents indicate the extent to which they agree with each statement (re. Likert see e.g. Bachman & Schutt, 2007, p. 219-220).

Language proficiency

Table 1 shows how the respondents ranked their ability to use Finnish in different situations. The respondents were roughly divided into two groups, in which understanding of the language varied from question to question. The respondents in the first group had minor or major problems in all the situations the questions covered. Surprisingly many felt that they had difficulty even coping in the simplest, routine, everyday situations (e.g. asking the bus driver for advice) in Finnish.

Table 1: Extent of the language problem (N=11). Indication of numbers in absolute figures

I understand or use [the relevant language] when…	No problem	Minor problem	Major problem	Total
Talking to friends	3	2	6	11
Talking to shop staff, bus drivers etc	4	1	6	11
Talking to teachers or government employees	2	1	8	11
Watching TV and films	3	1	7	11
Listening to the radio	2	2	7	11
Reading documents from government agencies	1	1	9	11
Reading text messages on mobile phone	4	0	7	11
Reading text on Facebook, MSN etc	2	2	7	11
Reading information signs, advertisements etc	4	4	3	11
Reading newspapers	4	0	7	11
Reading books	2	1	8	11
Writing letters or postcards	2	1	8	11
Reading text messages on mobile phone	3	2	6	11
Writing on Facebook, MSN etc	3	1	7	11
Writing e-mails	1	3	7	11
Filling in official forms	1	3	7	11
Writing in connection with school or work	2	1	8	11

Communication with the prison staff was therefore also limited and one-sided as described below:

> All I can manage to do is make phone calls or buy something from the canteen. I do know some words and phrases but they are limited to what the prison staff expect of me, and that is that I'm obedient (F1).

The same also applied to radio, television and newspapers, which relatively few were able to follow in full:

> I have tried listening to the radio. I can understand a few individual words but the overall picture is more of a problem. It's more or less just NRJ or Radio Rock (F3).

The second group consisted of a few respondents who rated their language skills as relatively good in many different situations. One respondent in this group rated his language skills, even in various abstract, legal-bureaucratic contexts, as very good. The majority in this group were not as accustomed to expressing themselves verbally and in writing, especially with regard to legal texts:

> There are so many difficult words that need to be looked up in the dictionary (F5).

Information technology proficiency

Information technology proficiency refers to the ability to effectively use the computer and the leading peripherals and applications available. Basic skills nowadays are e.g. the ability to use word processing programs (e.g. Word) and the Internet, as well as various spreadsheet programs (e.g. Excel). Table 2 shows how versed the respondents were in information technology.

Table 2: Information technology proficiency (N=11). Indication of numbers in absolute figures

	No know-ledge	A little know-ledge	Quite a lot of knowledge	Almost fully know-ledgeable	Fully know-ledgeable	Total
Use the keyboard on the computer	0	1	0	4	6	11
Use a mouse	0	1	2	0	8	11
Search for information on the Internet	0	0	0	4	7	11
Post information on the Internet	0	4	0	0	7	11
Write, send and read e-mails	2	2	1	1	5	11
Send images or documents by e-mail (as an attachment)	2	3	1	0	5	11
Create your own personal website	4	1	0	1	5	11
Use "chat" programs (e.g. MSN)	4	2	0	0	5	11
Send images, documents or music via MSN	4	1	1	3	5	11
Use the computer for writing letters	0	1	0	0	7	11
Use graphics or drawing programs	4	4	0	0	3	11
Use memory stick or CD on computer	2	5	0	0	4	11
Use spreadsheet (e.g. Excel)	4	4	0	0	2	11
Use search engines (e.g. Kvasir or Google)	0	2	0	4	5	11
Download and install programs on compute	6	1	0	3	1	11
Use electronic dictionary/spell check	1	0	1	4	5	11

Nearly all had the most basic skills. They could use the keyboard and mouse, search for straightforward information on the Internet and use word processing programs (Word). As regards more advanced tasks, such as e.g. downloading programs, the skill level was however, more heterogeneous.

The skill level varied to the extent that some were almost totally ignorant when it came to skills that are now considered to be commonplace, e.g. to create a simple website or search for images on the Internet and insert them into text documents. *It's in its infancy*, an older male respondent (F5) described his ability to use the above mentioned tools. The respondent had not needed a computer at all for two years and therefore felt extra backward. The respondent felt that *it would take a few days to update his knowledge of the most essential skills.*

However, a large number of the respondents were quite knowledgeable in all of the skills that the questions covered. Especially the younger ones, who had begun to use computers very early on and acquired the IT skills needed in the modern high-tech culture. Those who had studied at university could also have special skills:

> We had a lot of practical instruction in accountancy at business school. I still have a good command of quite a number of accounting programs (F3)

Two distinct groups could be identified among the respondents. One (the majority) comprised respondents whose skills and practical proficiency were diverse and extensive. The other (the minority) comprised respondents whose information technology skills were limited to the most basic.

Future prospects and training needs at impending release

The following describes in brief, the kind of specific needs and shortfalls and the extent to which the respondents considered themselves to have these in different areas and what the future from this perspective looked like.

Table 3: Training needs and future prospects (N=11). Indication of numbers in absolute figures

	Strongly disagree	Agree to a lesser extent	Agree to some extent	Largely agree	Strongly agree	Total
I need more training in order to manage	0	1	4	3	3	11
The training here is different to that in my home country	0	1	3	7	0	11
I need learning support in order to cope with school subjects	2	4	3	1	1	11
I have never had difficulty coping with school subjects	0	1	4	3	3	11
I was friends with my classmates in my homeland	0	1	4	2	4	11
I had difficulty getting work in my homeland	1	1	2	5	2	11
I had many temporary jobs in my home-land	1	1	1	5	3	11
I have a lot of work experience	1	5	0	3	2	11
In my previous jobs, I needed no training	1	0	4	5	1	11
I am familiar with the demands of working life in my present country of residence	3	3	2	2	1	11
It is impossible for me to get work when I am released.	3	0	3	2	3	11
My education and work experience do not match my current requirements	1	1	2	5	2	11
I will adjust to working life outside prison	1	3	3	1	3	11
I have too little experience to get the work I would wish for	1	0	2	4	4	11
I know many people in my present country of residence	1	4	2	2	2	11
I mix preferably with people from the same background	1	1	5	2	2	11
I have the skills necessary to get a job	1	4	3	2	1	11
I have adapted to the lifestyle in this country	2	3	1	3	2	11
I can manage on my own in everyday life	2	3	2	1	3	11
I am familiar with the demands of working life	0	1	1	4	5	11

Common to most of the respondents was the unstable situation on the job market and in society in general. The actual life situation also partly explains the respondents' criminality. It had its roots in the home country's sociostructural anomalies, which made it difficult to become established, as has already been noted. For many, criminality in this situation was mainly financial and not so much a lifestyle choice, as described in the classical criminology (see e.g. Hirschi, 1969; Gottredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Neither did the possibilities of establishing themselves in Finnish society after release, look so bright. Most would be deported to Estonia on release:

> There are no opportunities in Finland. Everyone will be prohibited from re-entering for 10 or 15 years (F1).

To make a fresh start in Estonia on release would also be difficult:

> From the very first day, after release, everything is difficult. To seek work, to occupy yourself means that you will have to travel around the country and no one will give you a recommendation when you already have that X in the box indicating that you are an ex prisoner. You receive no benefits and no support from anywhere (F2).

A large number of the respondents thought that their odds in the Estonian job market were as bad as before, if not worse with a criminal history in combination with a Russian background:

> There is language and racial prejudice. In many places it is difficult to get a job, a good job, and even if you were able to speak fluent Estonian, being Russian is a clear disadvantage. If you have been released from prison, your job prospects are as good as zero (F6).

Some respondents thought that their chances of avoiding relapse were fairly small. Criminal behaviour is actually described as an opportunity on the right occasion:

> It is such a possibility. I would probably start again if, in the future, I had the opportunity, with a little trouble, to make big bucks (F1).

However, some had a slightly more optimistic view of the chances of getting a job. In these cases, it was mainly a question of black economy work within the construction industry. Here, they aren't quite so finicky about the past:

> Where I worked before, it didn't matter how many times I had been convicted. They'll take me on anytime (F4).

For most, there was certainly a degree of optimism. The structured responses quite clearly revealed that the majority somehow wanted to update their training, specifically in the hope of getting a "foothold in the world of work". It was already apparent from the previous section how the training needs varied. In this section we can add that some wished to continue their studies with a view to a university degree or a vocational qualification. Others however, only needed a certain type of specialist training:

> Within the construction industry I need specific knowledge of new building materials and technology. I already have a basic knowledge (F3).

As previously stated, the prisons, were not however, equipped to accommodate the special educational and training needs of the Russian speakers. Many saw this as an injustice:

> Prison has nothing to offer those of us who are Russian-speaking or foreigners. Finns however, are able to educate themselves as much as they want (F2).

Summary and conclusions

Nowadays, a central aim of the custodial sentence is that it contributes to prisoners' integration into society according to the sentence plan designed for each prisoner (Act 767/2005). Activities in the prison should be organised so as to promote prisoners' skills for a life without crime. Education and training as part of the general rehabilitation activities have an increasingly important role in achieving these goals.

The respondents have various kinds of training needs, making evaluation a major challenge. An additional challenge is prisoners of foreign origin whose sentence plans are, on the whole, usually inadequate.

This study has evaluated training needs of 11 Russian-speaking respondents. Although the numbers are small and unrepresentative, the sample provides interesting information about the Russian-speaking prison population's particular educational requirements. It also provides information on the problems and areas of future research that should be focused on, so as to contribute to the development of prison rehabilitation activities.

The respondents were relatively well educated, which is not so typical of the prison population in general (Kivivuori & Linderborg, 2010). Despite this, they had similar educational and training needs and problems to the prison population in general.

In this study, educational and training needs have been considered from a narrow pedagogical didactic (e.g. learning problems in school) and a broader life course perspective.

The respondents' needs were mainly socio-cultural and not so much pedagogical. All had completed at least compulsory primary and lower secondary school with higher grades than average among the Finnish-speaking prison population (cf. Kivivuori & Linderborg, 2009). Almost all had passed an exam at upper secondary level (upper secondary school or vocational studies) and quite a few had also studied at university/college.

Admittedly, they had specific pedagogical-didactic needs, e.g. learning English as well as other languages. Some also wished to update their more or less inadequate information technology skills. However, on the whole, they did not have as extensive learning and other problems with their basic education, typical of some of the Finnish prison population. However, they had major problems readjusting to society overall. On release, many would be deported to their homeland without reasonable employment, possibly also without accommodation and a constructive social network. In this situation, to again be driven into criminal circles could, for some, become a reality.

What most prisoners need is a combination of various kinds of readjustment (training related to individual support and rehabilitation measures). The respondents had a major need for vocational and other training. They also needed help with all types of issues relating to managing and planning their lives in order to get back on their feet again. Overall, the aim was to bring order into their lives.

None of the respondents had received the support they needed. On a few occasions the respondents had been given the opportunity to talk with the study supervisor. There was no comprehensive plan in place for education, training and other measures. Neither had the respondents been offered the opportunity to participate in educational or training activities.

The language barrier is the main reason for exclusion from virtually all activities in the prisons for Russian speakers. By engaging qualified interpreters during the sentence planning process it would be possible to take greater account of the Russian speakers' needs and plan the sentence so that it could be better used to promote conditions for a normal life in the community. Prisons should also take account of the Russian speakers' specific needs and where possible, plan rehabilitation, education and training, as well as other activities, so that the sentence plan objectives, can, to some extent, be achieved. This assumes of course, individual types of activity as well as language skills, which in the prisons' current resource situation, are regarded as a problem. Another problem is the fact that a large number of the Russian speakers are subject to deportation orders. Of course, this fact, combined with the lack of resources, also has an effect and ultimately means that the Russian speakers are perceived as an extra strain and therefore may not be considered as important as the Finnish prison population.

However, it should be borne in mind that the freed Russian speakers could in the future, be potential clients in prisons in Finland. In order to counteract this trend, it would pay to invest a little more in the rehabilitation and educational and training needs of the Russian-speaking respondents. This is also affirmed by the respondents' narratives.

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CHAPTER 5

Polish prisoners in Iceland

by Gudmundur B. Kristmundsson

The objective of the research project is to study the educational backgrounds of Polish prisoners in Iceland with a focus on their basic skills, e.g. reading. The report is part of a Nordic wide study of the situation of immigrants in prison. Iceland's prison service has supported the project by providing relevant data and facilitating visits to prisons. The study is expected to gather information that can form the basis for more targeted teaching and educational opportunities in prisons, e.g. by making allowances for prisoners who do not have the prerequisites for completing a secondary education, for example. The data was gathered in three prisons during the period April to May 2011.

Immigrants in Iceland

Immigration to Iceland has been increasing steadily in recent years. At the beginning of 2011 the figure was 25,693, which is equivalent to 8.1% of the total population (Statistics Iceland, 2012). The number had been increasing continuously over the previous 15 years, but fell for a period when the recession led to a reduction of construction work. In 2010 the total number of immigrants was 26,171, i.e. 8.2% of the total population.

Polish people made up the biggest immigrant group in Iceland by far. At the beginning of 2011 there were 9,463 people from Poland, which was equivalent to 36.8% of the total immigrant population (Statistics Iceland, 2012). The majority were men, 40.8% of the total number of male immigrants, while Polish women made up 33% of the total number of female immigrants. Lithuanians were the second biggest group at 5.7% followed by people from the Philippines at 5.2%. Other nationalities that are well represented among immigrants in other Nordic countries, e.g. Somalia, Turkey and Iraq, are very little represented in Iceland. This can be due to the great growth in jobs in previous years and the periodical lack of unskilled labour and trained tradesmen.

The relatively high number of immigrants of Polish origin was influential in deciding which nationality to study in the Icelandic part of the study. Many other immigrant groups are few in number and there were few prisoners or none from these countries. A characteristic of the Polish group is that they are hard-working and keen to earn money. They appear to come to the country in order to work a great deal for a limited period after which they return home. Therefore they are not particularly motivated to be integrated in society and learn the native language. A survey carried out by the trade union Eining shows that only 13% of Polish people believe they can exchange words in Icelandic. This influences people's adaptability when looking for new opportunities in the job market, in which relatively fewer Polish people than Icelandic apply for new jobs (Arnarson, 2012).

The Polish people who have come to Iceland in the last few years are typically young people aged between 20 and 40. Therefore they have completed elementary education in their home country. Most have presumably completed 9-11 years of schooling; 6-8 years in primary school and three years in secondary school, with school years of 10 months and five days a week (Guide to Higher Education in Poland, 2000a). Poland has a deep-rooted tradition of education. This is reflected in the fact that they have an academic teacher training system lasting five years, which has existed for many years. Those men that were included in the study appeared to be familiar with the education system in their home country. In Poland children start school at pre-school level when they are 5-6 years old. They progress to primary school aged 6-7, and then they spend three years in middle school, followed by secondary school for 3-4 years. This system has existed since 2009 (Guide to Higher Education in Poland, 2000b, 2012).

Methodology of the study

A Polish interpreter was employed to interpret the answers given by the participants. The interpreter is a PhD student at the University of Iceland. He understands some Icelandic, but speaks the language to a limited extent. The interpreter communicated with the researcher mostly in English. It was done this way in seven out of eight cases, but in a prison in the North of the country where there was a single Polish prisoner, a Polish-speaking Lithuanian who spoke excellent Icelandic acted as interpreter. The methodology of the study was partly quantitative, e.g. for data on the educational background and schooling and partly qualitative, where prisoners were asked to assess their educational backgrounds and describe personal expectations and future preferences. Everybody was asked the same questions to ensure consistency, general impression and a uniform basis for comparison, despite the fact that this was not the primary goal of the research study.

Selection of participants

When the data was collected, there were nine Polish people in Icelandic prisons, either as convicted prisoners or on remand. All except one chose to take part in the study. It was not clear why he did not take part and no explanation was provided.

The researcher informed the eight men from Poland about the nature and purpose of the research study, and he made it clear to them that they had the right to refuse to take part and to abstain from answering individual questions. Identical information was presented in the same way to all the prisoners, i.e. a meeting in advance of the interviews. No one asked for further explanation but some expressed interest and satisfaction. All made an effort to answer the questions asked.

The eight prisoners were divided over three prisons; in Reykjavik there were three people in custody, in Sydisland there were four prisoners in one prison while one person was in a prison in North Iceland. The researcher and interpreter were well received by the prison staff that had facilitated the collaboration with the Prison Service. Interview conditions were good and problem-free everywhere.

Implementation

Initially the researcher and the interpreter reviewed the questionnaire and the guidelines for the study. The interpreter had lived in Iceland for five years. He had a good educational background and an excellent knowledge of the education system in his home country. He appeared to have a good understanding of his fellow countrymen in Iceland and what they generally aimed for. This insight turned out to be useful in those cases when the answers seemed unclear. The biggest challenge during some interviews was when the participants wanted to make conversation with the interpreter. Sometimes the researcher had to interrupt the conversation and ask for an interpretation of what was being said. However, no problems arose and these conversations were reviewed when the interviews were finished.

The questionnaire was available in both Polish and English. Some prisoners wanted to read the Polish text while the researcher read aloud and the interpreter translated. This provided an indication of the prisoner's reading skills.

All visits to prisons were initiated by a brief meeting where the prisoner, or in *two cases the* prisoners, were informed about the purpose of the research. At the same time it was emphasised that it was to be a confidential conversation and none of what was said would be used against the prisoner.

The initial meeting was attended by prison staff and when it was over, the researcher and interpreter were led into a room where the interview would take place. All interviews were with individuals and only the prisoner, the researcher and the interpreter were present.

The researcher introduced the questionnaire and made the prisoner aware that it was up to him whether he answered or not. All the interviewees were very cooperative and the interviews ran smoothly. It occasionally happened that the prisoner wanted to add something beyond what was being asked and it was necessary to ensure that the course of the interview did not deviate.

There was a clear increase in trust when the prisoner met an interpreter from his own country. When the interview was completed, the researcher and the interpreter spoke together, especially about what was unclear to the researcher. The answers were noted continuously while the information that was irrelevant to the question was noted on a separate sheet of paper. The interviews were also recorded on a dictaphone.

Additions to the questionnaire

Direct additions to the prepared questionnaire were not made, but the researcher was able to ask informal additional questions about reading skills, reading and writing if he found it necessary. The questions related to the reading habits of the prisoner, how much he wrote and whether he wanted to do more reading or writing in prison than he was already doing. Not a lot of concrete information emerged from this, but it provided some idea of the person's reading and writing habits and how being in prison impeded them in their reading or writing.

Ethical considerations

There are certain rules of confidentiality for visitors to prisons. In one instance the researcher and the interpreter had to sign a statement to the effect that they were familiar with the prison rules. The rules were followed strictly and none of what was talked about or what the visitors learned was outside the limits set by these rules. The prisoners gave their year of birth and if they also gave their date of birth it was not recorded.

Since the study involves a sample of only eight persons there is some risk that the information can be traced back to the individual. Great efforts were made to prevent this. The prisoners were informed of the researcher's confidentiality. They were all aware of the facts and made no objections.

Analysis of data

The interviews were carried out on the basis of the original questionnaire, which was approved and used by the group that carried out the research in the other Nordic countries. If the interviewees wanted to provide supplementary information this was also noted. Usually it was a case of elaborating on what was already said. In some cases they were emotional comments, e.g. about guilt or a desire to get their life together and find honest work. The comments were only noted down if they elaborated on the answer already given. The data was categorised and the answers were analysed in the same order as they occurred in the questionnaire. Initially they were about basic and known facts, including age and educational background. Then the answers to the more open questions were categorised.

The findings of the study

Age, place of birth and mother tongue

All participants were born in Poland to Polish parents. All spoke Polish as their mother tongue. One prisoner was born in 1993 and had just turned 17 years old. The next youngest was born in 1989 while the rest were born in 1987, 1986, 1983, 1974, 1973 and 1954. All prisoners except one were younger than 40 years. The age distribution is not very surprising as it reflects the group of Polish immigrants who

have come to Iceland in recent years. The youngest prisoner was 13 years old when he came to the country with his parents. The rest arrived as adults and most had been there for a short time or had just arrived.

Educational background

All participants started school at the age of 6 or 7. Two said that they had turned seven when they started school. For all respondents, the school year was 10 months long and the week was five days. The youngest pointed out that the school year in Iceland was only nine months. He had gone to primary school in Poland and continued in Iceland where he finished the ninth and 10th year of compulsory school, in total 10 years at school. Another prisoner had gone to school for eight years and therefore only finished primary school, but not middle school. A third prisoner had attended school for 10 years, where he had completed primary school and two years of middle school. Three had gone to school for 12-13 years and had completed both primary levels and the secondary level. Two said that they had learned a trade as a carpenter and electrician respectively at secondary level. One had completed 15 years of school; primary school, secondary school and a vocational education. Beyond that he had spent a year at university before he discontinued his studies.

With regard to the length of compulsory school, the youngest participant had completed nine years of schooling, while those that were born in 1983 or before had completed eight years. The reason for this is that compulsory school in Poland was extended.

The participants were asked what they liked and what they did not like at school. Four said that they liked most or all subjects but the oldest said he didn't like anything at school. The others said that they liked subjects such as physical education, mathematics, biology and woodwork. Three participants said there were no subjects that they didn't like. One said he thought it was all boring, while others mentioned history, mathematics and languages and one described Russian as a boring subject. It is worth noting that some of them did not like mathematics and languages. These are important subjects, especially languages, if one wants to settle in a different country.

Generally it can be concluded that despite the fact that the participants had not completed a long educational programme, they had positive attitudes towards school and education. It did not emerge how they had managed at school, but there were no indications that school had been traumatic for them, with one exception perhaps.

Ideas about education in prisons

The participants were questioned extensively about whether they had plans to get an education after their prison sentence and whether they planned to engage in further education after they got out of prison. The answered were varied, ranging from those who were not interested or felt they were too old for education, (1) to

those who were interested in getting a university degree. Two participants wanted to take their General Certificate of Education-Advanced Level exams while in prison and then embark on further education. One wanted to continue with his university studies but didn't feel that he knew enough about what was available to him in prison. Another had learnt massage and wanted to get further education in this field when he got out of prison, and get a university degree in massage or physiotherapy.

The answers from two persons were noteworthy; that they didn't know enough, or had insufficient information about what it was possible to study during their prison sentence. When they were asked if they had tried to obtain information, e.g. from a student counsellor, they couldn't quite answer. It is not clear why they did not seek out information; whether it was due to language barriers or that they didn't know where to look for information. That was not answered.

Three prisoners expressed an interest in learning a language while they were in prison and after their release. Three mentioned English; one mentioned German and two did not specify the language. One felt that there was no benefit to him starting an education since he only had four months left to serve. One had worked with construction machinery and wanted to learn to operate such machines. One said unprompted that he had no interest in learning languages and that he was too old for education. One of the three who were interested in learning languages emphasized that he didn't want to learn it from a CD but from a real teacher.

Generally one can conclude that all the participants except one were interested in getting more education. Some had a clearer idea of what they wanted to learn and what goals they wanted to achieve. In light of their experience from school it is interesting that so many wanted to learn languages.

Work experience and thoughts on the future

The participants were asked what education and work they would like when they had served their sentences. They were also asked about their expectations for the future in general. The answers were very varied and it is difficult to see a particular pattern. However, it was clear that most had thoughts about education and work and dreamt of having a good financial situation. The youngest participant, who was only 17, wanted to stay in Iceland after he had served his sentence since his whole family is living in the country. He wants to be a carpenter and practice sports. He was only in custody and therefore he did not have the opportunity to do sports. His case was at a stage where it was too soon to talk about educational opportunities.

Five participants had been living in Iceland for different periods on average for 3-5 years, but three participants had not spent any time in the country. Two of those who had spent some time in the country wanted above all to be allowed to stay in Iceland, but they were not sure that it was possible because of the difficult situation they were in.

Most, or six prisoners, wanted to educate themselves when they had served their sentence. Their preferences varied from a machinery course to learning a trade or

continuing their studies, and one was interested in studying at the university. One prisoner mentioned that if he were to work in Iceland in the trade for which he had been trained he would have to improve his knowledge of Icelandic.

Two made it clear that they wanted to live normal lives as honest men when they got out of prison, one of them said he wanted to marry his girlfriend and start a family. Generally it can be said that the participants had some vision for the future and it could be sensed that they were sorry and felt guilty because of the circumstances. This was most expressed in the participant who had the longest course of education behind him.

Oral and written skills

During the interviews an attempt was made to form an impression of participants' linguistic skills in their mother tongue as well as other languages. They were asked about reading and writing as well as reading habits. The interviews and the prisoners' behaviour during the interviews provided a reasonable picture of their skills in language and reading without being entirely adequate. That would have required a separate test.

Polish was the mother tongue of all the prisoners. They said they generally spoke Polish with their friends, their Polish work mates and one mentioned his friends in prison. The latter had learned Russian at primary and middle school without using it even when the opportunity arose. But he mentioned that he could speak Russian. Only two prisoners spoke Icelandic, one well and the other one a little. Some mentioned that they used English. Two respondents said they spoke English, one that he understood English but couldn't speak it. The youngest said he knew some English that he had learnt at primary school in Iceland. One mentioned that he knew some German but was not fluent. The two oldest participants (born in 1954 and 1973) said that they spoke Russian but they didn't seem very motivated to use this skill which may be because there are not many opportunities in Iceland to do so. All said that they had learned the languages at school and one said that he had also learnt some English from watching TV.

The interviewees were asked if they could read and write texts in the languages referred to. Their abilities turned out to be very varied. Those who had learnt English answered that they could read simple texts and one said he read English books his mother sent him. The two who had learned Russian felt that they could read and write that language. One said that he had no desire to use the language, while the other one (the oldest) said it was rarely necessary or possible to use it.

Those who had learned English believed that they could write some but considered it difficult. This mostly concerned short texts, e.g. communication on the internet. One (born in 1989) thought that it was easier to write than to speak English, but he didn't give any specific details.

The participants were asked what language they spoke every day. Their answers were almost all the same; they spoke Polish, but five of them said they spoke a bit

of English when they were speaking to Icelandic people, and also behind prison walls when they were speaking to people who were not Polish. Two said that their knowledge of English was limited and two said that they used Icelandic to some extent, especially the youngest one who had attended an Icelandic school.

The interviews clearly showed that the participants had some oral language skills but their understanding of language could be limited at times. All the prisoners had spoken Polish at school except the youngest, who had spoken Icelandic for three years while taking the last years of elementary school in Iceland. They all preferred to read and write in Polish if possible. There is some doubt regarding the participant who was born in 1974 and had the least education. He did not answer, but just said that his Polish work mates translated for him when he needed it. When the participants were asked what language they preferred to use if they were to start an education and work experience, five of them said they would choose Polish, two would chose Polish or English and the youngest said Polish or Icelandic.

Knowledge of Icelandic

The participants were asked about their abilities in Icelandic, including oral and written understanding and writing skills. Only one felt that he had skills in the language and was somewhat modest in his assessment. That was the youngest respondent. He did not think he had a problem talking to his friends in Icelandic, reading posters or writing text messages. He considered it somewhat harder to talk to and understand shop staff, bus drivers, etc. It could be difficult to listen to radio and TV in Icelandic. The same was true for reading newspapers, Facebook and mobile phone messages. He also found it somewhat difficult to write letters and emails in Icelandic and writing assignments at school. It became clear during the interview that the participant's reading skills were excellent and when the researcher asked him questions in Icelandic he didn't appear to find it hard to understand them.

Another prisoner felt that he was able to use some Icelandic but not without difficulty. He had spent five years in Iceland and did not feel that he could speak English when communicating with Icelandic people. He found it quite difficult speaking to Icelandic friends, shop staff, bus drivers, etc., or watching films in Icelandic, listening to radio, understanding signs and other posters in public spaces and getting anything out of newspapers. During the interview the researcher tried to form an impression of how difficult reading was for the participant. When he was presented with the questionnaire he was not interested in reading it, and he showed many signs of limited reading ability without being illiterate. This respondent had the shortest school attendance of the participants and made very little of his abilities and interest in studying when the sentence was over. He was the only person in the group that did not have the required qualification to embark on further education.

The other six prisoners felt that they had no knowledge of Icelandic. Two wanted to elaborate on their use of English and felt that they spoke it quite well. One said he read books and periodicals. The researcher suspected that the participants'

knowledge of English, although limited, was sufficient so that they preferred to use English instead of improving their skills in Icelandic.

Computer skills

The participants were asked some questions about their computer skills and where those skills were the most or the least useful to them. The answers were very different and the age of the participant was important. The youngest prisoners had more skills than the oldest. The youngest prisoner felt that he was well able to use a computer, but did not know how to make a homepage or how to use graphics or drawing software. The second youngest, who was born in 1989, felt that he was well able to use a computer but not to make a homepage. He said that he knew how to use graphics software and Excel, but that he wasn't particularly good at it. The same was the case with the next in line, who was born in 1987. He felt he was good at doing other things on the computer and he was well able to publish information on the internet.

Among the older participants the computer skills were more sporadic. The participant who was born in 1983 felt he was good at using the keyboard and the mouse pointer to search for information on the internet. He believed he was able to download programmes and write email and texts. There were some things he did not use at all, e.g. chat rooms, picture transfer, Excel and graphics software. Others believed that they had limited skills in some of these areas, mostly using the hardware such as keyboard and mouse pointer, searching the net and writing email. They found other things difficult or they didn't have the required skills. What's interesting was that the oldest person of the group, who was born in 1954, appeared to have some computer skills despite the fact that he did not consider himself very competent. He was able to use MSN, write e-mail and other texts and knew how to use Excel and graphics software. The reason may be that he had a technical education.

The prisoners had limited access to computers in prison and were clearly interested in having easier access, mostly so they could communicate with family and friends in their home country. In assessing computer skills it is necessary to allow for the fact that some of what was asked was either not of interest to the people who were asked or else they did not believe that they needed it in their normal lives.

Thoughts on education, work and need for education

The participants were asked if they needed to learn new things, including with regard to the work they would like to do. The answers were very varied and did not seem to be associated with age and educational background. Few thought that they needed further education or training to be able to do the work they wanted – at least not a great deal. Although the youngest prisoner felt he needed this as he had neither work experience nor education.

Most participants felt there was a difference in education and work training in Iceland and Poland. Three answered that they did not know enough about the circumstances which presumably was because they had generally not spent much time in Iceland. All except one felt that they had almost no need or no need at all for support teaching if they were to attend school in Iceland. Five participants felt they had not had learning difficulties while three probably had to endure some problems or even major problems.

When asked, most did not feel that they had had problems finding work in their home country with the exception of two inmates. One of them said that he had always worked in the same place. Five had worked many places while the youngest did not have much work experience which is explained by his young age. Unsurprisingly, the older participants had more work experience than the younger ones. All of them, including the youngest, had been in waged employment. Most thought that their previous jobs had not required special knowledge. However, two of them had a clear belief that the opposite was the case, but they did have a technical education. All prisoners had been on friendly terms and had a good relationship with their school mates when they were at school.

Now and in the future

Five of the participants felt they knew very little or nothing at all about Icelandic working life. Two believed they knew a little about it, but they had been living in the country for some time. The last person did not give an answer.

All except one respondent believed that it would not be difficult to find work after their sentence. One of them was uncertain about what would happen. Some would leave the country and in those cases their answers must relate to the job opportunities in Poland. Five considered that their education and experience would help them when they got out of prison. One of the prisoners had doubts while the two older ones said that they did not know. None of them thought it would be difficult to adjust to society when they were released from prison. However, three of them felt they lacked enough experience to get the work they wanted.

The prisoners' answers when they were asked if they had got to know many Icelandic people provided food for thought. All prisoners had got to know Icelandic people, but it was unclear how many and what form of contact they were talking about. Two of them explicitly said that they had got to know them in prison since they had never lived in the country outside the prison. The answers must therefore be considered quite imprecise and it was difficult to get more elaborate answers.

They were asked if it was important to them that their friends had the same background as themselves. The four youngest and the oldest did not think it was important, but the three in the middle did. When asked about professional knowledge the three youngest felt theirs was inadequate, while the oldest participants found theirs sufficient. However, there was one (born in 1983) who felt that he needed more knowledge. The prisoners were asked if they were integrated into the country in which they were now living. Most of them felt that they were, but

their answers were somewhat vague and difficult to interpret. Three inmates who were living in Iceland answered that they had not adapted to the Icelandic way of life. Those who were living in Poland and had only been in Iceland for a very short time, felt that they were well-integrated, which must have meant that they were thinking of Poland.

When they were asked if they could manage on their own in normal everyday life, the answer was yes, except from one who had doubts, but he didn't want to elaborate. That was the participant who has been mentioned a few times and who was born in 1983.

Finally the participants were asked if they knew the demands of working life. All except for the youngest felt that they did. In this as in other questions, those who had only spent a limited time in Iceland based their answers on the Polish situation.

Generally it can be said that the answers to questions about the prisoners' situation and their relationship with work and working life were at times somewhat vague. The respondents' age seemed to play a part, but so did the fact that some prisoners had been arrested almost immediately on arrival in Iceland.

Discussion and suggestion

It must be emphasised that only eight men took part in the study in Iceland, but they are nevertheless the largest group of ethnic minority prisoners. One must be cautious in drawing conclusions and considering this a description of all Polish prisoners, or even ethnic minority prisoners in general. The study should rather be considered an observation of the actual people or of cases that describe these people. Nevertheless the eight participants contribute information that can undoubtedly be used to improve the circumstances of foreign prisoners in Iceland, and presumably a great deal of it may also be used in the other Nordic countries too.

What clearly emerges from the respondents' answers to questions about their educational background and relationship with education is that they have had a rather solid education in their home country. They also give the impression that they are aware of the connection between education and work, which is useful beyond dispute and will serve them well when they choose and complete an education.

Before data collection began the researcher made an effort to learn the main features of the Polish education system. This turned out to be a great advantage during the interviews, but also when reviewing the answers. Providing brief summaries of the education systems from which the prisoners come is advantageous. Such a database would assist the student counsellors and educational institutions with understanding the prisoners' qualifications and needs for basic education, if any.

It is worth noting how little interest the participants had in communicating in Icelandic. Those who had lived and worked in Iceland for 3–5 years said that they preferred communicating with Icelandic people in English, even though they did not think that their own knowledge of English was very good. This can be difficult to

explain, but their Icelandic work mates could be partially to blame as they often start out speaking English and then it becomes a habit. So the Polish people then will not be motivated to improve their knowledge of Icelandic which can be a problem in other situations, like in a social context talking to other people and for gaining an insight into how the society works. Furthermore it can limit their work opportunities and prevent them from playing an active part in society.

It is particularly important to communicate to the prisoners the value of speaking the language of the host country and to advise them on courses and other means of improving their knowledge of the language. During the interviews an attempt was made to observe the reading and writing skills of the respondents, partly in the form of direct questions, but also in other ways such as showing them the Polish section of the questionnaire and asking them to read it. There were many indications that only one out of the eight had any difficulty in doing so. This can no doubt be explained by their solid basic education and the ambitious educational policies of their home country. Despite the fact that this small group appeared to have good reading and writing skills it is a well-known fact that a large number of adults have problems in this area, and that prisoners' educational background is on average worse than that of those outside the prison walls. Reading and writing skills are a basic prerequisite for almost all formal education. The prisoners who do not apply for education or reject it are possibly doing so because they are experiencing reading difficulties. It would represent a distinct improvement if a test were used to assess reading and writing skills. Tests for adults in the job market were translated to Icelandic in 2005-2006 and then presented to 340 persons. The objective was to standardize a test and investigate whether it was possible to assess the reading skills of adults in this way. As an attachment to the test there was a questionnaire about their reading and writing habits (Arnardóttir & Kristmundsson, 2006). The results were interesting in many ways and it was clear that the test was applicable. A good test in many languages would be desirable for assessing reading skills among foreign as well as native Icelandic people. That way one could help those who are struggling with reading difficulties and give them the opportunity of improving their circumstances. That is one of the main conditions to manage in the society awaiting them outside prison, where reading and writing ability is an important requirement.

Some of the interviewees pointed out that there was a lack of books, magazines and journals in Polish in prison. They also pointed out that access to computers and the internet was restricted, which may be due to security considerations. It must be emphasised how important it is to have access to different types of reading material. It provides entertainment but it also serves the purpose of opening a window on society.

Learning and teaching were often mentioned during the interviews and most were interested in learning something practical, e.g. language and crafts. A few said they did not have a clear idea of what the possibilities were. The researcher asked about study and vocational guidance, which he knew had been of benefit to many in prisons. Some respondents did not appear to understand the role of study

counselling and had perhaps not tried to get help from that service. The reason was not clear but there are probably grounds for strengthening this service, not the least for the benefit of foreign prisoners.

The study of ethnic minority prisoners in Icelandic prisons was a very interesting process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants and the staff, both inside and outside the prisons, for their participation and assistance. Furthermore, it is my hope that the conclusions of the study can help improve the education of ethnic minority prisoners and make them better equipped to encounter society outside the prison walls.

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CHAPTER 6

Iraqi inmates in Norway

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Information

The Norwegian study has had the goal of developing knowledge of the educational background, preferences and requirements for education in inmates of Iraqi background. We have also examined how this group of inmates are adapting to Nordic educational culture in terms of language and culture. Inmates in Norway, as well as in the other Nordic countries, are very diverse. Part of this diversity is that very many nationalities and citizenships are represented. For some encountering Norway and the Nordic countries may be difficult, strange and may seem very different from what they are used to, Their education spans a wide spectrum of both level, content and amount. There are also inmates who for various reasons do not have access to schooling. Challenges for the respective countries' prison and probation services are therefore major when for example the educational offers in prisons are being prepared and offered to individual inmates.

The Iraqi inmates grew up and had their education in a country with war and political conflict. Research shows that the educational system is among the targets hardest hit in war and conflict and the education system is used systematically authorities and power groups to gain control over, indoctrinate or assimilate all or parts of the population (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Hanemann, 2005; Machel, 2001). Iraq is no exception to this.

It is therefore probable that the prisoners from Iraq are affected in different ways by such events and that this has influenced their individual courses of education to different degrees.

In the following we account for the study's background and why the group of inmates from Iraq has been selected for the study. After that there is a short review of the educational system in Iraq and a part that includes the study's methodical approach. When presenting the central findings, the study's qualitative findings will be presented first, and then the findings from the quantitative part will be presented. Finally, we discuss the findings in brief and present a review of the practical implications of the recommendations.

Background for the project and approval

This report is a follow-up of a large national Norwegian study carried out in 2004, 2006 and 2009, which shows that many ethnic minority prisoners have insufficient education for various reasons. In the Norwegian survey of inmates in May 2009, it emerged for example that 10 per cent of all inmates had not completed any form of education. A lack of education represents a major challenge for Prison and Probation Services and the training offered by this service with regards to

designing the educational opportunities in the prisons on offer to individual inmates. Research-based knowledge is important in the creation of good and structured educational offers that meet the target group's needs. Research-based knowledge is important not least because studies show that the proportion of foreign citizens in Norwegian prisons has doubled in three years (from 2006 to 2009) (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2010; Eikeland, Manger & Diseth, 2006; Hetland, Eikeland, Manger, Diseth & Asbjørnsen, 2007).

What is the study based on?

The study is based on 17 qualitative interviews with inmates from Iraq, which were carried out in three Norwegian prisons in the period from February to April 2011. Geographically, the prisons are divided between three places in eastern Norway and have varying degrees of security from open to locked departments. The respondents' ages vary. The youngest was born in 1990, the oldest in 1963. Six respondents were under 25, while six were aged from 26 to 39. Five respondents were over 40. Through interviews it emerged that the length of the sentences they received varied from a couple of months to many years. At the outset we planned to interview inmates of both genders. This was not possible since there were no women of Iraqi ethnicity in the three prisons where we conducted the interviews. Statistics from Norway and other countries to which we can compare ourselves show that the prison population consists of 95-96 per cent men and only 5-6 per cent women (Eikeland et al., 2006; Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008, Eikeland et al., 2010).

Reasons for selecting inmates of Iraqi background

In recent years there has been a significant increase in immigration to Norway, especially immigration for work (Henriksen, Østby & Ellingsen, 2010). As of January 1, 2012 there were 547,000 immigrants in Norway, and 108,000 Norwegian-born second generation immigrants. These groups combine to make up 13.1 per cent of the population (Statistics Norway, 2012). Of these 21,000 immigrants are from Iraq, and of those 6,400 are Norwegian born people with parents who emigrated from Iraq.[12] Inmates from Iraq are selected for this study because they constitute a relatively large group. On January 27, 2011 the prison population in Norway included 31.6 per cent foreign nationals from 99 countries. The largest groups are from Poland (131), Lithuania (111), Nigeria (80), Iraq (73), Romania (56) and Somalia (52) (Ministry of Justice, 2011).

It is desirable to have more knowledge about the background of Iraqi inmates. In this context, this refers to educational background, educational ambitions and requirements. Most respondents in this group are Iraqi-born and have attended school there. A smaller number have grown up in Norway and attended school here. What we know about these from research is that young people with parents from

[12] Population statistics, Statistics Norway (2012)

Iraq are almost completely unrepresented in higher education in Norway (Støren, 2006, reproduced in NOU 2011:14, p. 172). To understand the particular background of ethnic minority prisoners from Iraq it has been important to look at contextual circumstances such as the educational system, political and economic circumstances. The Iraqi educational system is briefly described below.

The educational system in Iraq

The educational system in Iraq was influenced by Western educational systems over many years. Even today it does not have an identity rooted in the cultural, religious and linguistic minorities in the area. In general, Arabic is the official educational language. An exception is the Kurdish autonomous region in the North, where the educational language is mainly Kurdish.

As in most other countries higher education was reserved for the sons of the elite, while girls and women had little or no access to schooling or higher education. This changed when the Ba'ath party seized power in 1968, with Saddam Hussein in charge. Despite Saddam Hussein's atrocities the educational system flourished in the beginning of the regime, in a country where nearly 90 per cent of the population were illiterate. National measures were implemented against illiteracy[13], and the disabled were given special training programmes. Elementary school became compulsory for everybody and inmates were given reduced penalties if they voluntarily went back to school (Ranjan & Jain, 2009). There were also measures to get women into education[14]. In the period from 1970 to around 1990, the educational system in Iraq was considered to be one of the best in the Middle East with regard to access, competence, quality and gender equality. In the West it was seen as a model for an educational system that worked on all levels, including international standards and exchanges.

According to World Education Services (WES, 2004) what was achieved in the period between 1970 and the end of the 1980s was destroyed as a result of the regime cutting funding. It became increasingly oppressive, controlling and brutal.

In the years following the US invasion in 2003 and as a result of destructive acts of war, around 80 per cent of all educational institutions were destroyed (Issa & Jamil, 2010, p. 363; Ranjan & Jain, 2009). A collapsed educational process after years of war, sanctions and invasion led to a renewed increase in illiteracy (UNESCO, 2003).

The minimal improvements that have been carried out since the invasion in 2003 have primarily benefited Baghdad and the Kurdish autonomous region in the North. Even if the invasion in 2003 ended a dictatorial and brutal regime, it failed to create good conditions for growth in the educational sector. It must be emphasised that

[13] National Comprehensive Campaign for Compulsory Literacy Law

[14] In 1980 a total of 416 out of 762 elementary schools were earmarked for girls (Issa & Jamil, 2010, p. 360)

improvements have been implemented in Iraq since 2007, but there are still huge challenges in education.

Methodical approach

Data is gathered in structured and semi-structured interviews. Some interviews developed into what can be termed in depth interviews. The individual respondents are selected in advance according to purposive sampling (Silverman, 2001). Otherwise, the respondents are made up of inmates that actually agreed to participate.

In qualitative studies, where personal meetings with the respondents are important, structural and organizational framework surrounding the respondent can complicate the process. It doesn't make it any easier when the respondent is confined behind prison walls. This study is based in the educational department of the office of the county governor in Hordaland, who was tasked by the Ministry of Education and Research with the national responsibility for education within the criminal administration system. The study also required permission from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Research. We met with no obstacles on this occasion. The County Governor in Hordaland made the first contact, also with the prisons. When contact was first established the project manager at the University of Bergen made appointments with each of the three prisons where we were well received by the prison and school management.

The interviews lasted between one and a half and two hours and proceeded without any problems. In one case we were presented with an ethnic minority prisoner who willingly told us about his educational background. When it emerged that he was not from Iraq he expressed disappointment that he could not continue the conversation. This was confirmation that prisoners experienced the conversation with the researchers as positive.

As well as answering the questions in the interview guide, they also brought up topics and ideas that preoccupied them. Some had very emotional reactions to some topics and some did cry. Nevertheless, they all appeared to be in control of the situation. During some interviews the interviewer asked some extra questions in order to get the respondent to open up their "story". This way he was able to, if he wanted, elaborate on the issue. Most were willing to open up and had a lot to say.

It was our experience that the interview guide was not sufficiently relevant contextually, so some of the questions appeared somewhat meaningless to the respondent and sometimes not very relevant. For example, this was true for questions about whether the education in Iraq was relevant to the workplace in Norway, or if work experience from Iraq has been useful for getting work in Norway. The interview guide would have benefited from having more open questions, which there would be a tradition for in qualitative research. Neither does the interview guide ask questions or make statements relating to the respondent's life situation in Norway. It does not allow for whether any of them have attended school in Norway, which may have influenced their views on education, preferences and needs for the future. A prevalent feature of qualitative research methods is the principle of taking care

of the respondents as well as possible (Kvale, 1997). The fact that the respondents in this study are inmates with an Iraqi background, and thus a vulnerable group, makes it even more important to reflect on ethical issues.

A particular ethical challenge relates to the use of interpreter, such as the case is in this study. People who come from areas with war or political conflict will in some cases be sceptical or suspicious towards a third person from the same country, unless that person is selected by the respondent himself. In this study we talked about this with the interpreter in advance. The interpreter's task was to translate the interview guide, the information documents and the declaration of consent to Sorani, Badini[15] and Arabic. The interpreter was experienced and had a professional background in pedagogy, so the topics of the interview guide were not unfamiliar to him. In this study the researcher also had experience with using interpreter in challenging conversations.

Prior to gathering of data the project was reported to and approved by the privacy protection ombudsman for research, the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). All interviews are transcribed in Norwegian and in the way the respondents' statements were formulated through the interpreter. We used the qualitative analytical programme NVivo9[16] to analyse the data.

The respondents

All respondents in the data collected were born in Iraq to parents also born in Iraq. The respondents are from different cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. Most of the respondents (12) are from the autonomous Kurdish region in Northern Iraq (Kurdistan Region). Kurds make up about 20 per cent of the total population in Iraq. Four (4) respondents are from other parts of Iraq and their mother tongue is Arabic. One (1) respondent belongs to another ethnic group that makes up about 3 per cent of the population. Nine (9) of the interviewees came to Norway on their own and had no family in Norway. Some of these have spent time in other European countries before they came to Norway. Four (4) arrived with their family and two of them have attended school in Norway; one completed lower secondary school while the other completed upper secondary school. Five (5) respondents have established their own families with their own children in Norway or been reunited with their wives or children from Iraq.

[15] Sorani and Badini are Kurdish dialects that are mainly spoken in Northern Iraq in the autonomous Kurdish region.

[16] NVivo9 is a computer program that automates many tasks that qualitative researchers usually do manually; such as classification, sorting, analysis and visualisation of text based data.
[17] This makes the scope of the data easier to follow and improves reliability of the analyses and the interpretation process.

The most important findings

The most important findings from the study are highlighted in the following. First we present findings from the qualitative study in which we asked the respondents to answer questions about: educational background, educational activities and work in prison, work experience, educational interests in prison and their views on the future as well as spoken and written language. Secondly, we present the results from the quantitative part of the study.

Educational background

The oldest respondents went to school in Iraq between 1970 and 1980 and have generally spent more time in education than those who were born later. The youngest members went to school after the heyday of the educational sector, and they left Iraq before the reconstruction of a new educational system started. With the exception of one respondent they were all six years old when they started school in Iraq. The school year lasted eight months and the normal school week was six days with Fridays off. Some respondents say that in addition to attending public school they received education at the Koran school (madrasa) in the mosque in the afternoons. To the question of whether school was compulsory, answers vary. Some claimed that schooling was compulsory while others said the family decided whether the children should attend school or not. In many schools it was the practice that those who did not turn up to school were punished by being forced into military service by the Ba'ath party, which kept a close eye on the school system.

The respondents attended school from between 1 and 15 years. Two have formal education beyond upper secondary level: one is a trained practical nurse; another completed the military academy in Iraq. Only one of the respondents had completed secondary education in Norway, but he had only three years of schooling behind him before he started secondary education. There is great uncertainty associated with these figures and many of the respondents seem unsure about the exact number of years they have attended school in Iraq, and many have had large gaps in their schooling. For example, one respondent had an interrupted school education, but then he spent two years at a maritime college in another country before coming to Norway. Some may have had only a few months active schooling but still declare it as one year. The figures we use depend on whether we look at the number of years the respondent has actually attended school or the highest completed level of education.

Even if seven respondents declare that they have sat a final exam, only three of them have a certificate or other documentation of completed education in Iraq. When asked if they had a certificate the respondent either replied "no", that they did not complete school or education, or that they sat exams but the certificate is missing. Most still emphasise that they want documentation of the education or training they are receiving in prison because it will help them when they are going to apply for work. For a couple of the respondents it is the certificate itself that is the main purpose of the education.

Education in a country at war

Something that emerges in several interviews, especially with the older respondents, is the negative influence the authorities had on the education system. A great deal of the education was aimed at indoctrinating the pupils and securing their loyalty: "*…we received a lot of education in Saddam's ideas*". There are stories of young people who for different reasons had their schooling and educations interrupted and were forced into military service. Others dropped out of school and studies to join resistance movements.

In addition to the more structured questions in the questionnaire, we encouraged the respondents to tell us something about their time at school in Iraq. It emerged that positive and happy memories were associated with the breaks and the time spent with friends: "*We had a lot of fun, with both friends and teachers.*" When we ask the respondents about negative experiences during their time at school, many tell us about physical abuse by the teachers; being hit and kicked. They were hit if they couldn't answer questions or when they hadn't done their homework. Some say that one of the reasons they took care with their school work and homework was to avoid being hit by the teacher:

> We had a mathematics teacher who died. He hit us more than normal. He didn't hit us on the hands, but he took our shoes off and hit us on the feet. I learned maths because he hit us. I studied maths a lot because I didn't want to be hit.

War and political conflict make up the framework around all the respondents' stories about schooling. To many it has meant fear, an insecure financial situation, moving, interrupted schooling and great difficulties with concentration. The consequences the war had for the individual vary, but none are unaffected: "*There is nobody from Iraq who doesn't have sad memories.*" Many tell us that the war was a feature of the school days and they often had to hide in basements for protection. Bombing took place at different times of day because "*the war did not keep regular hours*":

> When the planes arrived from Iran everybody had to run. There was a big hole dug under the ground and we crept into the hole and hid. At that time there were only problems and I was always afraid.

Flight seems to be a central feature of the respondents' stories. They tell us about interrupted schooling because their families have had to flee, either internally in their own country or to other countries: "*It was a war situation. We were almost always on the run, from one place to the next. The city was bombed and the teachers were afraid to come to school*". With the exception of the two respondents who received most of their education in Norway, none of them say they quit school

because it was boring or that they didn't like going to school. The reason for interrupted schooling seems to have been growing up in a country at war, and where war for different reasons made it difficult to complete one's education or maintain a normal progression of the school trajectory. Some fled from Iraq without resuming their schooling in the country where they arrived.

Educational activities and work in prison

In this part we take a closer look at the ongoing formal educational activities in which respondents participate, or expect to start while serving their sentence.

Seven respondents have taken courses during their sentence or are taking courses organised by the prison education services, such as Norwegian, English and the Computer Driving Licence. Furthermore, two respondents have started vocational training such as carpenter and chef courses. To complete a course of education to the level of certificate of apprenticeship they need an apprenticeship. For the respondent who is training to be a chef the road to apprenticeship depends on the court cases awaiting him, and the prison in which he will serve his sentence. Those who take courses or vocational education are generally positively disposed towards their training, but many point out that it would be better to have more hours per week devoted to the courses they are taking. There are too few offers for inmates and it would be beneficial if the educational offers available were more extensive.

Obstacles to participating in educational activities

The majority of the respondents in the material felt they received little or no information about the prison education service, or educational activities in prison. We know that a brochure about educational opportunities for inmates is distributed to inmates, but for different reasons such information is often completely lost. Information about educational opportunities is available in Norwegian and English. It is therefore quite likely that some foreign inmates do not understand the information they receive.

Even if the respondents want an education while in prison they say there is a long waiting time, a lack of course places, that they get started late and that complaints and requests do not get through. Many say that they already have *"ticked the box on the form"*, but have been told to wait without receiving any information about what is happening with their application in the meantime. Common to all the respondents is that they do not know why, or for how long they must wait for an answer. They have waited from a few months to a year and they do not feel they have any influence on the situation. One respondent asked the prison officers and the educational staff several times when he could expect to get a place on the course but was told they didn't know, or "*that's the way it is in prison*". Another respondent was told that inmates were not entitled to education when it had been decided to deport them.

Despite the fact that many of the respondents have been given long sentences, impermanency seems to prevail in their lives. They tell us about moving between different prisons and sections, which makes it difficult to think long-term about prison education. Several respondents claim they have had a place on a course, but lost it when they moved to another section, or were transferred to another prison: "*I was at the first section for six months. After two months I got a place, but then I was moved to an open section here and I lost my place.*" Respondents with first-hand experience of war say that they struggle with physical and mental problems that make it difficult to concentrate on learning new things: "*There are many people who come from the same area and the same situation. We have not managed to learn – we have lost the ability to concentrate on learning.*" Through our conversations with inmates during this study it is clear that some are in need of psychological counselling services. However, none of them tell us that they are getting help with processing thoughts and experiences in prison or that anyone has looked at their background as regards prior schooling and work experience.

Work in prison

With regard to the question of respondents' work in prison it emerged that nine respondents took part in facilitated work in prison, respectively cleaning, carpentry, sewing, forestry, mechanical workshop, transport and welding. The inmates work while they are waiting to get into courses, schools or educational opportunities: "*When I arrived here I was told that I had to work. You're not allowed to just sit in your cell; you have to either work or go to school.*" The respondents have different experiences with prison work. One of them found he developed skills he didn't have before, and the time in prison was an enriching experience. Another has been in several prisons and says there are different practices for how work is allocated in the different prisons: "*Here they asked me what job I wanted. There are many jobs here, but they don't want to send you to a job you don't like.*" In contrast, another experienced that he had no influence on the job allocation. If he didn't want to work the alternative was to be placed in solitary confinement, which was not perceived as positive. In one of the prisons the inmates are offered a welding course organised by a secondary school in the county. They also get a certificate that they have completed the course. The document doesn't say that the course was completed during a prison sentence, which the respondents feel is a positive. They also think that certificates, course diplomas and testimonials will be important for the inmates when they are going to apply for work after their sentence.

Work experience

The respondents were asked about their work experience from Iraq and Norway and if their education from Iraq was good enough to get work in other countries (and in Norway). Many of the respondents say that *work experience from Iraq* is largely gained in family businesses. Such businesses include shops, workshops, restaurants

or different activities in construction industries. Apart from work experience from family businesses, the respondents mention short employment periods in shops, seafaring and transport, construction work or agriculture. Answers are divided on the question of whether this experience has been sufficient for getting work outside Iraq. Those respondents with previous education or with military work experience felt that neither the education nor the experience could be used in other countries. However, those who had experience within health, seafaring or restaurants believed that their work experience could help them get work in other countries too. There were also respondents with limited or no work experience from Iraq, apart from working in smaller family businesses.

Sixteen respondents have work *experience from Norway*. Common to these is the fact that the jobs have been very temporary and short term. The work was part of the black economy with insecure and unfavourable working conditions, badly-paid and on unfavourable terms. Such workplaces include bakeries, restaurants, cleaning, catering, removal companies, warehouses, abattoirs, mechanical garages, airports, shops, transport, pizzerias and kebab takeaways. Only two respondents have experienced stable work situations over longer periods. Two respondents attempted to start up their own companies, respectively restaurant and imported food shop, without success. The jobs they have had in Norway have been obtained through family networks and fellow countrymen.

The two respondents that were in what they themselves called good work situations before their sentence believe they could resume their contact with their previous employers who might be willing to help them find new work.

Educational preferences and views on the future

In the following we present the respondents' *educational preferences in prison*. The majority of the respondents want to get an education or receive training in prison. Many say that the greater wish in terms of education is to get a master's degree, or become a doctor or a teacher, but that these dreams are difficult to fulfil. The inmates primarily want two types of courses, computer driving licence and language courses in Norwegian and English. In addition there are some who want vocational training such as chef, hairdresser or car mechanic. Vocational education and training is not possible to achieve in all prisons so the inmates are dependent on moving to a prison where it is possible.

Most respondents say that improving their Norwegian will make them more independent in Norway: "*One can make enquiries for oneself without being dependent on others*". Several of the respondents have had deportation orders imposed on them, but despite this they envisage that they will return to Norway and have to learn Norwegian. However, one of these say that English will be more useful if he is going to be deported, and that English can be used in many countries. One of the respondents, who has tried hard to get a place on a Norwegian course and finally has been told he has a place, is still waiting for an answer from the prison to see if he can accept the offer from the local authority:

> I have some problems here in the prison, but I don't know if that is the reason I can't get an answer. I applied for a Norwegian course. I phoned the Tønsberg municipal authorities and they said it was free. Then I spoke to the prison about getting the time to go to school and learn Norwegian. I have not had an answer yet.

The reason given for learning Norwegian, English and computer skills is that it will make them better able to manage in Norwegian society. If they are deported from Norway, they feel they have a better chance on the employment market in Iraq if they have digital skills and know English as well. Generally it will help them in their job search if they also have a certificate or course diploma.

Several respondents waiting for a place in school or a course have tried to learn languages on their own, either alone in their cell or by talking to other inmates. Two respondents say that they have obtained textbooks and that they are working regularly on their own: "*I have to learn Norwegian; everybody likes speaking Norwegian, so I've been learning the language. I have bought «Ny i Norge», and I've been self-studying.*" Another says he reads children's books to learn more Norwegian, and he is working with Word on the computer and uses a dictionary. When asked if he can't get access to CD-ROM where he can listen and watch pictures he says this is not available in the prison, and he would have to get it himself. The inmates are generally unsure of what is available in terms of teaching aids in prison and what they are entitled to. This appears to make it harder than it has to be to study on their own initiative.

Educational preferences and future outlooks

It is clear that topics relating to the future, such as plans are difficult for the respondents to talk about, because they consider them as unrealistic dreams: "*I want many things, but since they are only dreams I can't say them out loud*". The time in prison complicates the future planning and they think it is difficult to imagine an existence outside the walls. Uncertainty about whether they will be allowed to stay in Norway or be deported makes it problematic to think about the future:

> I believe that when you are in prison you don't think about the future. When I get out I can think about the future, but I still don't know if they are going to send me back or if I am staying here.

> What am I thinking? I have no thoughts. I can't say anything because I don't want to think about anything. I have no power over anything, right?

They would rather think about the future when they are finished their sentence: "*If I go back I will do my thinking there, I can't think about that future now.*" Some people think it can be difficult to get work after spending time in prison and feel that nobody needs them: "*I don't know what my future will bring; I don't know what will happen to me, I'm just sitting here thinking that after four years they don't need me.*" Others say that the world outside the walls has changed a lot during the time they have been inside and they think it is difficult to plan or envisage a future they are not in control over.

All respondents want work when they get out. The need to look after themselves, their girlfriends, wives and children is an important motivational factor to get work. The gap between previous work experience in Iraq and Norway and the work they want in the future is not that great.

Most want to continue with the same type of job they had previously: "*If I return I want to do the same type of work I had before – construction work*."

Five respondents have definite plans for what they will do when they are released. Of these, four have partially begun, are nearly ready or have completed their professional education as carpenters, welders, nurses and seamen. These have a strong preference for finding work corresponding to their education

The respondents who do not have education see different job possibilities, but preferably connected to previous work experience in the area of car mechanics, restaurants and other service industries. Insufficient information and a lack of knowledge about the labour market and work opportunities within different branches in Norway, makes it difficult to plan what work they would like: "*I want to be very involved with computers, but I don't know what job will be suited to that*". Some consider that it won't be difficult to get a job after serving their sentence because they "know somebody" who can help them. They feel that family and friends are important resources in the search for future work. Only one of the respondents says that he will go through a recruitment agency to look for a job. Otherwise some individual prison officers and the social welfare office are helpful in contacting employers when the inmates have served their sentence. The respondents who due to deportation decisions or for other reasons envisage their future in Iraq say that they will get work in relatives' businesses there: "*I have a father, mother and brothers who will help me*".

Spoken and written language

The respondents were asked what their *mother tongue* was or what they consider their mother tongue to be, in what situations they use their mother tongue and if they can read and write in their mother tongue. Twelve respondents' mother tongue is Kurdish. Everyone was taught in either Kurdish or Arabic – the majority were taught in the latter – at school. Four have Arabic as their mother tongue and one gives another minority language as the mother tongue

The respondents prefer to read and write in their mother tongue with the exception of two who came to Norway as minors. These prefer to use Norwegian.

Most can read and write in their mother tongue and explain that they read books and poems about their native country's history, books with religious or historic themes as well as books about love. How much they read and write in their mother tongue everyday varies a great deal: "*I borrow books from the library,*", "*I read every day*", "*I read and write poetry*", "*I write letters*", "*I read science and religious books.*", "*I read books about Kurdish history*". This can be understood both as a meaningful activity for oneself that is not part of the organized educational activities and as an interest alongside other organized activities.

Other languages

A surprising finding is that so many respondents have language skills apart from their mother tongue. Languages mentioned are Farsi, Turkmen and Greek. Other languages are English, German and Norwegian. They report that they speak these languages with partial mastery in writing. Those with Kurdish as a mother tongue seem to be able to speak more foreign languages than those with other mother tongues. In questions about where they learned languages, they say that they have crossed borders to other countries, especially neighbouring countries, where they have lived, worked or sought refuge, something which expanded their language skills.

Which languages the respondents speak at any given time depends on to whom they are speaking. They speak their mother tongue with family and friends of the same background. In prison they use the mother tongue and Norwegian, but also some English.

Skills in Norwegian vary between the respondents. Those who grew up in Norway or have been here for a long time speak and write Norwegian more or less fluently. Other respondents are completely dependent on other's help in order to understand what is being mediated to them in Norwegian and have not got a place on the Norwegian course either. Some of them have still learned a little Norwegian in prison. When asked how they learned Norwegian, they say "*From a pal*", "*Through self-study*", "*Everyone likes speaking Norwegian, so I've been learning it*", "*I bought «Ny i Norge» and I've been self-studying*".

To what extent the respondents listen, read or write in other languages apart from their mother tongue varies. An interesting observation is that five respondents say that they are interested in poetry. They read poems and several write their own poems – love poems and poems about their native country. Three respondents write love poetry in Norwegian, one of them has specialised in poetry where the melody is in the mother tongue and the text is in Norwegian.

To questions regarding the language they would like to use if they undergo training or receive education in prison, those who do not speak Norwegian so well that they wish to have their education in Kurdish or Arabic. The respondents who feel that they have a relatively good command of Norwegian want to take their education in Norwegian.

Questionnaire/study

In the following, we present the results from the quantitative part of the study, where the first thematic part of the questionnaire provides an overview of the ways in which the respondents use the *Norwegian* language and in what situations they use it. Table 1 shows the answers.

Table 1. The respondent's understanding of the Norwegian language, N=17

I understand or use Norwegian when I		No problems	Some problems	Major problems	Did not answer
1	Speak to friends	9	8	0	0
2	Speak to shop staff, bus drivers, etc	15	2	0	0
3	Speak to teachers or other people in public offices	7	10	0	0
4	Watch TV and films	9	7	1	0
5	Listening to radio	9	8	1	0
6	Read letters from public offices	4	8	4	1
7	Read texts on mobile phones	14	3	0	0
8	Read on Facebook, MSN and so on	8	6	1	2
9	Read signs, posters and so on	14	1	2	0
10	Read newspapers	7	8	2	0
11	Read books	5	8	4	0
12	Write letters or postcards	7	6	4	0
13	Write texts on mobile phones	10	5	2	0
14	Write on Facebook, MSN and so on	7	4	4	2
15	Write e-mails	6	3	6	2
16	Fill out forms for public offices	9	4	4	0
17	Write whatever is associated with school or work	7	5	5	0

Table 1 has 17 items (statements) where he first five statements in the questionnaire are about the degree of functionality when it comes to using language in everyday situations (such as talking to friends, shop staff, teachers and so on), and how they understand Norwegian when they watch TV, film or listen to the radio. The answers are divided between *no problems* and *some* problems. In other words it seems if the respondents are managing relatively well in situations they more or less find themselves in regularly even if they have not mastered the language completely. Oral situations call for higher levels of functionality than written situations seem to, something which can also be expressed through respondents' answers to statements about written functionality

Statements 6 to 11 are about the extent to which respondents manage to make use of Norwegian in written contexts. Here four answer that they have no problems reading letters from public offices while eight say that they have *some* problems (total 12 out of 17). Five respondents state however that they have no problems reading books (Norwegian), while eight say that they just have some problems (13 out of 17). It doesn't emerge here what types of books are being referred to, literature or text/school books. It is however an indication that Iraqi prisoners either read or try to read books in Norwegian.

The respondents ticked for written functioning in Norwegian on statements 12 to 17. Here there are several who report greater problems than under the previous question while many seem to manage relatively well in written activities It seems that reporting problems with written Norwegian depends on the type of writing activity. For example, eight of the respondents report that they had from *some problems to major problems* in filling out forms from public offices.

On statement 17, regarding school and schoolwork, the figures are distributed fairly evenly between *no problems, some problems and major problems* Here 10 of the respondents say they have between *some problems and major problems*. This is perhaps an indication that some form of language support is necessary in education and training.

Generally speaking, the respondents find it easier to read and understand than to write. There is also a difference is using and understanding Norwegian when it comes to leisure activities, shorter texts such as mobile phone text messages (SMS), Facebook and so on, compared to reading and understanding the contents of a letter from public bodies, newspapers and books. It is most difficult to read letters from public bodies, while it seems easier to read and write texts to and from people who have a closer relationship with and where everyday situations are the subject.

The questionnaire's second part presents the respondents *digital skills* (ICT). The tendency in the Norwegian material is that respondents as a group evenly have a relatively high level of ICT competence. More complex ICT skills such as sending pictures and documents, using graphics, drawing programmes or spreadsheets, are more problematic and several say that they would not be able to do that. These are however skills that may Norwegian users do not have either and do not have to be a specific lack in this group. We will take the issue of ICT up again in the discussion part.

The third part of the questionnaire concerns statements describing the respondents' *background and requirements* for learning new things. Many of the respondents seem to agree that the educational system is different in Norway than in Iraq; a full 16 of 17 respondents answer that this is correct from a medium to large extent. This possibly explains why 15 respondents from a medium to very large extent say that they need more education to be able to manage in Norway. Many jobs require documented skill in the field of work, which most of them don't have.

A little under half (11) of the respondents report that they will have a requirement for support teaching in school subjects to a very large extent if they are going to succeed in education and training. Six respondents say that school subjects

have never been very difficult and nearly everybody seems to have had a good relationship with their school friends in Iraq.

With regard to work, work experience and education for work, seven say that they had from some to major problems finding work in Iraq, while the rest say that they didn't have such problems. Seven respondents maintain that they had many random jobs in Iraq, while 10 say they hadn't. To questions about whether they think education is necessary to carry out the work they did previously, seven say that it is correct to a medium extent, while nine consider that it was necessary.

The interesting fact here is that a large group of respondents feel that they have a requirement for more education in order to master daily life and the workplace in Norway. While most did not have problems getting work in Iraq, in Norway they encountered a completely different labour market with increased competition, a requirement for education and/or a requirement for documented experience and competence.

The last part of the questionnaire consists of statements describing the respondents' *current situation* and how they see the *future*. Respondents give a relatively positive self-presentation both in relation to work experience and general command of everyday life. Fifteen of the respondents answer that they are familiar with the workplace in the country they are now in ranging from *medium* to a *very large extent* and nine of the respondents think that the experience they have from school and working matches what is now required. They are to a large extent (12 out of 17) optimistic concerning work after release. Furthermore there is a large majority who think that they will adapt quickly to the workplace outside prison (14 of 17). Eleven respondents maintain that they have the experience required to gain the work they want, while 13 say that they to a medium to very large degree have knowledge of the demands of the workplace. It is uncertain what parts of the labour market they claim to have knowledge of and whether they are referring to the labour market they themselves have experience of (Iraq and Norway), or if they have knowledge of all of the Norwegian official labour market. If we compare it with answers given in the qualitative interviews, it is likely that the respondents only know about aspects of the workplace in Norway.

Discussion

In the Norwegian report the discussion was organised around the seven sub-questions in the study. Out of space considerations these questions will not be included explicitly in this discussion, but form part of the discussion itself.

Iraq as a state has been characterised by war and political unrest for several decades, which has had destructive effects on the educational system. According to Hanemann (2005, p. 6) war and political conflict have had destructive effects on education and literacy, both in terms of the suffering endured and psychological effects on pupils and teachers. An important finding in this study, although hardly a surprising one, is that war and political unrest appear to have been significant causes for respondents to leaving education at various stages. As a result only half

of the respondents have as much as *one* final exam and only *three* respondents have a certificate of education.

One consequence of war-related traumatic situations is that many have problems with concentrating on learning activities. It is a fair assumption that as pupils they have had a difficult basis for learning and education.

One circumstance that was highlighted during the interviews is foreign language. The majority of the respondents say that they speak one or more foreign languages. However, it is not clear whether they can read or write these languages or if they only communicate verbally.

With regard to language preferences, the majority prefer to read and write their mother tongue, except for those who have lived in Norway for a long time. With regard to preferred language for education those who say they master Norwegian fluently or relatively well say they prefer Norwegian as language of teaching, while those who do not understand or speak Norwegian say they prefer Arabic or Kurdish as language of teaching. A large proportion of the respondents say that they read a lot, in Kurdish or Arabic. They read mostly books; many refer to their favourites in poetry, history and religion.

In general the respondents' ability to function in Norwegian is poor. It appears that they understand, read and write more Norwegian in relation to close personal relations and social contexts. It is worrying how many have problems with reading and understanding letters from public offices. If they are going to stay in Norway it is crucial that they are able to understand what public offices try to communicate to them. One may assume that at least some of the respondents have such poor literacy skills, perhaps also in their mother tongue, that they can be categorised as functionally illiterate. That means that they can read and write enough to manage everyday life, but do not have the literacy skills to take control of their life situation. UNESCO (2003) has concluded that six to eight years of schooling is a minimum in order to function in modern society. Many respondents do not have this many years. If this group of inmates develop knowledge and skills in Norwegian – both spoken and written will increase the chances of employment for those who are going to stay in Norway.

Almost without exception the respondents can see advantages of learning Norwegian. Some of them have borrowed teaching material for Norwegian language courses (*Ny i Norge*) or children's books. Some respondents have already completed Norwegian courses, while many say they have registered for this service without being offered a place. Due to their low level of functionality in Norwegian many inmates will require Norwegian training in order to benefit from the education and training services but also to be able to communicate with other inmates and prison personnel. Their Norwegian language skills should be ascertained immediately on arrival and inmates should be given an offer of Norwegian courses adapted to their levels and abilities, perhaps even literacy courses. The respondents expressed many wishes, or rather dreams about education, both in Iraq and Norway. One significant motivational factor for the desire for education, training or work is the possibility of being able to take care of family and children in the future. Their preferences for

training or education appear to be highly correlated to their past work experience. Some of the respondents have started or would like a vocational education, such as mechanic, chef, hairdresser, etc. A minority group who are "sure" they will be deported want courses in English and vocational training because it will benefit them when they return to Iraq.

Many of the respondents think they will need support during their education and training. This is especially the case with respect to the general school disciplines. Looking at the general level of education among the group of respondents it is likely that many of them will have need for extensive help if they are going to have a real chance of taking and completing education and training during their sentence or find work after they have served their sentence. The National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) (2009) has developed an action leaflet for training of inmates with minority languages within the criminal administration system. The measures appear to meet some of the needs expressed by the respondents in this study. For example, NAFO emphasises the importance of a thorough study of the language skills and total qualifications among the inmates, which is crucial being able to adapt the teaching and training for this group of students.

With regard to access to the job market after serving their sentence many respondents say that they have previously applied for work through formal channels and participated in several job seeker courses without success in obtaining work. Most of the respondents say that most of their work experience was gained outside the official job market, which suggests that they have had problems qualifying for formally advertised positions. A recent report by Bjørnstad, Gjelsvik, Godøy, Holm and Stølen (2010) shows that persons with little education are most at risk of losing their jobs when the economic situation becomes more difficult. Given the general trends in the Norwegian labour market there are few indications that the prospects of getting work for this group are great unless they receive support with the job seeking process before their release. One measure that can make it easier for this group of job seekers is that the schools and qualified teachers working in the criminal administration system survey what total qualifications the inmates have and that they later get this certified in writing. Certification of completed education and training is also something the respondents wish for.

In order to take an active part in Norwegian Society most people need basic digital competence, and the prisons must prepare a strategy for how ICT can be developed and implemented in education and training in prison. This is also a challenge for democracy. The Report to the Storting no. 37 (2007-2008) states:

> The Ministry aims to establish internet for inmates in all prisons. Internet will enable better availability of learning opportunities and increase the possibilities of taking higher education at technical college and university level. As well as being important for teaching and learning, internet is a social benefit that breaks down the barriers between inmates and the wider society. Ethnic minority prisoners can have the opportunity to read

> the newspapers in their own country in their own language. Access to internet is a necessary service if the principle of normality is to be followed. (p. 112)

Previous surveys of inmates, in Norway and in the Nordic countries (Eikeland *et al.,* 2008) show that there is deficient access to ICT equipment in prisons. This creates problems and obstructs education and educational progression. Most respondents in this study express the same thing. They are frustrated because they don't have, or only have limited access to the internet and ICT based tools in prison. Many also want CD-ROM with educational content so they can teach themselves. But because this appears to be difficult in prison they borrow educational material, which to some extent appears to be obsolete.

The data material shows that the respondents as a group have a relatively high level of IT skills. Most are able to use ICT as communication tools and master basic skills. However, they have bigger problems when it comes to more complicated ICT operations. Even if the inmates in this study perceive their own ICT skills as relatively good, a comparison of all inmates in Norwegian prisons with pupils in tenth year of elementary school that the pupils at school scored significantly higher than the inmates at all skills they were tested on (Manger, Eikeland & Asbjørnsen, 2011).

As an additional element of the discussion we will highlight some of the structural barriers that the respondents consider significant obstacles to starting and completing education in prison. Discontinued education or training as a result of being moved to other sections or prisons is one example that the respondents point to.

Another barrier that is pointed to is that information leaflets about education and training opportunities in prison are only available in English and Norwegian. There are many ethnic minority prisoners who do not master these languages or who could not read such information even if it was available in their mother tongue. If the prison wants to reach the ethnic minority prisoners with information it must be translated to the different languages of the inmates. They must also be offered interpreter services or help to read the contents.

As we understand from the respondents it is difficult to gain access to interpreter services in prison. Instead, other inmates with the same language are used as interpreters. This is ethically difficult and unprofessional. It also creates the risk of an inmate acting as interpreter for another gaining access to information that creates an imbalance of power between the parties. This can create unnecessary conflict between inmates.

Another very unfortunate issue is the long waiting time to get a place on a Norwegian language course and other educational and training services in prison. The waiting period according to some informants lasted for almost a year. This is in agreement with findings by Ravneberg (2003) who says there is no uniform practice for how the prisons inform the inmates about the prison's educational and training opportunities, but that this varies between different prisons. It also emerged that

there could be a long period from the inmates starting their sentence and starting education, work or future planning. The Iraqi inmates in this study also experienced difficulties with making enquiries and were sometimes met with irrelevant and negative responses. Those with deportation decisions against them also feel that this is used against them with regard to education. When the respondents do not get sufficient information about educational opportunities and rights in prison because the information is given in a language they don't understand, they have in reality very little knowledge of their own situation. It becomes almost impossible to plan a course of education or training. It is also an infringement of their basic and legal rights to education and training.

According to Skarðhamar (2006), individual resources such as education and participation in the job market are important for facilitating individual development. Skarðhamar claims that there is little doubt that some immigrant groups generally are more exposed to certain factors associated with crime. At the same time the tendency in his material shows that if education and training are facilitated many of these will do well in Norway. One important premise is that the time *during* their sentence is used to prepare the inmate for the time *after* their prison sentence. In this context that means giving the inmate a place on a Norwegian language course and that their educational or training preferences are realised as far as possible. With the necessary support most can manage to qualify according to their own abilities.

If there is to be any hope of this group of ethnic minority prisoners from Iraq getting the education they are entitled to under Norwegian law and international conventions the prison and schools have to acknowledge and relate to the multicultural reality they are part of and adapt the educational services accordingly. The prison is a closed institution, but it is also part of the society to which the inmates are returning.

Practical implications and recommendations

The findings in this study have implications for criminal administration and training within the criminal administration system in Norway. Below we present some areas we consider important to examine more closely in order to develop a practice for education and training that includes this group.

The respondents are starting from a basis where they have little knowledge of their own rights regarding education in prison and other entitlements. The right to education applies regardless of whether a decision has been made to deport the inmate or not (e.g. The European Convention of Human Rights). Information given to this group must be improved. This can be ensured by providing written information in the inmate's own mother tongue or main language. The inmate must be given information about the right to education and training in prison generally, and if education and training is offered in the relevant prison in particular. If the inmate's literacy skills are so poor that they cannot learn about their rights and educational opportunities from written information they have to be offered the services of an interpreter, either individually or collectively. Measures should be implemented to

improve access to and capacity for Norwegian language teaching for ethnic minority prisoners (cf. Equal education in practice! 2007-2009; Report to the Storting no. 27, 2004-2005).

Without basic skills in Norwegian ethnic minority prisoners cannot communicate with staff and fellow inmates. Prisoners with the same linguistic background should generally not be used as interpreters for other inmates. Structural barriers in prisons should be removed. For example, the waiting period for getting started with educational activities must be reduced. When inmates are in an educational programme the prison authorities should avoid transferring them between prisons. If this is unavoidable, provision should be made for the prisoner to resume his education in the prison to which he is moved.

In order to get the best possible knowledge of the prisoner's background with regard to education and work plans for the future, a preliminary conversation should be held to thoroughly establish educational background, desires and needs and which allows the inmate to give more detail about his background. The more knowledge the school has about the inmate's background and work experience, the better the schooling and educational service can be adapted. For many this will require an interpreter.

The national curriculum for the new school reform (Kunnskapsløftet) (LK06) describes five basic skills: to express oneself in spoken language, *to express oneself in writing, to be able to read, to be able to do arithmetic and to be able to use digital tools.* Skills in making use of digital tools are an integral part of the competency measure in all disciplines. Internet skills are included in this basic competency. Thus internet has become an important work tool for all pupils in primary school and secondary school. This study shows that the respondents are able to carry out simple basic ICT tasks. This is also true for the prison population as a whole (Report to the Storting no. 16, 2006-2007, p. 92). Inmates with Iraqi background need better educational provision to develop more than basic ICT skills. Today digital skills are crucial to staying informed about societal developments, but also for managing everyday life. The European Council's recommendation *Education in prison* (European Council, 1990) §1 states that all prisoners must have access to training. ICT should be used as a teaching tool in the prison education service, but it must be controlled so that the use is not in conflict with current requirements for security and control, including the inmates' requirement for access to the internet in different contexts. Inmates' needs for ICT skills and training in the use of internet should be part of the survey procedures on arrival in prison and later (UDIR, 2009, p. 3). In Report to the Storting no. 27 (2004-2005) it is emphasised that ICT skills are necessary for developing adequate competence for the students. Inmates also have a great need for digital competence. Prisoners may engage in remote studies with the aid of a computer, for example. The requirement for controlling the inmates' communication must be resolved in practice through collaboration between the relevant authorities of justice and education (p. 25).

The respondents have varied work experience and a lot of work experience, but it is often not very relevant in a Norwegian context. The school should survey

the inmate's total qualifications and offer relevant training in relation to previous experience and future job prospects. This will increase their employment prospects after they have served their prison sentence. The inmate should also be offered the services of an interpreter for the survey conversation. The criminal administration system can offer the inmates help with drawing up a plan for the future. The health and social services can assist them in making an individual plan, the school can help them with an education and training plan and NAV (The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) can assist with an action plan. The prisons should facilitate local coordination and harmonisation of these plans (UDIR, 2009, p. 4).

Many respondents would like to receive a written statement describing the skills and competencies obtained from completed courses, training and exams. It is recommended that the inmate is followed up after serving their sentence with respect to work. The respondents in this study do not appear to have major demands. Their wishes for the future are predominantly realistic, but they need support and practical help with getting started on education or work after their prison sentence. A practical Norwegian language course should be facilitated in combination with work and other activities for inmates with particular literacy problems. UNESCO (1995) establishes that being able to read or write (literacy) is a human right that is important to the individual's personal and social development, which is a prerequisite for education.

Reflections on the meeting with Iraqi inmates

Our experience was that the meetings with the 17 inmates from Iraq were interesting and that the participants were enthusiastic and willing partners in the conversations. The reasons for the individual respondents' prison sentences were unknown to us. This made it easier to emphasise other circumstances and the actual person involved. In our conversations many appeared to be resourceful people with knowledge, skills and an interest in learning. They come from areas with war and political unrest, but regardless of how each individual was affected by these circumstances they all chose to leave Iraq. They fled or moved under difficult circumstances, sometimes at the risk of losing their lives. Many of them have probably been to other countries and have perhaps spent time there before coming to Norway.

Despite the fact that respondents speak positively about Norwegians in general, some of them seem to live in a "parallel world", in which they rarely meet or interact with people other than their fellow countrymen. Their time at school in Iraq was characterised by interruption, moving and dropping out, but their time at school in Norway cannot have been free of problems. Faced with politicians ambitions for more inclusive practices the schools come up against great challenges such as differences in learning outcomes in different socio-economic groups, increasing drop-out rates in secondary schools and the low number of minority students that apply to enter into higher education. These obstruct the development of the inclusive, multicultural and democratic society that Norwegian politicians strive for (Westrheim, 2009). Even if the respondents that have gone to school in Norway did not necessarily drop out

of the school system, we can assume from this research that they never were fully included (Lillejord, 2008). An interrupted educational background characterised by instability, inadequate education, limited work opportunities and other reasons have perhaps contributed to the inmates in this study looking for other ways out of a difficult life situation.

"There is an alternative school in prison", says one of the respondents, where the "big boys" teach you how to be a better criminal. This is the negative side, but other more constructive things can be learned in prison. He speaks English well, which he learnt from fellow inmates with English-speaking backgrounds.

We noticed that several of the inmates attached special importance to meals. They buy food and prepare meals that they eat together. Often Norwegian inmates and others are invited to the meal as well. Some accept, but usually the meal is eaten with one's own countrymen or other ethnic minority prisoners. They say it is rare that Norwegian inmates invite them to share their meal.

The respondents say that they have either had work in activities that are outside the official job market, or in activities run by family and friends. It is difficult to get into the official Norwegian job market. When they say this, it strikes us how preoccupied the respondents are with being able to work, learn more and be active. Hasund and Hydle (2010) use the term liminal capital to define a type of social capital held by the inmates. Liminal capital is social capital in concrete form as the resources and network that liminal, vulnerable and marginalised young adult men create. Liminality is considered an undefined zone between society's transition lines (p. 177), in Turner's (1967) terminology, "betwixt and between" (cited in Hasund & Hydle, 2010). Liminal capital can be understood as the idea that marginalised persons or persons who move on the boundaries, the liminals, can have their own form of social capital. This is not necessarily a capital desired by the rest of society, but shows that social capital can take many forms.

Without getting lost in hypothetical images of the inmates' motivations for the actions that have been taken or guessing how the inmates functioned before entering prison, we know from society otherwise that many minority groups are in such liminal spaces. According to Hasund and Hydle (2010) they experience exclusion from ordinary, organised society, primarily because of communication problems, language, understanding, knowledge, skills and movement. This is true for Norwegian inmates that have particular problems with reading and writing, but also ethnic minority prisoners who can have the same communication difficulties. The relationship between minority and majority in a multicultural society takes on a very special meaning in the context of the prison – and when we consider it as intuition, system and process (p. 177). Liminal stages are, according to Seymor-Smith (1986, cited in Hasund & Hydle, 2010), a result of a separation from society and can be considered a consequence of society not being inclusive.

As Hasund and Hydle (2010) claim, it is important to acknowledge that marginalised persons on the periphery of established society can hold social capital despite circumstances such as drug abuse and criminal careers (p. 178). Prison is

sometimes seen as a peripheral place on the edge of civilised society (p. 185). It is screened off by walls that, according to Goffman (1967)[18], create a barrier between the inmate and the world outside.

But perhaps it is just in such peripheral places that new opportunities emerge, and changes can take place. Training in the criminal administration system *does* have possibilities, just because it encounters the student on the margins, but also because of the opportunities education and training provide in themselves.

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CHAPTER 7

Serbian prisoners in Sweden

by Anna-Lena Eriksson Gustavsson

This project is based on the survey of prisoners' educational background and study needs carried out during the autumn of 2006 at Linköping University. The survey was commissioned by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (Kriminalvården) and presented in November 2007 in the report *Kartläggning av intagnas utbildningsbakgrund – studiebehov (Survey of prisoners' educational background – study needs. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Report 24 (Kriminalvården, Rapport 24).* The survey was part of a Nordic cooperation project in which similar studies were conducted in all the Nordic countries. The various national reports have also been processed and are featured in the anthology, *Innsatte i nordiske fengsler Udanning, utdanningsønske og -motivasjon (Prisoners in Nordic Prisons, Education and training, educational preferences and motivation)* (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008), TemaNord 2008:592. The anthology was also presented in an English edition in 2009 (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2009).

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to use a Nordic jointly developed study instrument to identify the educational background, motivation and educational needs of the group of prisoners in Swedish correctional facilities, who do not have Swedish as their native language. The result of this study will serve as a basis for the development of the organisation, planning and implementation of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's educational interventions of various kinds for this focused group of prisoners.

Method

The study instrument produced in autumn 2009 and spring 2010 was a manual and a basis for interview based on a qualitative and quantitative research approach. The qualitative research approach was inspired by what is termed as "theory generation on empirical grounds", a method for detection research (Ely, 1991; Starrin, Larsson, Dahlgren & Styrborn, 1991) while the quantitative research approach examined different types of measurable knowledge, hard data (Holme & Solvang, 2001). This meant that in the interview, information was sought using both open and more structured questions. The interview thus contained sections, which could be described more as a conversation in which the interviewer asked the respondent to report and describe. The interviewer listened actively to the respondent's story, posed follow-up questions and asked for clarification and explanations when this was necessary. Other sections involved answers to questions with fixed responses or statements, which the informant would evaluate on a scale.

The decision to seek out knowledge with the support of different approaches was based on a desire in the meeting between the respondent and the interviewer to obtain as comprehensive a wealth of information as possible despite cultural differences and perhaps language barriers. Open questions and a conversation-like nature of the interviews thus gave the respondents opportunities to recount on the basis of their ethnic background and understanding. Too great a dominance of structured questions and set responses, governed by a Swedish context and Swedish circumstances, had in all probability been difficult to understand and therefore difficult to answer.

The interview manual, which was available in Norwegian and Danish, was translated into eight different languages on the basis of the language groups that dominated among prisoners in the five Nordic countries at the time of planning the study. Each of the Nordic countries was responsible for interviews with prisoners from a single language group.

Implementation

As described above, it is prisoners with Serbian as their native language who participated in the Swedish study. A total of 10 prisoners at three different institutions participated in the study and the sample has been prepared using data from different institutions in terms of prisoners of ethnic origin other than Swedish. In this case, the selection has thus been made with particular emphasis on prisoners of Serbian origin and the prisoners were in an open prison and in two high security prisons.

Before the interviews, information about the Serbian school system had been gathered focusing on educational structure, educational organisation and access to education.

This material together with a brief guide on the interview as a research method constituted the preparations for the interview process. In addition to information about the school system and method preparations, the interview manual was also reviewed. An introductory and preparatory meeting was conducted under the guidance of project manager and researcher with the above data as a starting point. Participants at this meeting were a teacher from one of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's learning centres, an interpreter and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's client education and training manager.

Following the described meeting, the project manager conducted two interviews at one institution and a teacher and interpreter participated at both these interviews. In direct connection with the two initial interviews, project manager, teacher and interpreter discussed their perceptions and experiences of the work. Subsequently, the teacher, together with the interpreter, conducted 8 interviews at 2 different institutions on 2 occasions. The interviews lasted between 40 and 90 minutes and all interviews were conducted in specially designated rooms in the prisons. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed verbatim. Speech has however, been rewritten into written language and any pauses or emphases

have not been specifically indicated in the transcripts. Therefore, the interview documentation consists of the interviewer's notes in the interview manual as well as audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews. The transcriptions comprise a total of 128 pages of text.

Through careful preparation, an introductory meeting, the teacher's and interpreter's participation in the two introductory interviews that were conducted by the project manager as well as monitoring of these, created the conditions for as uniform implementation of the interviews as possible in the total of 10 interviews. The last parts of the quantitatively orientated part of the interview, focusing on the prisoner's background and current situation, were not used in the present study[19].

Ethical considerations in research

Both the implementation of data collection and analysis and interpretation of data have complied with the ethical principles of humanistic and social science research, covering information requirements, compliance requirements, confidentiality requirements and usage requirements (HSFR, 2007).

The substantive focus – educational background, training motivation and training needs – which was the subject of studies in this project, places great demands on the researcher's ability to read and perceive events and processes. Education and training are seen as essential for both the individual's well-being as well as opportunities to compete in the job market. In Swedish society, education is "socially desirable" and lifelong learning a reality. It was therefore of great importance that the respondents did not feel uncomfortable about participating or obliged to participate, but did so voluntarily and were guaranteed anonymity. The respondents received information about the research project through the interviewer, both verbally and in writing and acknowledged in writing their willingness to participate in the study. They had the opportunity to cease participation without this leading to any consequences for them. Only researchers involved in the project have had access to collected data material, and in all accounts, whether verbal or written, it is not possible to identify either the environments or individuals participating in the study.

Interpretation and analysis of empirical data collected

A qualitative interview is characterised according to Kvale (1997), in that the researcher in a conversation tries to understand the world from another person's perspective. The aim is to achieve a deeper understanding of phenomena as well as experiences. The connection, the context of the interview, is created jointly by the interviewer and the interviewee and questions and answers are affected in their formulation and understanding during the conversation (Mishler, 1986).

[19] The last parts of the quantitatively orientated part of the interview, focusing on the prisoner's background and current situation, were not used in the present study.

The main purpose of qualitative interviews is not to compare entities without gaining access to individual respondents and their different ways of looking at a situation or event, it is "the ability to reach deep into the individual interview, which is the interview's strength in qualitative studies" (Ryen, 2004, p. 77). The qualitative research seeks to find structures and patterns, which as clearly as possible demonstrates and highlights the phenomenon or the context which is researched. The researcher's visualisation of perspectives and choices throughout the entire process is critical to an accessible and understandable interpretation of the research results (Larsson, 2005). In this study, interview data has been analysed and interpreted using a qualitative content analysis and the work has been inspired by Huberman and Miles' (1994) structure and steps for making sense of a large body of data material.

By initially repeatedly reading the transcriptions, on the basis of the interview guide's preparatory notes, statements reflecting the respondents' remarks regarding educational background, motivation and educational needs were looked for. This initial analysis resulted in a number of *themes* based on statements that were consistent in various respects, and also statements, which showed disparities and contrasts. This analysis phase can be compared with what Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994) term as primary interpretations. There were repeated reflections over whether the themes were possible and probable in light of the substantive focus of the interviews and the context reflected by the content.

The next stage of the analytical work involved grouping, creating designations/ metaphors, contrasting, comparing and dividing *the themes* in order to understand *relationships* between these and the contexts in which they existed. Ryen (2004) writes that an analysis of this type "…becomes interactive through the data and the researcher's written text influencing each other. The important aspect of demonstrating data is that it helps the researcher to *see patterns*" (Ryen, 2004, p. 120). Howitt and Cramer (2008) similarly express this analytical work as identification of a number of themes, which reveal patterns in the empirical material. In summary, analytical and interpretation work are characterised as an inductive approach and the discoveries which are then made, lead to understanding of processes and phenomena.

The quantitatively orientated sections of the interview are reported descriptively on the basis of the written interview document used by the interviewer. The responses from the 10 respondents have been compiled in this interview document (Table 1 and 2).

Presentation of results

The presentation of results begins with a brief description of the respondent group and of the basic education and the educational level described by the respondents during the conversations. This is followed by the presentation of the themes and patterns that emerged through interpretation and analysis of the qualitatively orientated interview material. At the end of the performance report comments are presented on the quantitatively orientated parts of the conversations with the respondents.

The respondent group

The group of respondents that participated in this study were all middle-aged men from approx. 40 years of age and up to 60 and the total period of time in Sweden varied from approx. 10 years to over 30 years. The respondents were born in the former Yugoslavia and gave Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo as their countries of birth. The native languages cited were Serbian, Serbo-Croatian and Romany. As previously stated, the so-called BCS languages, Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian are similar and can be characterised as dialects rather than as different languages.

Good basic education

The former Yugoslavia and present Serbian school system includes both mandatory and voluntary types of schooling and higher education. Children start school at 6-7 years of age and compulsory primary and lower secondary education is 8 years. It is then followed by 4 years of study at upper secondary level and these studies can be both theoretically orientated and vocational. In order to start studying at upper secondary school, students must have completed compulsory schooling and also passed a final examination (www.mpn.gov.rs; Verbal source Linköping Municipality).

All respondents with the exception of one had completed 12 years of primary and lower secondary as well as upper secondary school studies. Seven respondents had degrees and diplomas from practically orientated upper secondary school studies and 2 from theoretically orientated studies. The respondent who deviated from the group had completed compulsory schooling and started vocational upper secondary school studies but abandoned them after two years.

After completion of upper secondary school studies, five respondents had continued their studies at college and university and the two who had been in education the longest had studied for a total of 16 years. The higher studies had partly been theoretical university studies and partly studies at colleges with a focus on vocational academic education.

In conclusion, it can be established that the group of respondents, which participated here, had good basic education and in addition for the most part, completed education and training, which offered opportunities for employment.

Multilingualism

A feature of the group was that its members used and expressed themselves in several different languages. On the one hand they had their native language, which they more or less used on a daily basis depending on the surroundings and the situations they encountered, but also on the people in their vicinity. On the other hand, they had lived in different countries for periods of time or mixed with people who spoke other languages and learned to communicate on a daily basis in these. The respondents had also studied different languages during their compulsory and optional studies in their home countries and during their stay in Sweden studies in the Swedish language had also taken place. It was therefore not uncommon that the respondents indicated that they spoke three or more languages, more or less fluently. The languages, apart from their native language and Swedish were Polish, Italian, English, German, Spanish, French, Greek and Russian. When it came to written communication in the languages mentioned, ability was significantly more limited than the verbal.

In conclusion the group appears to be *multilingual* but the language skills largely involve a *verbal ability* to communicate in the different languages. Furthermore, it has been expressed that language skills are often developed in communities outside the so-called formal education context, such as e.g. courses or traditional school tuition.

Autodidactic Swedish skills

In Sweden, adults who do not have Swedish as their native language, are offered basic education in the Swedish language and on Swedish society. SFI, Swedish for Immigrants, is a separate form of schooling and the tuition must be based on the fundamental values expressed in the curriculum for the voluntary school system, Lpf 94. According to the curriculum, the course must both "represent and impart" [...] "the inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men and solidarity with the weak and vulnerable" (Lpf 94, section 1.1, Fundamental values). Within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's programmes, prisoners are offered the opportunity to participate in SFI tuition during the period of enforcement.

Despite, in most cases, relatively long periods of residence in Sweden, half of the respondents had not participated in formal instruction in Swedish for immigrants, SFI, either during time in prison or at any other time in the country. They had instead developed their skills in the Swedish language through work and daily conversations when it was necessary to use the Swedish language. They stated that

Swedish television programmes, newspapers and written information contributed to the development of their language skills in Swedish, but some expressed that their competence in Swedish was not the same as that used by ordinary citizens, but a form of "street language". Once again it was the ability to speak the language that was in focus and assessed as adequate, but when it involved writing Swedish and facing more formal written language situations and demands, the ability was sometimes perceived as inadequate (See also Table 1).

Two respondents had attended an SFI course at the institution and 3 had studied the Swedish language through municipally organised SFI courses, but abandoned these studies. One respondent had studied Swedish according to traditional Swedish upper secondary education, A, B and C courses in Swedish. However, half the respondent group wanted to have more and continued instruction in the Swedish language. The reason for this was e.g. that it provided opportunities for development in order to be able to speak with their own children, who were only Swedish speaking, and generally to be able to communicate in the national language and understand the society in which they lived. Why, despite requests for this, they were unable to study Swedish was explained e.g. that after they had served their sentence, they would be deported and that they were in a queue and received no place on the SFI courses organised during the period of enforcement.

In conclusion it appears that the respondent group's *ability to communicate verbally* in Swedish is *generally adequate*, although with certain variations, whereas the ability to *write* the host country's language was more *limited.* It should be added that the spoken Swedish was used on a daily basis to communicate with the staff and other prisoners while the written language abilities and requirements were often associated with more formal situations, such as information and letters to and from government agencies as well as various types of applications and requests. On the latter occasions, greater demands are often placed on language skills than in day to day situations. *Competence in the Swedish* language has largely been dedicated *outside* Swedish society's *formally organised instruction in Swedish.*

Education during the prison stay

In addition to the studies in the Swedish language reported above, as well as SFI courses and studies in Swedish in accordance with traditional Swedish upper secondary education, the respondents stated that during their stay in prison, they had engaged in *computer studies* (2 respondents) and studied *English* (4), *German* (1), *social studies* (1) *and psychology* (1). One respondent had taken a course in *building and construction.*

A common feature of the courses reported was that they were *shorter courses* at a *basic level*, compulsory primary and lower and upper secondary level, and participation in the courses was governed by what was on offer to the respondents. In some cases, individual education and training requirements coincided with what was on offer.

Three respondents had not participated in any education or training during the period of enforcement. One of them was not motivated to study, one wanted to study but was not given the opportunity due to a deportation order after serving his sentence. One respondent stated that information about various opportunities for study had not been clear and understandable and that it had therefore been difficult to choose a study programme.

Self-employed – temporary placements

During conversations with the respondents, questions were asked about work experience, both in the home country and during the stay in Sweden. The experiences were very diverse in character and also extremely varied in terms of the time devoted to the various types of occupation.

Occupations had mainly been in the service sector (e.g. retail, restaurant and cleaning), traffic and transport (e.g. driver) and the industrial and craft sector (e.g. lathe operators, welders and construction workers). Experience of working in healthcare, as well as interpreting and translation services were also mentioned. The group's difficulties in being able to access employment were evident. Questions about previous experience and training could mean that previous criminal background and sentences served were disclosed and this often had an adverse effect on employment opportunities.

Respondents reporting the longest periods of working within the same industry, up to approx. 10 years, had been self-employed. In the case of shorter periods of work, 1-2 years, these were temporary periods of employment, interrupted periods of employment and also work placements. Many short-term periods of employment often meant that the person concerned had tried various occupations and it was seldom that the educational background governed the jobs that were reported. In the respondent group, there were also individuals who stated that they had no work experience, either in their home country or in Sweden.

In conclusion, there were significant differences in the reported experiences of the employment market for the participating respondents. *Short periods of employment* were more common than longer consistent periods of employment. It was also more common that respondents had *worked within various types of company* than that they had been working within the same sector, be they short or longer periods of employment. Vocational training did not always govern the work experience, which was reported.

Conversations about education and training

The following part of the performance report is based on the qualitatively orientated part of the interviews with the ten respondents. The analysis and interpretation work of the collected empirical data was based on the key aspects of the study (a) *prisoners' educational motivation*, (b) *educational needs* and (c) *educational wishes* during the period of enforcement within the Swedish Criminal and Probation Service

and the work has resulted in the patterns and themes presented under the headings, *To understand and be understood, The basis of all communication – language,* and *Opportunities for and barriers to study.* In order to highlight and reinforce the interpretations made, direct citations are used in the text, which are taken from the transcriptions of the recorded interviews. The citations have not been marked with regard to which of the respondents has contributed with the information. This is based on the fact that it must not be possible to identify either the respondents or the environments in which they are held. In the quotations, certain designations and names have been replaced with a x so that no one will be able to recognise statements linked to a specific individual or environment.

To understand and be understood

The desire, in different ways, to "move on" in life after serving the sentence, was a very clear and key result of this present study. The driving force and motivation to be able to "proceed" involved participation in education and training, which contributed to *personal development, rehabilitation* in order to be able to function in society and possibilities of *supporting oneself.* Education was therefore highly valued and highlighted as the key to the future.

> I want to graduate and get a certificate and so… And like what they have to offer, I will do. Each degree, diploma, is a good thing to have in life.

> Yes, I applied immediately I arrived and I want to study as much as I can.

To gain access to education, knowledge about and *understanding* of how Swedish society in general organises *education* and how the education and training system works within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. It was not simply a case of monitoring systems and cultural traditions to find educational opportunities and educational provision.

> I have to see what it's all about so that you…not that… you think quite differently to how those of us here think perhaps…

> I don't know what programmes are available here. I don't know what programmes there are but the only thing I know is that study is the best thing.

> I don't know what they… what you have to offer.

Requests for clear information on both supply of and access to education were sought and at the same time the information was a challenge depending on the language in which it was given. If the staff only spoke Swedish, it could mean that a large proportion of the prison population with another native language did not receive valuable information about education and training opportunities.

> If you were going to say that it's therefore a good question… the right question, how many understood… perhaps 50%.

Prisoners with the same native language, but also prisoners with knowledge of other languages could serve as a resource where both questions need to be asked and explanations provided if the information was crucial to understanding and managing inquiries and requests for education and training within the institutions.

An important basis for *understanding* was the ability to be able to *communicate* and instruction in the Swedish language was perceived to affect the possibilities of absorbing formal information provided, but it could also help the prisoner in a more informal way to have an understanding of his environment. It was a matter of both understanding and being understood. Through everyday conversations with staff at the institution, cultural customs and traditions emerged and this contributed to the surfacing of the Swedish contexts both inside and outside the institutions.

> So that I may or be able to talk to the guards here, they speak Swedish…

> You need this to be able to communicate with the staff and with people here in Swedish. It slightly raises my culture level.

> I've applied directly for Swedish. So that I can at least communicate with the staff.

The desire to *understand* Swedish society was also motivated by the fact that the prisoner had a *Swedish connection*, family and children, who lived in Sweden and spoke Swedish. To be able to understand and be part of the social and cultural environment, in which the family lived, knowledge of the Swedish language meant a lot. Through the language, there was the opportunity for participation and influence, and instruction in the Swedish language and Swedish society was therefore both interesting and important.

> I have a x who is x years old and x cannot speak Serbian. So when they visit, x just talks in Swedish and I need to understand. I want to have a conversation with my children, so I want to learn. I know I have a deportation order but my wife is Swedish, Yes, and my children are Swedish too.

The motivation to study was particularly salient when it came to education that could lead to work after release and this covered vocational education and training as well as academic education. Dreams for the future and planning for a career after completion of the sentence meant that knowledge and skills needed to be developed, completed and extended, as virtually all occupations today call for education and training, while previous work experience was often a few years in the past.

> I really like this, within the x-sector and such. I would like to do a course in this so that I could become a manager in some x-company. It would be important for me to attend courses.

> I have this in x, then we have thought about starting up on our own so that we can take an area where we can x.

> I thought about starting up on my own after, so then you have to at least be able to x. I need those skills.
>
> …if you could continue with the training that you had before, if you could continue with the training…

Thoughts and reflections about a future working life meant partly resuming previous occupational activities, and following postgraduate studies getting more qualified and senior duties, and also gaining opportunities to start afresh and rebuild.

Limited access to education and training during the enforcement period is often seen as very frustrating and could have a negative effect on the incentive to study. The institutions' organisation and selection of courses on offer were vigorously challenged as was the limited time available for study.

> It is like this, I have been in prison for a long time now, and there hasn't been much education and training in other places here, so no… I have lost so much in the air all these years. Yes… I have messed up for 4 years. For 4 years I've done nothing.

> …encouragement, I think, from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and go for transition possibilities for people who want to get on with their lives and education… But the way I feel now, it's almost it goes… they're shrinking the opportunities.

> Yes, time is so short, and this is a criticism… When I was at x, it was quite OK. I studied for 8 hours a day every day. Then when I came to x, there you could only study for half of the time. Then I ended up in x and there it was even smaller and here as well, here are two days roughly.

Apart from a limited choice of education and training and a limited number of student places, other reasons were also given as to why it had not been possible to begin to study. Deportation after completion of sentence, type of criminal conduct for which the respondent had been convicted but also reluctance of staff to help ensure that a prisoner would have access to education and training during his or her stay in prison (see also section *Opportunities for and barriers to study*).

The motivation for study was therefore generally high and comments that indicated low or no motivation were rare. When this was touched upon at some point, one reason for lack of motivation was the actual experience of the situation of being incarcerated. There was an inability to concentrate and focus on studies because of concerns over crime, punishment and the future.

> I know that you teachers make an effort, but it doesn't reach us. We can sit there and stare, but nothing sticks, our thoughts are elsewhere. That's how it is for me personally, just lost time. I can sit in school, but nothing happens. I'm not motivated.

Another reason given as low motivation for participating in education was that the education and training undertaken within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service has no value in the community outside the walls.

> *I can't, if we go along together, say that I have studied here to be a mechanic, and then you have also trained to be a mechanic but you have other friends, other people. And then I come along with a similar paper to the one you have, maybe the same school as you, what do I do there? I'll be picked on. My paper isn't worth a piss on the carpet.*

> *You feel second-hand… worthless…*

The time for study during the period of enforcement was deemed as lost time and it had a negative effect on motivation. Despite the description of opposition to study, the significance was nevertheless conveyed of the fact that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service tried hard to motivate participation in education and training. It was important that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service tried to encourage constructive and meaningful occupation during the prisoners' time in the institution.

> You can do something about people who are in prison. Give them a bit of a chance that they will just sense something… so people just need to find some motivation and you know, they need a little help. And you have to provide the opportunity for those who want to study, full time…

In conclusion, the clearly stated motivation to study and participate in education and training within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service was based on the desire and need to *understand* the context and the society in which the prisoner lived and to *understand and learn* the language of the country of domicile. Based on this knowledge, the individual could both *make him or herself understood* and hopefully also *be understood* by the people he or she met and the institution and the country in which he or she spent time.

The basis of all communication – language

The importance of being able to communicate with ones environment, not only during the stay in prison but in all life's contexts and situations, could not be over emphasised and meant that the respondents very clearly highlighted the *need for language studies.* Language proficiency and language skills were considered to be the basis for developing as a person, maintaining contact with family and friends, functioning in a society and pursuing a profession. The need to develop language skills was based on both a short term and closely related perspective and a long-term and future-orientated perspective. Requests for courses focusing on the development of language skills were therefore at the top of the wish list when it came to studies during the period of enforcement.

> I don't know what programmes there are, but all I know is that studying Swedish and English is the best thing, also, I only know very little. It slightly raises my culture level and you need this to be able to communicate with the staff and with people here in Swedish.

> I want to have a conversation with my children. So I want to learn.

> I need Swedish, I need knowledge of English I mean the language. German. I need that knowledge. I've thought about starting up on my own after prison, so you must at least be able to talk to people, make contact.

> I think those subjects are suitable and… it's good… you should develop language and knowledge of the language… it's important to speak properly.

Initially, studies in the *Swedish language* were requested and for those who did not have the opportunity to study during their stay in prison, the plan was to study language and communication on release.

> I intend to study at college when I get out. I think something to do with … communication and media.

Another aspect that emerged with regard to the importance of language skills was trying to motivate young prisoners to take advantage of opportunities to study language during the period of enforcement. The aim here was to get young people to understand that language skills are essential to the possibilities of a good life in the future, to gain access to work and be able to adjust to Swedish society.

The language, which after Swedish was the most frequently requested subject to study, *was English.* According to the respondents, knowledge of English created opportunities to communicate with many people and in many different environments, and provided access to cultural, as well as professional and societal contexts. One way to develop skills in the English language, other than through formal study, was also, in conversation in the prison, to "force" oneself to communicate in English with staff and other inmates and to read English texts.

> As said, I'm forcing myself… right now, to use English most and… develop… that language in particular. I want to get to a higher level. Still reading books in English, so… and it's going fairly well…is getting really good.

Other languages mentioned as subjects to study, were German and Spanish. Again, it was the need to communicate with a number of people in different environments that was given as a justification for study. As with English, both these languages were regarded as "universal" languages. The need for language study can be discussed in light of the previously announced results of the respondent group as a multilingual group and the verbal ability to communicate in several languages had largely evolved without formal language studies. Development of written communication skills is often supported by more formal teaching in order to understand in depth,

written language structure and formal requirements, and it was possibly the desire to develop the written language skills in particular that was reflected in the great need for language studies.

Opportunities for and barriers to study

As reported above, there was a very strong motivation among respondents to take part in studies during the period of enforcement and the motivation was based on a clear desire to "move on", to develop and to "feel good." *The wish* to focus on study was derived from the individual's previous educational background and experience, but also on the basis of the needs that arose because of the situation as a prisoner in a correctional facility and the stay in a new country. Needs and wishes for education and training were thus closely linked to each other and in the section below, respondents' experiences of how wishes for and the need to study were received and made possible during the period of enforcement.

The wish for education and training expressed by the respondents applied to both vocational education and training, continuing education programmes from previous education and subject studies at both basic and academic level. The varied individual wishes for education and training had, to a very limited extent, been catered for, and perhaps this could be a reason that the need described above, for language studies in Swedish, was so extensive. Education and training presuppose good knowledge and skills in the language of instruction that is used and requests to study Swedish were, as previously reported, clearly articulated and prioritised by the respondents. With the help of good Swedish skills, perhaps wishes to study could be clarified and justified and the studies themselves function in a satisfactory manner.

That which the respondents felt as opportunities for or barriers to study within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's educational organisation can be described on the basis of, on the one hand, *organisational* aspects and on the other hand, *personal/individual* aspects. Here, organisational aspects refers to *study options, access* to study, time for study and *continuity* of study, while personal aspects are linked to the *individual's characteristics* and *situation.*

Educational organisation

Based on the wish to study, which emerged, the range of courses and training programmes was perceived as limited and the *choices* were few. This applied to both vocational education and training and more theoretically orientated studies, as well as studies in Swedish for immigrants.

> No, there isn't much to choose from here at X. No there isn't.

> There's not much choice here. That is why it is too planned… that I can't study anything.

> I have asked so many times, have you anything that I could… some training so that I could work with plumbers or that sort of training, or electricity…, but they didn't have anything. If there were courses or training courses and such that I could go on, that would be important for me.

> It was the same when I came here and asked about Spanish, but they said they don't have access to it, and now a year has passed…

> So then I would like to go to school, because when I came here I couldn't speak the language. I only spoke Serbian. I said I wanted to learn Swedish and so on, but they said that, don't have it then, they didn't have it.

However, the respondents were offered to participate in the courses that had been organised at the individual institutions, although these were not at all consistent with the preferred study options of the individuals. The education and training options on offer, even though they were not requested or chosen, meant the possibility of occupying the respondents during the period of enforcement and also contributed to them feeling that they could handle their situation as prisoners.

> They have offered me training in the work that my bosses are doing in the workshop. They make holes in metal, cut metal. It's just that kind of machines…

> I need to have my thoughts and occupy myself with something while I'm here. I have to…

Some respondents also expressed a sense of ignorance about what actually could be studied and in some cases this uncertainty and ignorance sprang from the fact that no information was given or that it was difficult to understand information regarding current education and training opportunities.

The courses and training that were interesting educational options for the prisoners during their stay in prison often had a limited number of places and this meant a long wait to gain access to preferred and chosen studies. According to the respondents, another reason it was not possible to begin studying was the shortage of teachers and in some instances, the respondents stated that they did not understand why they were not given the chance to study.

> I never got to go to school, and they're… studies… places are limited, six… six from each department so… I didn't get a place in school.

I'm waiting for the programme, hasn't started yet.

I've only waited for two years to get in. (Interviewer: Did you apply when you first arrived?) Yes, as soon as I arrived.

No, they say that it's really difficult to find a teacher who could teach me.

In my case yes… but I know that others got school and education, but I had a negative decision.

(Interviewer: Would you like to study?) Yes. (Interviewer: And you have wanted to study for a long time with the Swedish Prison and Probation service but didn't get the chance?) No, I didn't get the chance. (Interviewer: And you've applied and they've given you a variety of reasons?) No, they haven't given me any explanation.

Lack of information, ambiguity and perceived arbitrariness as regards access to and opportunities for study created uncertainty and anxiety among the respondents. At the same time, the motivation to educate themselves was strong and involved ever new attempts to begin studying for some respondents, despite the wait and rejections.

(Interviewer: Will you be applying to study there too?) Yes, of course. We will see what happens in the meantime there.

A prerequisite for the studies to result in a certificate or a degree of any kind is that the prisoner is given *time* to study and the experience of the respondents was that the time available to devote to study was far too limited. In addition, the prisoners claimed that the prerequisites, when it came to time for study, had deteriorated since previously.

It'll be five hours per week. It will be two and a half and then two and a half.

We're not in school so much… you know… and half-time studies. It's not practical.

It was full time, eight hours per day. It was good.

> You could… before, there was more money you know, they invested much more in education and jobs and everything possible. It's much worse, much worse now.

Study time differed between the various institutions and transfers between these impacted on the possibilities for study for the individual prisoners. The reasons for the varied study opportunities at the institutions were not known to the respondents and they expressed dissatisfaction over e.g. having had less time for study when moving from a closed to a more open institution.

A desire to study full-time during the period of enforcement clearly dominated, and there was a requirement for a change in the educational organisation as well as responsiveness to the prisoners who were really motivated to study.

> The institution enable… in some other way organise, what's the school system called, and some prisoners are motivated to study. They don't have enough time… yeah with help in the prison.

> If you have to provide the opportunity for those who want to study, full time, and it must be a priority. I'll put it this way, in our department there are four or five you know who really want to study full time and who … who… really try, yeah, really struggle, but they don't get the chance.

> I would like to study full-time.

The eagerness to pursue their studies prior to release was often the underlying reason for the desire to study full-time.

Apart from time, the opportunity to pursue study is dependent on continuity, irrespective of whether the prisoner during his or her period of enforcement is transferred between prisons. The respondents' experiences of study continuity were both positive and negative. The educational organisation within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service today offers the student, depending on the field of study, opportunities for supervision by both distance teaching and teaching at the learning centre in the institution where he or she is held. The teacher's role was clearly defined and the respondents preferred to have easy access to support and guidance in order to succeed in their studies.

> I don't know, I don't think there's a difference between the institutions, for I have a distance teacher, who I study with, then I have ordinary teachers who actually… they can't help me much. But on the other hand, the distance teacher I have, they have actually helped me all the way. I'm pretty satisfied with this, but ideally I would like to have them on site.

However, there were also experiences of interrupted continuity in the studies without the reasons for this being made clear to the respondent. Lack of information on the reasons for the change led to uncertainty for the respondent and a host of unanswered questions of both organisational and of a more personal nature. Had the respondent himself or herself been the reason for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service discontinuing opportunities for study?

> I studied English, German and social studies. Yes it was good, I had full studies. Afterwards I changed institution in 2008 to x. Since then they have discontinued my studies. I had the books from the school so I had to return everything to xx. So when I come to x I wanted to have my books now. They said no.

The individual

The rhetorical question posed in the above section was repeated by the respondents in cases where they felt that they had been prevented either from obtaining a place or had had to quit their studies without explanation. On these occasions they could not understand the situation other than that it was *personal* and *individual qualities* which prevented them from gaining access to a student place. The features that the respondents highlighted as possible barriers, were e.g. ethnic origin, but also generally disparaging qualities attributed to the individual. In these cases, the respondents felt at the mercy of their environment, whether they had access to a student place or not and if anything, the already stressful situation as a prisoner became more pronounced.

> They stopped my studies because I said that I was y (indicated ethnic origin). They didn't say anything but on the sly, stopped my upper secondary … my school.

> It goes without saying that I thought I would be able to continue my studies. There will be… a disaster.

> There's a guy who doesn't like homeless people…I'm no fucking ape. In retrospect, I can't get the books, so he says to me: Not right now.

Apart from personal qualities, the respondents believed that the *situation* they found themselves in could also be a barrier to study. It was not uncommon that the respondents, after serving their sentence would be deported from the country and they felt that both the staff they met on a daily basis as well as teachers, explained that they did not receive a student place precisely because of the deportation order. Requests, for example to study Swedish in order to communicate with others in his or her environment during the period of enforcement were not considered because they would not be staying in the country following their release.

> I wanted to learn Swedish from the start and such but it was in x, they kept saying that you are going to be deported, so I couldn't study. Everyone there, not just one but… I have asked so many times and I've begged them and …

> I have been here for a year and a half – two years and said that I want to go to school and they've said all along that I have a deportation order, then they don't have ... staff ... so many staff to go to school.

> I know that I will be deported but I want to learn Swedish.

The situation in which the prisoner has placed himself, to have committed a crime and be punished for it, was also seen as a reason as to why they could not access studies during the period of enforcement. For the respondents, this was additional punishment, which was further imposed by the staff who were responsible for activities and rehabilitation within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

> …that person said that we are being punished here and shouldn't be better off than those on the outside. And… we're a danger to society and we should be whipped here and it's typ… You should be working she says, but surely there's time to study in the workshop too, for the work is only half time or whatever.

In conclusion, there appeared to be certain dissatisfaction with both the opportunities to study and with the conditions that the respondents felt were necessary for successful studies and learning outcomes. The respondents wanted more education and training, more time and continuity of their studies and a clarity and transparency in terms of what basis and how decisions about access to studies were made.

Discussions on use of the Swedish language and computer skills

The last section of the presentation of results in this report details that part of the study, which was based on the quantitatively orientated parts of the discussions. The questions asked and the statements to be processed meant that the respondents rated their ability to use the Swedish language, both spoken and written, and that they rated their computer skills and ability to handle the various functions of a computer. Table 1 below shows the results regarding use of the Swedish language and Table 2 shows computer skills and computer management. All 10 respondents had the opportunity to answer all questions. However, table 1 shows responses from only 9 respondents as one respondent had no knowledge of the Swedish language.

Most respondents ranked their ability to communicate verbally in Swedish as good, and they said that they had no major problems with either listening to Swedish radio or watching Swedish television (Table 1). These responses can be compared with previously reported results from the qualitative part of the study, in the sense that the respondents' verbal language skills, both in Swedish and other languages, were sufficient to be used in everyday situations.

When it came to reading various types of text in Swedish, the results clearly showed that shorter texts were easier to read than longer continuous ones (Table 1). For example, signs and messages on mobile phones or on Facebook presented no difficulties while books and letters from the authorities created problems for many of the respondents. Reading Swedish newspapers was considered relatively easy, but it is important to note here that for questions such as those included in the interview document, no answers were given to how or what the respondents read when they read newspapers. By reading only headlines, the individual may consider him or herself informed about the news and current events and this then means reading very short texts. Reading body text and articles, cohesive passages of text, places higher demands on reading ability.

For all questions that involved evaluating the ability to write in Swedish (Question 12-17), over half of the respondents reported difficulties of varying degrees (Table 1). The difficulties emerged when writing both short and longer written statements and information. Also in this respect, results are in line with the previously reported results from the qualitative questions during the discussions.

On several occasions during the discussions the respondents expressed their frustration that they were unable to use computers as much as they wanted during the period of enforcement. This situation is a consequence of the various types of restrictions that apply to prisoners in institutions and may result in the fact that computer skills and the handling of various computer programs and functions cannot be maintained and developed in all respects. Over half the respondents however, reported basic computer skills when it came to searching for information online, using e-mail and word processing for e.g. writing letters. They also stated that they could use dictionaries and spell check programs as aids in their writing (Table 2).

The features in this study that presented difficulties for over half the respondents were knowledge of how a chatroom functions, how downloading and installing programs worked, how images, documents and music could be sent via the Internet, how the data-processing program Excel could be used and how a website was constructed (Table 2).

Table 1. Use of the Swedish language (number of entries in absolute figures)

You may use the language of the country you are currently in, in many ways and in many situations. There follows a list of situations where perhaps you understand and even use this language. Please indicate to what extent you (he/she) feels there are problems with the language. Please place a tick on each line.

	I understand or use [the relevant language] when I am …	No problems	Some problems	Major problems
1	Talking with friends	5	3	1
2	Talking with shop staff, bus drivers, etc	5	3	1
3	Talking with teachers or people in public office	7	1	1
4	Watching television and films	4	5	0
5	Listening to the radio	5	2	2
6	Reading letters from government offices	3	5	1
7	Reading messages on my mobile phone	6	1	1
8	Reading on Facebook, MSN etc.	6	1	2
9	Reading signs, notices, etc.	8	1	0
10	Reading newspapers	7	1	1
11	Reading books	5	1	3
12	Writing letters or postcards	4	4	1
13	Writing messages on my mobile phone	4	4	1
14	Writing on Facebook, MSN etc.	3	3	3
15	Writing e-mails	3	3	3
16	Filling out forms for government offices	4	2	3
17	Writing things to do with school or work	3	4	2

Table 2. Expertise in using the computer (number of entries in absolute figures)

These questions cover a number of computer skills (ICT skills). How much are you (he/she) able to do within the following areas? Please place a tick for each statement.

I understand or use Norwegian when I		No know-ledge	A little know-ledge	Quite a lot of know-ledge	Almost fully know-ledgeable	Fully know-ledge-able
1	Use the keyboard on a computer	1	1	3	3	2
2	Use the mouse	1	0	1	2	6
3	Use the Internet to search for information or data	3	1	0	3	3
4	Post information on the Internet	4	1	1	2	2
5	Write, send and read e-mails	3	1	0	2	4
6	Send images or other documents by e-mail (as attachments)	5	0	0	3	2
7	Create your own personal website	7	1	1	1	0
8	Use 'chat' programs (e.g. MSN)	6	0	0	2	2
9	Send images, documents or music via MSN	7	0	1	2	0
10	Use a computer to write letters	7	0	1	3	5
11	Use graphics or drawing pro-grams	5	3	1	1	0
12	Use a memory stick or CD in your computer	5	1	0	2	2
13	Use spreadsheets (e.g. Excel)	8	1	0	1	0
14	Use a search engine (e.g. Kvasir or Google)	3	0	0	1	5
15	Download and install programs on a computer	6	1	1	1	1
16	Use electronic dictionaries/spell check	2	0	1	1	5

Concluding discussion

The importance of education in society today cannot be overstated and the regulatory documents governing adult education emphasises that the individual "should be given the opportunity to develop his or her knowledge and skills in order to improve his or her position in work and social life and to promote his or her personal development" (SFS 2010:800, Chapter 20, §2). It further specifies that it is individuals with the least education that should be a priority and that education and training initiatives should be planned and implemented on the basis of the individual's needs and circumstances. Even within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's education and training, priority is given to prisoners with the least education, and initiatives are planned on the basis of individual need (Handbok för Kriminalvårdens Klientutbildning, 2011:5) (Handbook for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's Client Education, 2011:5). In this concluding section, we discuss education and training within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service in light of these provisions and based on the results presented. The discussion also includes reflections on the study's research approach and implementation.

The educational background, educational needs, educational motivation and educational aspirations of prisoners who do not have Swedish as their native language in Swedish correctional institutions have been the subject of studies in this research project. The study is based for the most part on a qualitative research approach and the results thus apply to the group of prisoners who participated as respondents. A total of 10 prisoners of Serbian origin have participated in the study and it must be emphasised that the results presented cannot be transferred to the group of prisoners of Serbian origin in general.

Qualitative studies involve interpreting data, systematising discoveries and seeing a part of reality in a new way through the text presented by the researcher. Knowledge contribution and theory contribution mean that those who share the researcher's descriptive accounts of the results "may have the case definition in mind when thinking of other cases, and then perhaps discover the relevance of the interpretation, that the qualitative analysis resulted in" (Larsson, 1994, p. 180).

A clear and well-structured interpretation of the research results can contribute to recognition and understanding of similar situations and phenomena as those that were studied, but this is dependent on the researcher's ability to convey his or her interpretation. The results of this research project should therefore be of assistance in meetings with prisoners of both Serbian origin and other ethnic origins, where educational issues are the focus of information and discussion.

Through the discussion-like interviews, it was possible to gain a deep understanding of the perceptions and experiences of individual respondents. The repeated monitoring of questions that were asked and clarifications through the assistance of an interpreter, meant that the researcher had access to contextual information that provided a wealth of substance to the respondents' statements. In encounters between different ethnic and cultural relations, this depth of knowledge is necessary in order for no misunderstandings to arise but also so that any preconceived notions should be able to be problematised and analysed.

The questions asked and the assertions that would be evaluated in the more quantitatively orientated part of the interview reinforce some of the results obtained through the analysis of the qualitatively orientated part of the interview. Some questions, however, raise new concerns that were not possible to answer on the basis of the interview document, and some parts of the documentation focus on contextual areas that the respondents felt were not relevant in this context. This applied predominantly to questions and statements focusing on computer skills. The respondents' opportunities to both maintain and develop computer skills during the period of enforcement are extremely limited given the security measures and user restrictions that exist at the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's institutions.

As regards implementation of the collection of empirical data, this was planned in a thorough and considered manner with written documentation and meetings between project management and implementers, when choice, implementation and experience of carrying out interviews were analysed and discussed. This has resulted in such similar data collection work as it is possible to achieve, and it stands out e.g. in the transcripts that were the basis for the analysis of the data material. When reflecting on the selection of participating respondents, it feels important to emphasise the fact that all participants were somewhat older. There was a lack of younger prisoners and therefore the potential consequences of this are discussed further in the section below.

The respondent group

The participating respondents were between 40 and 60 years of age and born in the former Yugoslavia. They all reported a good basic education and here there is reason to wonder whether a younger respondent group would have reported the same high level of his or her basic education. The educational organisation as described both by participating respondents and in recent information about the education system in Serbia is however, consistent and has therefore been effective for a long time. That which could nevertheless have affected the educational opportunities for younger individuals is the conflict situation during the 1990s, which resulted in the former Yugoslavia being divided into a number of different countries. Whether the new national circumstances have affected the possibilities for young people to pursue compulsory primary, lower secondary and upper secondary studies is therefore important to bear in mind in meetings with young prisoners of Serbian origin.

The group, young prisoners, is also important to note in light of the results of the previous survey of prisoners' educational background and educational needs. It was revealed that many young prisoners with Swedish as their native language, had a low level of education and also participated less often than older people in the education and training offered within the correctional facilities (Eriksson Gustavsson & Samuelsson, 2006). Is it then possible that the powerful and clearly stated motivation for study among the participating respondents in this study is linked to age in the sense that both life experience and experience of working life have highlighted the need for education and training in order to be able to change lifestyle and break with a criminal career? Education is certainly a route to change

for all people (SFS 2010:800) but the challenge for the educational organisation of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, is to highlight the need for education and training and contribute to increasing motivation for education and training, especially among young prisoners.

Motivation – information – language

The most salient findings of this study can be represented by the words in the above heading, and this is discussed in the final section of the report below.

The respondents' strong desire to participate in the education and training courses organised by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service through their learning centres is an outstanding result. Despite having to wait for a place on a course and despite a perceived lack of clarity in terms of learning opportunities, there are clear expressions of a desire to be able to study during the period of enforcement. The need for education and training is the basis for the motivation that clearly emerges and the need-based experience can be explained in the light of the different experiences provided by the respondents during the discussions. The experiences come from *previous educational participation*, and the good basic level of education reported means that they are sure that they are able to cope with studying. They understand the meaning of initiative and effort and they want to improve their knowledge and thereby also their personal development. They are thus representative of what is held up as the aims and objectives of Swedish adult education "*…to develop their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen their position at work and in the community and to promote their personal development"* (SFS 2010:800, Chapter 20, §2). The experiences are also based on *life experiences,* both personal and professional in character. The respondents have experienced and faced demands of various types in different situations. They have learned about themselves, about their strengths and weaknesses and thus become aware of what they want and how visions and desires can be realised. The desire for education and training comes from an inner motivation based on self-knowledge and a need to raise the level of awareness. The situation and the environment in which the prisoners find themselves during the period of enforcement also create a need for education and further knowledge. These are recently acquired experiences in a new country with a new culture and a new language and the desire *to understand the new life situation* creates motivation to participate in education and training.

The respondents reported on a few occasions, reasons for their wishes to participate in education and training, which were not so clearly based on inner motivation, but driven by contextual and external factors. In these cases, wishes could be characterised more as an escape from other forms of occupation during the prison stay and a way to pass time during the period of enforcement. The motivation for study is however, equally strong even in these cases, although, in various respects, it is not obviously fuelled by a desire for personal development.

The study participants with their clearly stated motivation for study, are confronted with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's information about the educational organisation and educational opportunities, which is perceived as ambiguous,

incomplete and in some cases arbitrary. The findings of the study demonstrate the respondents' difficulties in understanding how the education programmes and courses on offer have been "selected", how application and registration for studies is undertaken, the grounds on which the granting of and access to a student place are decided and also what role the education within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service may have out in society following release. Admission to studies can, from a client perspective, be cited as a legal rights issue since admission to/refusal of a student place implies an exercise of authority. No respondent has stated that he or she is aware that those with the lowest level of education are given priority with regard to admission to study and that this could possibly be a reason why they have to wait for a student place. Different institutions' provision of participation in studies is also something that puzzles the respondents. Examples are given of commenced studies at an institution being suspended when transferring to a new institution without any explanation or reason for this change being given. In total, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service currently offers approximately 130 different theoretical courses, but the demand for some of these courses is greater than the availability of teaching resources and the vocational courses offered by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service are only located at certain institutions. These circumstances can therefore mean that prisoners do not have access to the required education and training but information on the reasons for refusal of application to study does not always appear to reach the prisoner and be understood.

The new organisation of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's client education and training, with the support of the distance working mode, is intended to ensure continuity of study when changing institution during the period of enforcement. A recurring explanation for the respondents as to why student places had not been offered was that after serving their sentences within the Swedish correctional system, they would be deported from the country. Regardless of nationality and ethnic origin, prisoners at a correctional institution shall have the same opportunities based on individual need to participate in education and training (Council of Europe, 1989), and if there are grounds to assume that prisoners with ethnicities other than Swedish are disadvantaged in regard to education and training, this requires particular attention.

The respondents' concerns regarding educational and training opportunities and availability within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service indicates uncertainty and occasional frustration over not being able to use the time in prison in such a way as to create opportunities to facilitate adjustment into society after serving their sentence. An already stressful situation as a prisoner is probably made worse by these experiences. Information on education and training, which is clear, transparent and understandable is necessary for the prisoner to see both opportunities for and barriers to educational participation during the period of enforcement. In addition, all staff within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service should be aware of this information so that the prisoner can ask questions and receive answers that reflect a common view and attitude towards the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's educational mission, educational organisation and access to education. Needless to say, client training officials and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's teachers have huge responsibility for various types of information initiatives, but encounters

between prisoners and all the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's officials need to convey the same view with regard to the importance of education in today's society. An important official, who was not named at all by any of the respondents, is the student counsellor, who is an important person with knowledge of both educational and training pathways and educational opportunities and who is a valuable initial contact when planning prisoners' studies.

The uncertainty and concerns regarding education and training within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service as outlined above are probably due in part to the fact that communication between prisoners and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's staff is not working optimally. Language is the key to understanding, both listening comprehension and the written language itself, and the respondent group which participated in this study did not have Swedish as its native language. Information on education and training within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service is mainly provided in Swedish and the language of instruction used in client education and training is usually Swedish. The respondents themselves, state that they occasionally help one another to understand the information provided, by conversing with prisoners with the same native language as their own and they may also occasionally converse in English, a language that several prisoners have mastered at varying levels of proficiency. The importance for prisoners with a native language other than Swedish to have the opportunity to study Swedish for immigrants, SFI, is evident when it comes to creating the conditions for understanding a new country, a new culture and a new education system, not least because of the specific context of life in an institution. For information initiatives of various kinds to have an impact and reach the prisoners with a native language other than Swedish, the following measures could possibly be considered:

- the same information to be provided on several occasions;
- information to be provided to groups with the same native language;
- opportunities to be provided for discussions on information with other prisoners with the same native language;
- frequent opportunities to be offered to pose questions to carers, teachers, student counsellors or other staff and
- in certain cases to be provided with additional information in, e.g. English.

This approach demands the time of both staff and the individual prisoner. This also means that *all* personnel within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service have good knowledge of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's client education and training and can contribute with answers and explanations, or by referring to experts, so that the prisoner can feel secure in terms of educational and training opportunities and participation. To ensure that studies are not interrupted when moving between institutions, a special procedure for following up of continuity is needed.

In conclusion, the findings of this study show that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service is facing challenging tasks with regard to prisoners of ethnic origin other than Swedish. This means e.g.

(a) *paying particular attention to young prisoners from this target group* and their level of education and motivation

(b) *organising and implementing information* about educational organisation and educational opportunities in a clear, understandable and transparent manner so that prisoners with a native language other than Swedish are able to understand and absorb this

(c) *enhancing educational opportunities in institutions* for the said target group by promoting the same formal rights to education in Swedish for immigrants as those of free citizens

(d) reviewing access to education and training, which means that *the number of education and training places* possibly needs to be considered and this particularly applies to the number of education and training places within SFI tuition. These measures should specifically show that the question of the importance of education in today's society translates more effectively into practical action.

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CHAPTER 8

Similarities and differences in the Nordic countries

by Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger

The same interview form was used in the national studies as a basis for the interviews with ethnic minority prisoners. Along the way, each of the researchers had to still make their own choices with regard to the framework of the interview regarding the question's relevance for the actual group they interviewed, about the method of analysis and how they later wanted to present their findings. As it emerges from the previous five country chapters, there are considerable similarities in the Nordic countries with regard to how education and training is organized in the overall plan but there are also differences. What educational policy the individual country pursues and how it is organized has of course consequences for the organization and practice of education, training and teaching in prison. Even if each of the Nordic countries follows the same tripartite educational structure: basic compulsory schooling, preparatory studies for higher education and university college and university education, there are still dissimilarities in content and the actual structure (Eikeland, 2008, p. 161). This also applies to ethnic minority prisoners serving a prison sentence, which have the same rights as other members of society to education and training. This all means that a comparison of findings between the Nordic countries must be made carefully and with certain reservations. Several conditions contribute to this. One applies to the size of the countries, the total prison population and the size of the foreign inmate population. The five Nordic countries have varying organizational structures for teaching and training in prison. Another condition is the characteristics of the individual group of ethnic minority prisoners. Some have been in the country where they are serving sentences of short duration and have most of their schooling and education from their home country while other groups came as small children or as youths and have had whole or large part of their schooling and education in the country in which they are serving their sentences. Their background and the political and social situation in the home country as well as conditions in the labour market are also significant for their preferences and requirements for education and training while serving their sentence. But also the organization of prison and probation services in the individual countries influences the educational offer in the prisons and the same goes for the security level (a high security prison versus a low security prison).

When it comes to the ethnic prisoner population, the teacher's competence at teaching and training has major significance for this group of inmates. Because in some cases these pupils come from an educational system that is fundamentally different from the Nordic educational systems, it will be a challenge to adapt teaching and training. Another question is if there is sufficient multi-cultural competence in the teaching staff and to what degree the individual Nordic country's prison and probation services are willing to raise multicultural competence among staff within and beyond teaching. This applies to teaching and training questions

and also applies to other employees in direct contact with ethnic minority prisoners. Multi-cultural expertise in prisons with many ethnic minority prisoners is not just an issue for few interested parties, but must include everyone involved at all levels. Do the prison and probation services have an overall philosophy and policy with regard to these issues? Above all, it is the teachers the inmates meet in class on a daily basis who will have most significance for them if they motivate them to be educated and trained in prison. But also the prison officers can have a major influence on the foreign inmate's motivation and preferences for education and training and hopefully also for the desire to change their lives.

In the following we will compare the most important findings of the Nordic study and present some of the differences and similarities, where the similarities are emphasized most. Each country has described and discussed above their findings from the national studies in great detail, whilst they try and point out main lines and tendencies, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Comparison of the findings first take their point of departure in the qualitative study (part I), then the quantitative (part II). Topics follow the same succession as in the interview form.

The qualitative part

Respondents

In total, 62 ethnic minority prisoners in different Nordic prisons were interviewed in the course of spring 2011. Of these, three are women. Research shows that between 94 and 95 per cent of those in prison in Nordic countries are men (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008). Sixty-two prisoners do not of course constitute an adequate number to make the findings generalized, but we still see some tendencies in the material which are interesting from the research perspective and which at the same time may provide important information to the prison and probation services in the five Nordic countries.

Respondents to the Nordic study are aged between 17 and 60 years of age and have resided for different times in the country they are serving their sentences in. For example, respondents in Denmark and Sweden had relatively long period of residence of many years in the two countries they are serving their sentences in, while the respondents in Iceland (with one exception) has resided there for a relatively short period before being imprisoned. There are major variations in the periods of residence in the country among respondents from Norway. Some have lived there for several years, while others were imprisoned a short time after coming to the country.

When it comes to educational background, Denmark stands out as most of the respondents have had their schooling and education there, while respondents in Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden to a large extent had their schooling and education in the home country or a transition country. Most of the respondents were born in a different country from the one they are serving their sentence in and in the same country in which their parents were born.

An interesting aspect is that in the statistics concerning ethnic minority prisoners, groups are identified in relation to the country categories, which here are Somalia, Russia, Poland, Iraq and Serbia. However, what emerges from the material is that several respondents do not identify themselves in terms of their country, but refer to other national and ethnic backgrounds. This means that they do not necessarily identify with the category under which they are registered. In Finland respondents identify themselves respectively as Russian, Russian-Estonian or Russian-Finnish. In Norway, they identify themselves as Iraqi (Arabic), Kurdish, or with another ethnic background and national allegiance. In Sweden, the Serbian respondents state their country of birth as the former Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia and Kosovo without this appearing in the statistics. This means that a "nation state" and culture are ill-suited as a common denominator for a group of ethnic minority prisoners from the same country or region. In the same registered country category, the inmates can speak different languages and they can have different cultural attitudes and different religions. In order to understand the ethnic minority prisoners' special needs it is therefore important to be familiar with their background, linguistically and culturally, and to become knowledgeable about their different points of identification.

Educational background

Respondents in the Nordic study appear to have a predominantly positive experience of their previous schooling and education. This emerges regardless of the educational system and the political situation in the country they come from. Despite the fact that the inmates in the Norwegian study tell stories of tough discipline, slaps and kicks from the teachers, they are to a large extent positive towards school and have good memories from school time. When it is reported the respondents in all countries say they started school aged between 6 and 7 years old. It is still important to remember that the contextual circumstances in the inmates' background create different expectations regarding the extent to which they have completed their schooling and education. Some of their backgrounds are from war zones, where schools and educational institutions were bombed or where the infrastructure has collapsed. Others have a migration history that led to a break in their education. This in turn has had consequences for the extent to which they have documentation for completed education or discarded grades. There will also be differences connected to their parents' educational background and support in the environment. In the Finnish material, respondents' parents seem to have more and higher education than in the two other groups. They valued education highly and also placed great demands on their children's education. Even if the educational background does not emerge clearly in all the national studies, it can be assumed that most parents do not have higher education, seeing that most respondents have not got it. The extent to which parents have higher education may of course be explained in the context of the educational system in their country of origin. Of a total of 62 respondents only 14 inmates have education beyond upper secondary school studies. This does not constitute however a lower percentage than that found in the quantitative surveys (for example, Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2010).

Educational activity in prison

It does not emerge clearly from all of the country chapters what is the extent to which respondents participate in different educational or training activities in the prison where they are serving their sentences, nor the extent to which they participate. In the Danish study, there are for example just two respondents who took part in educational activity in prison, in the Swedish study the number is 10, while in the Norwegian study nine out of 17 respondents take part in educational activities. Where it emerges which educational activities the prisoners participate in, these seem to be concentrated on the following:

- Language courses (most often in the language in the country in which they are serving their sentence and English as well);
- Computer driving licence or ICT training (computer driving licence consists of certifiable skills certificates that document ICT skills within the most common areas of use for a computer);
- Different types of vocational training or course modules of these;
- Other courses (this may be the teaching of basic subjects such as mathematics, for example, sociology and psychology).

Participation in courses and other educational activities seems to be steered by the offers offered in the actual prisons at any given time and to a lesser degree by the individual prisoners' preferences or needs.

Educational preferences in prison

The Nordic report shows good agreement between the educational activities that the respondent participates in and what they would want if they could choose freely. First and foremost there are many who want to take part in prison education and they have preferences regarding this, even if their preferences are not entirely clear in all the national studies. The preferences that emerge explicitly are not so different from what some of the respondents are already doing. They are: language courses, computer driving licence (ICT training) and various vocational educations or training (like chef, bricklayers, painting, carpenter, tiler, etc.). As regards language courses they primarily mean courses in the language of the country where they are serving their sentence, secondarily English and other European languages. One reason why the inmates primarily want to learn the language of the country where they are serving their sentence is a desire to communicate directly with other inmates. As it becomes apparent from the Swedish study, learning Swedish gives them the opportunity to understand the information given and to develop and understating of their surroundings. In both the Norwegian and the Swedish study the respondents with children and families want to communicate with them in their own language.

In cases where respondents for different reasons have had their education interrupted, some of these express a desire to resume and complete their education or their studies. Some want training or additional education so they can take on qualified work when they are released, while others simply want to start again. In the

Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish studies it emerged that participation in education and training is perceived as something positive. It fills the days with content and meaning so the time spent "staring at the wall" doesn't seem so long. Educational preferences often originate in the respondent's previous educational background, interests and needs, but as it also emerged from the Swedish study, from needs that have arisen from the situation of being imprisoned and being in a new country.

In the Danish study the motivation for getting an education in prison is variable, and only two respondents are currently undertaking educational activities. But it still emerged that about two thirds want to take some form of education. This agrees with what was found in quantitative studies of entire prison populations (Eikeland *et al.*, 2008; Eikeland *et al.*, 2010). Even if the preferences for the most part are to do with vocational and practical disciplines and activities, there are clearly also some that want to qualify for university and higher level education and eventually get education at college and university level. The Icelandic study showed that half of the respondents have a desire for higher education. In the Norwegian and Icelandic study there are some who say that they are too old to take an education.

Even if some respondents are currently taking an education in prison or follow courses and training, it is clear from most of the countries that many regard education and training more as a dream than a realistic possibility. Even if some have thoughts about what they would want if their situation had been different they are also sufficiently focused on reality to understand that this would probably not be possible. Given the structural framework in the prison and the fact that many of them have been away from school for a long time, many of the respondents do not have great hopes that their educational preferences will come true.

Barriers to take part in education

More than motivation, desires and needs for education, the respondents in all countries talk about *barriers* preventing them from taking an education in prison. This may also be a reason why they see the educational desires more as dreams than reality. The respondents in the Norwegian study told about the structural obstacles to taking part in educational activities, in all the three prisons they were in. Below we can see that the same structural barriers are also present in the other Nordic prisons, and for different groups of ethnic minority prisoners.

Some of the most frequently mentioned structural obstacles for education in prison are the lack of information (cf. Introduction). Lack of information threatens their legal rights to education during their prison sentence. Ethnic minority prisoners, like other inmates in Nordic prisons, have a right to education as long as they are serving a sentence in a country where the right to education is enshrined in law. Furthermore, the Nordic countries have signed international conventions and recommendations that ensure the right to education. Poor information about educational opportunities in prison result in insecurity about what the prison education actually has to offer. When such information is also presented in a language the inmate neither speaks nor understands, then he is prevented from being able to take in the information and think about what offers are suitable for

him or her. It emerges in the Norwegian and the Swedish material that often the translation or the interpretation is done by other inmates from the same language background. Lack of information also deprives the inmates from being able to make an informed choice of educational activity. If the inmate still finds out what educational and training possibilities he or she has available to them, there seems to be a very long waiting time before they are offered a place at school. One respondent in the Icelandic study who has a strong desire to resume their interrupted studies says he didn't know about the educational services in prison.

One common experience in the five groups is that the inmates are not given a reason for the long waiting time. This creates unrest and suspicion that the waiting time is deliberately dragged out by the prison. In the Swedish study some informants claim that ethnic background could be a reason why they do not get a place in school. However, the argument that is made by the prison education service is that there is a shortage of places for some training services and courses, and that only courses and education that are covered by the areas covered by the teachers' competencies are offered.

Other circumstances that the respondents are preoccupied with include the fact that the organisation of education and training is not good. For example, the Danish inmates say that they need more education, but the practical organisation of educational activity prevents participation and completion. Finnish respondents say that they have never been able to discuss their educational preferences with a study counsellor or advisor. They believe that there is no overriding plan for education and training. They are also given too little time for educational activities, often restricted to a few hours per week. In the Swedish study it is clear that limited access educational activities is experienced as frustrating and affects the individual's motivation to participate. It also leads to disproportionately long waiting time. One last critical factor in this picture is to do with movement of inmates between prisons and sections. If an inmate is transferred to another prison during the course of his education it is not certain that he will be able to complete the education, if the same education is not available in the prison he is transferred to. So despite the legal rights of the inmate, and their motivation and efforts, it happens that the education is still interrupted or terminated as a result of structural framework conditions.

Something that is mentioned in the Nordic studies is the uncertainty related to ethnic minority prisoners who it has been decided will be deported, and their legal rights related to education. Sometimes staff uses this as an argument for not giving the inmate an education. In Denmark ethnic minority prisoners who are going to be deported are only offered basic mathematics and Danish. In Norway they have in principle the same rights as anyone else, but still something seems to go wrong with the implementation. In the Swedish study it is claimed that inmates who have had a decision to deport them made against them are not prioritised when allocating school places. Inmates' desire to learn Swedish in order to communicate with others around them is not considered. As well as structural and organizational barriers to education there are personal factors that prevent or restrict ethnic minority prisoners' opportunities for following education and training. This usually relates to psychological and physical challenges. The former emerged in the Norwegian study

in which particularly the older respondents talk of traumas from a past in a war zone. This has given them learning and concentration difficulties.

Previous work experience[20]

By far the majority of the respondents in the Nordic material have previous work experience. The youngest respondents have of course least experience, and a minority say they have no previous work experience – neither from their home country or the Nordic countries. Previous work experience is characterised by short terms (1/2 to 2 years seems to be common). It has been odd jobs or apprenticeships (Sweden). But in all cases the respondents have changed jobs often. A minority has had work over longer terms – up to 10 years (Denmark, Sweden), and in the Swedish study these were persons who had run their own businesses. This is also true for work in the country they serve their sentence in. A couple of respondents in the Icelandic study have had work that required specialised knowledge corresponding to their education. The respondents have largely had unskilled work, only a minority was educated for the job they were doing. They have work experience from different industries and many have run small enterprises or worked in smaller family businesses. Those sectors that are mentioned in the Nordic material are shops, agriculture, transport and moving, construction, restaurant, cleaning, courier, workshop, interpreting services and the health sector. The jobs were gotten through fellow countrymen, family or network of friends, or some of them through public services. In the Finnish study one respondent says that because the job market was hard to get into it was "easy" to enter into a criminal career. This can be interpreted to mean that these respondents would have chosen differently if the country in which they are serving their sentence had had gainful employment for them.

Views on the future

It is not easy to talk about or plan the future when you are behind walls for years that exclude you from society and prevents participation. It is difficult to imaging life outside. Society outside the walls would also be changed, inmates with long sentences have problems understanding society as it has developed during their time in prison. And several respondents say that the time in prison in itself will diminish their belief in the future. They start thinking that nobody will need them and that a background from prison and a criminal record will make it harder to get a job. In that perspective the future perspective becomes only dreams and visions. Despite this we still see that most respondents want to take further education, some in prison and some after they have served their time. In all the studies it emerges that they consider education as a stage in personal development, which makes it possible to get on in life. Many are pessimistic with regard to work after prison, but they still

[20] Regarding the work duties that ethnic minority prisoners carry out in the prisons they are serving in, there was little information in the national studies. This topic is therefore omitted here.

think that education will increase their chances in the job market – also in their home country – if they are deported after prison.

A significant obstacle for many respondents is the previously mentioned insecurity associated with deportation. Many already have had a deportation order made against them and others are expecting or fearing one. The circumstances surrounding this scenario take a lot of space and complicate thoughts about the future. Some respondents say that they are not given the opportunity to take an education in prison due to their deportation order.

In the view of the future, for many respondents it is primarily the thought of being able to take care of their families that are in focus.

Spoken and written language[21]

Some respondents, especially those with an education, have learnt one or more foreign languages at school. But there are many respondents in this material who speak one or more foreign languages that they have learnt outside the formal educational institution. In the Norwegian study this meant Farsi, Turkish, Turkmen, Greek, English and German. They have learnt these languages by working in adjacent or European countries. Some have also learnt English by fellow inmates in prison.

In the Norwegian study it was found that a minority of the respondents spoke Arabic, which is the official language in Iraq, as their mother tongue. However, most spoke Kurdish, while one spoke a different minority language. Most want to read and write in their mother tongue, except for a few who came to Norway as children and have had all their education in Norwegian. In Denmark on the other hand, about half of the respondents spoke Danish as their mother tongue and 15 of 16 use Danish in everyday life. Of the seven who consider Somali as their mother tongue only four can read or write Somali. In the Danish material there are many who speak English, more who speak Arabic and one who speaks German. The Polish respondents in Iceland speak Polish as their mother tongue, but some can also read Russian, English and German. In the Finnish study all respondents gave Russian as their mother tongue, while almost all also spoke English. They used Russian in everyday life, while those with Ethnic Russian background also had basic knowledge of Estonian, which they had learnt at school. The Russian-Finnish respondents had good knowledge of Finnish. Therefore they wanted education in Russian or English. In Sweden the respondents give Serbian, Serbo-Croatian and Rumanian as mother tongues, while some also speak Polish, Italian, English, German, Spanish, French, Greek and Russian. These respondents have not participated in courses of Swedish for immigrants, but have learnt the language outside the official education arenas, through work and conversations with Swedish speakers, TV and other media. For everybody it is true that the spoken language is better than the written.

[21] This section includes mother tongue and foreign language.

Most respondents want education and training in their mother tongue, except for those who have lived for a long time in the country in which they are serving their prison sentence, who speak the language and have taken all or parts of their education in the country.

The survey

Understanding and use of the language in the country where they are in prison

In this part of the questionnaire the respondents were supposed to tick the most appropriate statements. Pages 7 to 10 in the questionnaire contained structured questions. The first page of structured questions (p. 7) is a follow up of the open questions related to language. The next page (p. 8) is about ICT skills, while the last two pages (p. 9-10) are about social and cultural capital. The structured questions (p. 7-10) were wither asked by the interviewer or directly translated by the interpreter on the spot, if the inmate wanted it, or alternatively the inmate read the questions himself and made notes, sometimes with assistance from the interviewer and interpreter. Even if these questions are structured many researchers wrote down the respondents' thoughts and stories around these questions, if the inmate agreed to it. In the following we will highlight those findings that are made in each of the topics in this part of the questionnaire.

The first topic was about understanding and use of the language in the country they are serving a prison sentence in. The respondents in the Nordic study have spent different amounts of time in the Nordic countries, so the answers vary. In the Danish and partly in the Swedish study the respondents have spent more time in the country than in the Icelandic and the Norwegian studies. A common feature is that the respondents function better in spoken situations than when they have to manage something in writing. Of those who speak the language partially it is easier to read short, simple texts than longer ones. For the same reason most say that it can be difficult to read letters from public offices, which also extends to newspapers and books. The exceptions are respondents in the Danish, Swedish and partly the Finnish studies, where most have *none* or just *a little* problem with understanding the language. In the Danish study it appears that newspaper reading is what poses the greatest problem. Most function better in the language when they are talking to someone they have close relations to, than if they are talking to strangers or when they're in stations they know and are familiar with. Still, there are many who understand simple language when talking to shop assistants or people in public offices. Most respondents from Iceland say they do not speak Icelandic, one of them can manage social situations, and another speaks a little Icelandic, but cannot use the language in everyday situations. In the Finnish study the group of respondents is divided in two. About half has great problems when talking to friends, service personnel, people in public offices, reading and listening, writing emails, completing forms and relating to school and education. Of these the hardest is to read and understand information from public offices, and completing official forms. Serbian inmates in Sweden consider their knowledge of Swedish as good in most situations; they have no problem with listening to Swedish radio or watching Swedish TV. They

say they have bigger problems with writing Swedish than listening to or speaking the language. And again, reading letters from public offices is a challenge, and they find it hard to understand and fill in forms.

Digital skills

Generally it appears that many respondents have relatively good basic digital skills. They have bigger problems when it comes to more complicated skills like using Excel, sending pictures and documentation as attachments, making a home page, downloading software, etc. If we compare digital skills with their self-declared skills in reading and writing, skills that for many are relatively weak, we might ask whether some want to present their digital skills as better than they actually are. It turns out, especially in the Icelandic study, that the age of the inmates can make a difference. Younger respondents seem to have better skills than the older ones. The Somali respondents in the Danish study seem to have somewhat better skills than the other groups, also when it comes to more complicated operations. The Finnish study shows that all respondents have basic digital skills and that about half of then also have more advanced digital skills.

Over half of the Serbian respondents in Sweden have basic digital skills like searching for information on the Internet, starting a Word document and using e-mail. More than half have problems with more complicated operations like downloading, installation, sending pictures and other attachments over the internet, and using Excel or setting up a home page. The respondents in this study also express frustration that they don't have access to use ICT more, for education and training and in other contexts.

Background and needs for learning new things

Most informants in the Nordic material respond that the educational system in their home country is different from the system in the country in which they are serving their sentence. The Danish material stands out in this regard, since the respondents have taken parts or all of their education in Denmark. In the Danish and Norwegian material most informants think they need more education to manage in the country they are serving their prison sentence in. Most of them also think they need more support with their school subjects, except for in Iceland, where the respondents do not feel they need such help. This is in contrast to the fact that none of the respondents speak Icelandic.

By far the majority of the respondents in the material think they have not needed education or special skills to carry out the work they have done previously. There is variation within the material as regards access to work in their home country, ranging from some problems to great problems. As regards the relationship with their school mates in their home country most respond that they had a good relationship. Even if

the Somalis in the Danish study have taken most of their schooling in Denmark, they have partly grown up in Somalia and nine of them say they had a good relationship with their fellow pupils there.

The present situation and the future

Two thirds of the Danish respondents and a majority of the Norwegian respondents say that they know the demands of the workplace in the country they are serving their sentence in. In the Icelandic study most respond that they do not know the job market. In the Norwegian and Icelandic study most of the respondents are optimistic with regard to getting work when they are released. In the Danish study most of them think it will be impossible to get a job when they are released. Half of the Danish and Norwegian and a majority of the Icelandic respondents respond that they have the right experience to get the work they want. Most respondents also think they will be able to adjust to the demands of the workplace in the country they are serving their sentence in. In the Finnish study there are many respondents who have deportation orders, as in the Norwegian study. These will eventually be sent back to Estonia, where they consider it impossible to get work. But still, they take a positive view on the future.

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CHAPTER 9

Discussions and conclusions

by Kariane Westrheim and Terje Manger

Introduction

We can see a significant increase in ethnic minority prisoners in most prisons in the Nordic countries (Hildebrandt, 2012). This increase has been particularly great in the years following the publication of the quantitative report on inmates in Nordic prisons in 2008 (Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2008). In that report it was concluded that there is a need for more studies, both qualitative and quantitative studies that can investigate problems in more detail, regarding issues like foreign citizens in Nordic prisons. This research report is one contribution to that.

There are relatively few qualitative studies on the educational backgrounds of ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons. In an English meta-study on ethnic minority women in prison, Yildiz and Bartlett (2011) investigated how ethnic minority prisoners are included or excluded in British research projects. The authors looked at 27 prison studies out of which 25 stated that both foreign and English inmates were included in the study. In most studies the ethnic minority prisoners were not further considered, neither in the design or the implementation of the study. Ethnic minority prisoners "disappeared", either in the material or were deliberately excluded in the further process. Some arguments for the exclusion were:

- The ethnic minority prisoners did not understand English and were automatically excluded from participation in the study.
- The ethnic minority prisoners that took part in the study were so few that the researchers did not consider it worth it to translate the information and questionnaires to other languages than English.
- The ethnic minority prisoners who took part had to be able to express their experience and feelings with an acceptable level of English. If they were not able to do that due to (possibly) different experience on the basis of culture this group was excluded from participation in the study (Yildiz & Bartlett, 2011, p. 638-639).

Only one of the 25 studies included experience from ethnic minority prisoners who did not have English skills or limited English in the data. These respondents were still excluded in the final analysis and in the dissemination of the project results (p. 639). This tells us that in studies of prisoners it is important to have a good overview of the prison population and also be aware of the diversity and minority perspective. Researchers must make the extra effort to make sure that everybody who will take part in the study is actually represented throughout the process. In some cases this will entail extra work, and maybe extra cost, but a study will not be representative of

the selected population unless everybody involved are visible, including in the final result and the dissemination of results.

Since the population of ethnic minority prisoners is increasing in Nordic prisons it is important to focus on this group to make sure they do not disappear in the statistics. This study focuses on the ethnic minority prisoners' educational background, preferences and needs in Nordic prisons. Therefore we have interviewed and reported on the ethnic minority prisoners. The researchers have ascertained that all information about the project, consent forms and questionnaires have been translated to the language of the respondents. They have used interpreters when it has been possible, to ensure that what was said both ways was understood. Even in cases where the respondents have been able to speak the language of the country the interpreter has been able to contribute if requested and when the questions were difficult to understand. In other words, all possible efforts and precautions were made to include the ethnic minority prisoners as real participants in the study. As mentioned in the methods chapter the researchers have experienced the interviews with the 62 inmates from Somalia, Russia, Poland, Iraq and Serbia as interesting and constructive meetings. Some of the researchers have long-standing experience with prison research and have met inmates and staff in the criminal administration system many times. For other researchers the interview study was their first meeting with prisons and those who reside there. Regardless of the researchers' previous experience with the research field they found that they encountered inmates who were enthusiastic and willing conversation partners. The reason for the individual inmate being in prison was unknown to the researchers and this made it easier to focus on the topic of the study and to not be "disturbed" by the actions the inmate had carried out. In conversations many of the respondents appeared like motivated and knowledgeable persons, but with different skills and naturally also different abilities to learn. On the other hand it might have put some circumstances in perspective if we had known their backgrounds. Some respondents told us themselves what criminal act they had committed, while others chose to let it rest.

As previously mentioned the respondents in the Nordic studies are different. They have different backgrounds and of course also different experience from their home countries and life as a member of the diaspora. Some have spent a long time in the country they are imprisoned in, while others were arrested immediately after they arrived. Some have citizenship or residence permit while others have deportation orders on them – the latter make up a large group. There is a discussion at Nordic level (Norway, Denmark and Sweden) about whether ethnic minority prisoners with deportation orders who are not going to be returned to Norwegian society should be placed in separate prisons.[22] One important argument is that these should be interned in separate units to be transferred for prison in their own countries (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2012). This is also a group of inmates with rights to education in prison (United Nations, 1999).

[22] It has been decided that the Vardåsen Prison in Kongsvinger is to be used for this purpose.

Inmates should be offered content while serving their sentence that is adapted to this group. It should not be like it is now, that they can apply for ordinary education and training services that the prison has available. Norway has the highest share of ethnic minority prisoners in the Nordic countries in relation to the total prison population. At the same time Norway has a relatively low foreign population living in the country, compared with for example Sweden and Denmark.

Even if the researchers did not ask questions about the reason for being in prison, or why the respondents committed crimes, it is likely that some respondents are career criminals, while others came here to look for work and make a better life for themselves and their families. Some have permanent residency in the country but have become involved in criminal activities for different reasons.

Despite differences in the amount of time they have lived in the country, different reasons for being in prison and different opportunities for making contact with the people in the country they are imprisoned in, many express generally positive views on Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Swedish people. But we also understand that they do not feel fully included. Many live in a parallel world, where they rarely meet and interact with other than their own fellow countrymen, other foreigners and a few other people. When it is difficult to make social contact, when the job opportunities are limited, when one has no income, then the barrier to quick, alternative solutions to problems may not be so high. For some this results in prison sentences. In prison many inmates learn more about such solutions. "There is an alternative school in prison", says one of the respondents in the Nordic material, "… where you learn to become a criminal by the bigger guys". However, this respondent did not consider criminality a problem, on the contrary, crime appeared to provide the solution to some of his problems. "…, but one can also learn other, positive things in prison", he continues, referring to the fact that he now speaks English relatively well, which he has not learnt at school, but from other inmates with English speaking backgrounds. This statement contains both negative and positive learning elements of forms of capital that the inmate has acquired – inside and outside of prison. Hasund and Hydle (2010) use the term *liminal capital* to define the type of social capital the inmates have. Liminal capital is social capital in concrete form as the resources and networks that liminal, vulnerable and marginalised young adult men create. Liminality is an undefined and undefinable zone *between* the transition lines in society (Hasund & Hydle, 2010, p. 177). As we understand it, in such liminal spaces opinions can clash and new understanding and meaning can emerge for the parties involved. Meetings between ethnic minority prisoners and teachers or inmates and prison officers can be considered a space for exchange of opinions and development of new understanding. Westrheim & Lillejord (2007) present the idea of a «zone for deliberation» as a potential arena for developing inter subjective understanding in situations where the parties involved have very different experience.

It is still important that teaching and training in prison makes a deliberate effort not to compete with such "informal learning spaces". We know from the general society that many minority groups are in such liminal rooms. According to Hasund and Hydle (2010) they feel excluded from ordinary society and one of the reasons is a problem with communication; language, understanding, knowledge, skills and

movement. This applies to Nordic inmates with who have reading and writing difficulties, but also inmates with foreign background who may have the same difficulties, for different reasons. The Nordic countries are increasingly multicultural and so are the Nordic prisons. The relationship between minority and majority in a multicultural society takes on a special meaning in prison (p. 177). Liminal stages are, according to Seymor-Smith (1986) (cited in Hasund & Hydle, 2010), a result of separation from life in society and a consequence of society's failure to include one at an earlier stage. Even if this is not true for all inmates with foreign background, as there are some with established social networks who have spent a long time in the country, it is still a point to consider that many who end up outside society as a result of exclusion are at risk of becoming criminals. If the staff in the prison education and the criminal administration system enter into positive dialogue with ethnic minority prisoners about their educational preferences and personal development, the individual inmate's perception if inclusion will probably increase, which can act as a buffer against criminal acts later on.

It is important to acknowledge that marginalised persons on the edge of society can have social capital despite circumstances like drug abuse and criminal careers (Hasund & Hydle, 2010, p. 178). The prison is considered a borderland on the edge of civilised society (p. 185). It is screened off by a wall that, according to Goffman (1967)[23], creates a barrier between the inmate and the world outside. But it might be that such borderlands are just where new opportunities arise and changes can happen. Education and training in the criminal administration system *does have* opportunities. To many, education represents new opportunities, because it encounters the imprisoned student on the margins and because of the opportunities that education provides in itself. The increasing number of ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons makes it more relevant and has implications for how education in prisons is organised and how it is designed, in terms of the teaching. This must also be the basis for the criminal administration systems in the Nordic countries for developing good education and training provision for ethnic minority prisoners. The criminal administration system must develop good conditions for learning in prisons, based on the rights the inmates actually have.

As pupils or students ethnic minority prisoners have rights in accordance with the national education legislation in the Nordic countries. However, the foreign inmate's status could have implications for how the education related legislation is practiced. In Denmark ethnic minority persons who are remanded in custody in prison without a sentence do not have a duty to work, while inmates have a duty to work after they have been sentenced. It is also a question of whether inmates with deportation orders against them should be able to follow the ordinary education and training offers at the institution. The law is interpreted differently. In Norway, adult citizens have since 2002 been entitled to elementary school education and since 2000 they have been entitled to secondary schooling. Foreigners with permanent residency or

23 Goffmann on the total institution.

temporary residence permits or work permits and/or residence permits providing entitlement for settlement permits have the same rights as Norwegian citizens. It is claimed that inmates with deportation orders against them are not necessarily entitled to training under national law. Instead one leans on statements in international conventions and recommendation where only the person's status as inmate is used as the basis for practice. On the background of these it can be claimed that *all* inmates in principle are entitled to training (NAFO 2009, p. 27-29).According to conventions and recommendations all inmates are entitled to an education and it should be adapted to the individual needs as far as possible and also provide support and facilitation to those with special needs. It is also emphasised that the right to an education should not be replaced by work. An important aspect that emerges from UN's convention of economic, social and cultural rights, is that the education should also aim for the overall development of the individual; character and understanding of the dignity […] (art. 13.1). This is a great challenge for the criminal administration system in the area of education.

Despite laws, international conventions and recommendations, the available education and training open to ethnic minority prisoners is still characterised by different practices within the same country and between the different Nordic countries. So training cannot be said to be sufficiently provided for this group of inmates.

It would be a great backlash to the criminal administration system in the Nordic countries if the ethnic minority prisoners are not adequately included in the planning and implementation of good teaching. Even if ethnic minority prisoners who are going to be deported are placed in separate prisons, as has been recently decided in Norway, the Nordic countries are still obliged by international conventions and recommendations. They should provide a full and good service, with a view to the fact that the inmate is going to re-enter civil society. As in all good education, training of ethnic minority prisoners must be based on rights, fairness, inclusion, access and not the least quality.

On this background we will discuss findings from the Nordic study. Even if the findings from each of the national studies must be considered on the background of the circumstances in the country, there is a lot that is comparable. The Nordic countries have relatively similar education systems, and a prison system built on quite similar legislation, guidelines, conventions and recommendations.

Discussion of the findings in the Nordic study

On the background of the objective of the Nordic study and the topical subdivision of the interview forms, the following main topics were investigated[24]: *Which educational backgrounds, preferences and needs for education do ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons have?*

[24] The same problem definition was used in the national studies.

In the following the discussion is organised in accordance with the problem definition and the questionnaire's topical subdivision. Not all findings will be discussed to the same extent. The discussion places particular emphasis on the significance of background and context, different structural barriers to education and training in prison, the importance of language, the view on the future and preferences and needs of ethnic minority prisoners.

Importance of background and context

Many ethnic minority prisoners are from countries with educational systems that are very different from the ones we have in the Nordic countries. If we look at the immigrant populations in the Nordic countries there are significant differences between different groups as regards how much education they have when they arrived in the country they are now imprisoned in. Such differences can also be reinforced during their stay on the Nordic countries. Some groups come from countries with well-developed educational systems; others come from countries where only the privileged get an education. There are few countries in the west where the situation is as difficult as it is in Somalia, which hasn't had a public school system since the Somali state collapsed in 1991 (NOU 2010:7, p. 33). It can be a challenge for ethnic minority prisoners to encounter an entirely different education system, maybe the first one they encounter, while in prison. If the inmate is going to return to his home country, either voluntarily or by deportation, it matters what education or training he takes part in and whether it is useful in the home country. For example, is a Norwegian welder's certificate valid in all countries? Is a vocational certificate automatically recognised in the inmate's home country? Not all such questions can be answered properly unless the inmate's background is known. It is conceivable that such information can be obtained in the long term.

Some respondents in this study have backgrounds from inside or near war zones or areas with a lot of political conflict and unrest, which for many has had consequences for the continuity and completion of their education. Others come from countries that are in recession, with a lot of poverty, high unemployment and other social problems. They have come to the Nordic countries as a result of being UN quota refugees, due to being on the move as refugees or for reasons of family reunion, as job-seekers from Schengen countries like Poland, Lithuania and other countries, but also for other and sometimes unknown reasons. Some respondents have been in the country in which they are serving since they were children or very young, as in the Danish contribution. Others were young, adults or older when they arrived, as in the Norwegian, Icelandic, Finnish and Swedish studies. The respondents have different migration histories and they have handled the challenges in their new country in different ways. Some have adapted well to the new existence and made social connections with people in the country they are in, other are isolated or only have contact with their own countrymen. Their migration and background histories

also influence their stay in the new country, and also their motivation, preferences and need for education behind and outside the prison walls. There is great variation in the inmates' cultural, linguistic and educational background. Such contextual circumstances emerge very clearly in the Nordic material.

Several respondents in this study appear to have had a difficult time growing up and school history, while other tell us about good and problem free school years and have completed elementary school, secondary school or in some cases higher education. All respondents started school in their home country at the age of six or seven; they had good friends and say that they managed well at school. After that, however, their education takes on different directions and durations. While one respondent in the Norwegian material only has one year of schooling because the village school was bombed by Iranian planes and was never rebuilt, there are respondents in the other Nordic countries that have reached higher education, even if not completed it. Despite the fact that some respondents (cf. the Norwegian material) say they had problems at school, such as being hit or monitored by teachers, or they have had interrupted schooling, there are few who say they did not like going to school. It is unclear from the Norwegian material whether the respondents have had academic problems at school and what they were specifically, although it must be assumed that some of them have had such problems. A significant, pleasing and general finding is that the respondents have a largely positive attitude towards school, education and training, also in prison.

When the motivation, preferences and needs relating to education and training revolve around gaining knowledge and developing skills that will enable them to do well on the job market and take care of their families, this has to be seen in light of the situation in the country they come from. On the background of the knowledge that is available about the ethnic minority prisoners, their backgrounds, educational histories, work experience and migration history the challenge for the teaching in the criminal administration system (prison education) becomes to map or survey the inmate's linguistic background, educational background, formal and total qualifications, work experience from the home country and emigration. Such knowledge is important, for preparing a meaningful educational programme for the individual, and for issuing certificates and course diplomas that state what the inmate has taken part in and what skills that have been achieved.

In the discussion of education, preferences and requirements by ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons, we see it as crucial to find out what is not working adequately. Respondents in the Nordic material are quite unanimous as regards what barriers they perceive as inhibiting to education and training in prisons.

Barriers to education and training in Nordic prisons

Information and interpreting services

In a new study (Thorsrud, 2012) on women in Norwegian prisons it is claimed that the criminal administration system faces great challenges as regards communicating with and providing information to inmates with minority languages[25]. It emerged that inmates that do not speak Norwegian miss out on important information due to language problems. This leads to frustration and poses a risk that the interests of the inmates are not taken care of. Decisions made by the prison, such as rejecting applications for permits, are written in Norwegian, while it should be written in the mother tongue of the inmate or in English. This does not necessarily require a lot of resources and will protect the inmate's legal rights in a much better way (p. 30-31).

One issue that emerged clearly in the Nordic study is that different practices regarding information, interpreting and written material are a problem for the respondents. Ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons have rights relating to education and of course other things, but it turns out they often do not know what *rights* they have. The rights are often not clearly stated and are practiced differently in prisons and in the criminal administration system in the individual Nordic country. The right to education is non-negotiable, but there is adispute over who has full rights and who can only partially benefit from the education services. With respect to the right to information and interpreter services in their own language it appears that this is awarded only to a very limited extent. The flow of information from the prison to the foreign inmate often appears arbitrary. If this is due a lack of an information strategy, arbitrariness, indifference, discrimination or perceived language barriers on the part of the prison we do not have any basis for commenting on, but statements by the respondents in the Nordic material speak clearly. Information about the education and training services in Nordic prisons does not reach the inmates to an adequate degree, and if it does it is often in a language the ethnic minority prisoners do not understand. An inmate must be able to express himself in a language he knows best, or understands. If this is not possible the communication must be done via an interpreter. Not only is it important that ethnic minority prisoners receive and understand important information, it is also important that they receive help with searching for the information they require. According to Skutnabb-Kangas and Philipson (1994), it should be a given that education and information are given in the mother tongue.

A finding that is cause for concern in the Nordic report is the fact that a large part of the information that is disseminated to the inmates does not come from the staff of the prison or from teachers, but from other inmates – usually from the same country. Associated with this practice there are legal, security related and ethical problems. Neither does it guarantee that the information that is communicated is

[25] The term minority language is used about children, young people and adults with a different mother tongue than the majority language. In most contexts in the report the term used is ethnic minority prisoners.

correct. On the contrary, it can be misunderstood and incomplete. This could have consequences for whether the inmate chooses to take part in educational activities in prison, and for what he chooses. Lack of information also deprives the inmate of the opportunity to make a qualified choice as to educational activity. It does occur that the inmates do not know they can take part in education in prison or what they can chose – such as the respondent in the Icelandic study who has a strong wish to resume previously interrupted studies, but says he didn't know there was such a service in the prison.

If the inmate nevertheless manages to find out what education and training opportunities he has, it appears that the waiting time is inappropriately long before they are offered a place at school. It is not clear to the researchers what the real reason for this is. Are there not enough places for the individual courses? Is it due to inertia in the system, and if so where are the bottlenecks? In the Swedish study some respondents suggest that ethnic background can a possible explanation why they do not get a place at school. The argument that is highlighted by the prison education as explanation for how long waiting time is that there is a shortage of places for individual training and courses and that only courses and education that are covered by the teachers' area of responsibility are offered. In other words, the education service varies quite a lot within the individual Nordic prisons and it is difficult to continue with the commenced education if one is transferred to a different prison where this education, course or training is not offered. It is a matter of concern that inmates in Nordic prisons do not get sufficient information about the educational services they are entitled to and that structural circumstances prevent them from having their rights to education awarded to them. They also claim that the practical implementation of the education does not work well. This suggests lack of management of the knowledge organisation that is the educational institution and it has very unfavourable consequences for the inmate. Unless education and training is secured at a higher administrative level it can easily fail at the levels below.

Educational activities and preferences

There is variation as regards which ones and how many educational activities the inmates take part in. It ranges from being underway with vocational education, such as carpenter, to not participating in any form of organised education or training. Most inmates complain about lack of information and long waiting times for a place at school, but nevertheless most of them take part in some activity or other. If they did not get a place on a course or education programme in prison, they talk about activities they have gotten involved in on their own. It might be reading (technical literature, poems, history, religion, and entertainment), writing (poems, songs, and stories), drawing or other that they do to pass the time. It might be books they have obtained from the library or borrowed from others. Some also say they borrow books to learn Norwegian or children's books that are easier to understand.

Among courses that are being arranged, it is language courses (English and the language in the country they are serving their sentence in) that appear to be popular. During their time in prison the inmates have a need to communicate with staff, as

well as with other inmates. If they commence an education in prison, they must have enough language skills to understand what they are reading and to be able to solve problems. Those who do not develop language skills will have problems completing a full vocational training. There are few technical books available in the language of the inmates that also adhere to the Nordic countries' national curricula. In order to keep up with the teaching they need language skills. The problem seems to be that it is difficult to get a place on the language courses and many inmates wait for a year or more before they get a place. If the inmate has a deportation order against him, it appears somewhat arbitrary what educational activities they are entitled to and if they get a place in education and training. However, the legal framework is unclear, and language and information are also factors. It is a problem when such vagueness creates less favourable conditions for education and training for certain groups of prisoners. Nordic prisons today are multicultural, but the educational services are still organised as if the prisons are mono-cultural. The criminal administration system and the educational authorities in the Nordic countries must take into account the multicultural reality by facilitating education and training offers accordingly. This does not just apply to language courses; it must apply to all subjects and courses that the prison offers. The respondents follow the courses offered that the actual prison offers and that largely means activities covered by the staff's professional competence, unless ICT-based teaching is offered – as in Sweden for example. It goes without saying that if the staff's professional competence determines what's offered, this can be too limited in relation to the diverse requirements of the inmates.

One thing are what educational activities the respondents in the Nordic study actually take part in, another thing is what education and training they want. As we can read in the country chapters there appears to be reasonable agreement between what the ethnic minority prisoners envisage for the future and the type of education and training they would like. Even if most want and also see the need for education and training in prison, some of what is offered is irrelevant for some, such as inmates who have previously commenced vocational or higher education and just want to complete this.

Since the respondents in the study have different backgrounds, education and work experience, they also have different preferences for education in prison, or after their release. The majority of the respondents believe they need more education to do well in the job market, even if they also consider their chances low because they have a criminal sentence behind them. They want more educational options and shorter waiting time to get a place on the various educational activities. For example, the Danish inmates say that they need more education, but that the practical organisation of the educational activities prevents participation and completion. Finnish respondents say that they have never been able to discuss their educational preferences with a student advisor or counsellor. They think that there is no overarching plan for education and training. Limited access, too long waiting time, lack of guidance and counselling service and moving between prisons during an education programme – all of this creates more disruption, interruption, and loss of motivation.

The importance of language and language teaching

According to Viljugrein (2002) minority language inmates are more isolated than others, partly as a result of linguistic and cultural circumstances. It is not easy to keep a conversation going, ask sensible questions and give or receive information without knowing the language. The inmate might have to spend years of his life in prison and they will hopefully communicate with staff and other inmates. Language teaching is important to ethnic minority prisoners because it lays the foundation for ability to participate in educational and training opportunities in prison. Without language it is impossible to take part in educational activities that require good language skills and that the inmate can read and write technical literature in the majority language. Viljugren (2002) claims that many ethnic minority prisoners only have what she calls superficial language.

Mastering the language when the foreign inmate is returned to society will have importance for economic, social and political participation. Good knowledge of the language also makes it easier to use democratic rights and establish contact and friendship with persons outside one's close circuit of fellow countrymen (NOU 2010:7, p. 34). This is fundamental to taking part in society on an equal level with the country's other citizens.

If the inmates are going to benefit from educational activities in prison they need language training. If education and training in prison is to have any value it must be adapted to individual requirements. For example, those who need support with the subjects or with training and work practice should receive it. There is also a communal aspect to language, for example being able to speak one's own language in prison with other inmates from the same language background and maintaining one's cultural character as far as possible. This is about identity and belonging. It is a paradox that the language courses are so hard to get on when language skills are some of the most important to be able to participate in education and communicating with staff and inmates. Furthermore, language is a necessity for having a real possibility for further education, work and social interaction when returning to society. If education in prison is to be a useful resource for the inmates, during their prison sentence and after returning to society it is important that the criminal administration system, the school management and teaching staff get time to develop competencies in multicultural teaching and multilingual teaching through further education. Time must also be allocated for the personnel to discuss professional challenges and opportunities particularly relating to this group of students. Education and training must be based on the requirement of the individual and be part of a total plan that also include the time after release. How do the respondents view the future and do they consider education and training as an investment in it?

The future after release

Education and training can be of great importance to the foreign inmate – not just when it comes to future work or further education, but because schooling and properly adapted training has a positive effect on the individual's self-esteem and

identity, while it reduces the burden of being imprisoned (Viljugrein, 2002). As is the case among the rest of the population, the immigrant's level of education will also influence how they do in other areas (Blom & Henriksen, 2008, in NOU 2010:7, p. 33). The higher education one has, the greater are the chances that one does well in other areas of life. For example, higher education provides better opportunities for entering the job market, and individuals with higher education have other types of professions than those with low levels of education. A great challenge to all inmates is the fact that after their sentence they will return to society outside the prison walls. That is also true for ethnic minority prisoners, but they are not necessarily going back to society in the country where they are serving their prison sentence. Nevertheless, they are going back to a society and there are no indications that it is less of a challenge to be sent back to Iraq, Poland or Russia. Regardless of which society the inmate returns to, it requires thorough preparations, such as through education, training and work experience.

The ethnic minority prisoners in the Nordic study have different views on the future, but many think it is difficult to talk about the future after prison. Some have been given long sentences and think society will change during the time they are inside and it is difficult to envisage what life will be like. Others think that prison will mark them for life and it will be difficult to get into the job market. But there are also some respondents who are optimistic and think they will manage fine in the future. But most respondents think that education will increase their chances of managing in society and in the job market. Education also serves other functions. For example, they believe it contributes to personal growth, identity and self-esteem. That way it can contribute to alleviating the perception that some respondents say they have of themselves, as people without value and importance. Still, the possibilities for work are what motivates most to seek out educational activities, whether in prison or after the prison sentence. Work means income and the possibility of looking after their family regardless of where they are.

Work experience and the need to develop new skills

In an increasingly technological and advanced society with an increasingly high threshold for entering the job market, it will be necessary to develop special skills to meet the demands of the future. Inmates without relevant work experience will easily end up outside the job market (Yeonopolus, 1994). Many respondents in this study have had short term, often arbitrary work situations, in their home country and their new country[26]. Only a minority have had work lasting over several years, or which has required skills that they had to have more education to gain. For many of the inmates their work has been in small enterprises, run by family or friends. Naturally, this varies between the different groups of inmates in the Nordic study, but common to all is that they have not learnt the skills they have in an educational

[26] We are talking about a diaspora when many members from the same ethnic or national group has left their home country to settle in a different country, but still maintain ties to their original country (Safran, 1991).

setting, but rather in practice in a work situation. In any case, education and training aimed at developing skills for meeting the demands of the job market would be positive for the inmate during the prison term. Education and training will form part of the capital the prisoners bring with them after the prison term and this will also benefit society.

The respondents in the Nordic study generally agree that education and training are important with respect to entering the job market after prison. Even if they claim that it was not necessary to have an education to do the work they had previously, they recognise that the future looks different and that it could be necessary to learn more. In this process there are some that think they will need support during their education, but most think they do not need this. On the other hand, they would like support and help with finding work after prison.To what extent do the ethnic minority prisoners perceive ICT skills as being potentially helpful for their education? According to Arcangeli, Paolo, di Mieri and Suriano (2010) internet-based learning, in its different guises, is not just useful for "ordinary" pupils and students who are prevented from taking part in ordinary teaching and courses, but are also good tools for other groups of pupils and students, such as ethnic minority prisoners.

The respondents in the study wish they could spend more time on the internet. They have good basic ICT skills, and the younger ones seem to have better skills than the older respondents. Except for the Somali respondents, most have problems with complicated operations such as Excel and setting up their own website. Given the long waiting time and the limited educational opportunities in prison, ICT based education will be a good alternative to ordinary teaching. It will provide more opportunities and maybe also a better choice. For ethnic minority prisoners who want to start or complete higher education, ICT-based services and guidance will be necessary. It should be possible to implement this and still have systems in place for secure use of the net. Education and training in a classroom in which the student and teacher are both present physically will probably dominate the traditional educational institution for a long time still. Some will claim that ICT does not replace the physical relationship with a teacher. However, it is not always the case that this relationship is good, or suits everybody. For a prisoner, internet-based relationships with teachers may be preferable in some cases.

Practical implications and recommendations

The findings in the Nordic study should also have practical implications. We want to make some recommendations to the political authorities, ministries, criminal administration systems and schools in the Nordic countries.

Information

The criminal administration system and the schools have to prepare complete information about the educational opportunities the prison provides. Such information has to be translated to the languages that the inmates speak or understand. Inmates from different countries must be made aware of what legal

rights they have in relation to international conventions and recommendations. To avoid uncertainty regarding rights and opportunities it is important that such knowledge is embedded in the criminal administration system and in the school system, to make sure the inmates get good and correct information regarding this issue. The responsibility for communicating general information about the criminal administration system and making sure that ethnic minority prisoners receive the information they need to navigate the system lies with *the criminal administration system. The schools* have a particular responsibility for providing information about the educational opportunities and rights that the ethnic minority prisoners have to training as stipulated by laws, conventions and recommendations.

Use of interpreter and interpreting services

Ethnic minority prisoners who need it, have to receive information and in some cases education in a language that they understand properly. In most cases this will be their mother tongue, but it can also be another language or dialect. Therefore it is important to get an interpreter who speaks the same language/dialect as the foreign inmate. Ask the inmate to provide as many details as possible about what language they prefer. The inmate cannot make qualified decisions when they only partially understand the information. Use of interpreter must be common practice for interviews, surveying, and information dissemination and as far as possible to get the inmate started on the education. Provide good information to the interpreter about the particular character of the given interpretation task to ensure an optimal interpreting situation. The criminal administration system is obliged to evaluate the requirements for interpreter and then book an interpreter with the necessary qualifications. It is also responsible for explaining to the inmate who doesn't want an interpreter why an interpreter is necessary. It is not appropriate to use other inmates as interpreters when communicating important information or other messages. The objective is to protect legal rights and equality in situations where language barriers exist.

Inmates who have been issued deportation orders

Inmates with deportation orders issued against them experience that they have low priority compared to other inmates and sometimes are told that they are not entitled to education. As we referred to above, the right to an education applies to *all* inmates, according to UN. Høstmælingen (2004) writes, with reference to the relevant UN convention: "[...] In this context it is noteworthy that the right to an education applies to everybody, including foreigners and persons who are not legally in the country" (p. 311).

Inmates in custody

This is referred to as a problem in Denmark, where many inmates spend a long time remanded in custody. It is important to emphasise that inmates in custody have the same rights to education and training as other inmates.

Long waiting time

The inmates must receive quicker response to their application for education and training. If they have to wait longer than a reasonable period they have to be told why it is taking so long.

Better counselling service and student advisors

The counselling service and student guidance service must be reinforced. It is particularly important to ethnic minority prisoners from countries with a completely different education system than the one in the country where they live and/or serve their sentence.

The educational provisions must increase and be adapted to the individual needs

Ethnic minority prisoners in Nordic prisons are from different social, cultural, economic and political backgrounds. That's why the criminal administration system and the schools have to gain knowledge about the inmate's previous educational background and put it in context. The school also have to adapt the education and training to the inmate's abilities and aptitudes.

Surveying the prisoner's competencies

The schools should carry out a survey of the educational background, requirements, preferences and literacy as soon as ethnic minority prisoners arrive in prison. It can also be relevant to test the inmate's literacy skills – in their own language. This way the inmates can receive a better adapted education programme.

Vocational training

The schools must facilitate more vocational training adapted to the ethnic minority prisoners. It appears that ethnic minority prisoners want the same vocational training opportunities as other inmates. This means they must get the same access as others to such training.

Evaluation/assessment of total qualifications

The study reveals that this group of inmates have a good deal of work experience from their home country. They have had several jobs. To place previous education and work experience into a structured education programme the schools must use evaluation of total qualifications and validation, so that previous education and work experience can be evaluated in relation to the national curricula in the different countries.

Language education

Ethnic minority prisoners want education in their mother tongue and other languages. The schools must facilitate courses to be taught in the inmate's mother tongue or a language that the inmate understands well. This is particularly important to enable ethnic minority prisoners to take part in the different vocational training opportunities. If the inmate is to be deported it would be natural to teach him/her English or other languages that will be useful when they return to their own country.

Digital competence and the computer driving licence

The level of ICT skills vary among ethnic minority prisoners. The schools should therefore provide basic training in ICT for inmates with low level of ICT skills and advanced training for those who master the basic skills. Such training must pervade all subjects. Additionally, there should be courses to address areas in which the ethnic minority prisoners are weak. This might be use of Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint and other ICT skills that are necessary to manage in society. The computer driving licence is requested by several and the training offered should be extended according to requirements.

Elementary school

The schools should facilitate teaching and training for ethnic minority prisoners that have little or no previous schooling.

Support teaching

Many respondents express a need for support in the subjects if they are to benefit from the training that the school offers. The schools should be particularly aware of this problem and provide adapted teaching and maybe special teaching according to report by educational and psychological counselling service.

University studies

The schools must facilitate university studies when the inmates want such education. As more and more people are taking college and university education in ordinary society this will become gradually more relevant in prisons as well.

Better follow up after release, rehabilitation and education plans

Many ethnic minority prisoners are unsure of what education they can proceed with after their release. They also have little knowledge of the job market and what it has to offer. Therefore, the schools must prepare a good plan for rehabilitation and education with the individual inmates. The plan should demonstrate progress and contain basic information about education and work opportunities after release from prison.

Short descriptions of the educational systems in the individual countries

To get a better understanding and overview the schools should prepare a short description of the individual country's (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden) education system in the country's own language and the language spoken by the foreign inmate. A description of the education system in the country the inmate is from should also be provided. This would be a good help for the inmate, for the school and the criminal administration system.

Transfer to another prison or to prison in their home country

Transfer to another prison in the middle of an educational situation or just before an exam can lead to an interrupted or ruined education programme. The criminal administration system and the schools must, as far as possible, ensure that the inmate is allowed to complete the education programme they are undertaking. If the inmate is going back to the home country, the educational authorities in the home country should be contacted with a view to continuing their schooling.

Motivation for education

The fact that also ethnic minority prisoners are motivated for education is important to emphasise for everyone who works on training and education in the criminal administration system; prison staff, teaching staff, Norwegian employment services and other relevant collaboration partners.

Work group

The important findings that are made in this Nordic study clearly show that both the criminal administration system and the education authorities face great challenges as regards ethnic minority prisoners and their rights to education. The researchers who have contributed to this report recommend that national work groups are established as soon as possible, that are made up of representatives from the criminal administration system, schools and other players. The work groups must have a clear mandate review the foreign inmate's situation, including the legal framework, information, training and work.

More research

The work on the Nordic report makes it clear that ethnic minority prisoners' situation in Nordic prisons, especially with respect to education, is an area where more research is needed. Finally, we would like to point out some areas where more research is particularly needed.

The teachers' perception of the teaching and their competence

Following several years of research into the inmates' education, research is now also needed on how the teachers experience the teaching and training in prison. For example, is it their perception that the teaching is sufficiently adapted to the great diversity in the inmates' educational background, ethnic belonging, language, religion and culture? Are the teachers' skills good enough to meet the major challenges the Nordic prisons are facing when it comes to this diversity?

The teachers' and the prison officers' motivation of the inmates

This report also shows that prison staff can make a big difference to the foreign inmate's motivation for education and training. There is generally a need for research on how the inmates are motivated for education in prison, and in this context the influence by prison staff, teachers, employment counselling services staff and other players and the interaction between them should be looked at.

The mind-set and politics in the criminal administration system

In this report we have said that multicultural competencies is not competence that should be confined to a few interested parties, but has to include all involved parties at all levels. Therefore it must be investigated whether the criminal administration system has an overarching policy on these issues and if this policy is implemented on a lower level or is adapted to the different cultures among the staff in the schools and the criminal administration system. Which multicultural competence does the prison staff develop throughout their education? Which competence is available among teachers and other professional personnel

to facilitate a multicultural teaching environment and adapted multicultural teaching? The same questions can also be seen in relation to other staff in the criminal administration system such as employment guidance personnel, priests, librarians and other players that interact with ethnic minority prisoners.

Actual participation in education

Despite rights laid down by international recommendations and national legislation there is great variation between the Nordic countries and the prisons as regards how many inmates actually take part in training. This is particularly evident in the Danish study. Therefore it is necessary in all countries to map which circumstances that prevent or promote participation. It has particularly been observed that a lack of information about educational opportunities and linguistic barriers are critical factors for participation and completion of education in prison.

Higher education

In accordance with the increasing level of education in the population and the increasing diversity of the educational backgrounds of inmates, the need for more knowledge about the inmates' opportunities to enter higher education after prison is also increasing. Also among ethnic minority prisoners many have qualifications to enter third level education, and research based knowledge will be useful for facilitating self-tuition during a prison term.

Language acquisition

The studies in the Nordic countries show that many inmates have learnt languages outside the official educational arena. It is of interest to investigate further how disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minority prisoners, acquire a language and how this is used in everyday communication and in communication with the authorities.

Digital skills

Even if the studies show that the ethnic minority prisoners report having relatively good digital skills, updated skills will be required in any education. Our studies provide an indication of what skills a non-representative selection of ethnic minority prisoners has. Therefore there is a need to investigate much more thoroughly how this group of inmates manage in a digitalised education system.

Social capital and new opportunities

In the report we write that it is important to recognise that marginalised people on the edge of established society can have social capital despite circumstances like drug abuse and criminal careers. In prison new opportunities can arise and changes can take place. It is important to investigate what new opportunities that can face ethnic minority prisoners in a Nordic prison and how their social capital can become a resource in education and training. The criminal administration system and the schools must develop good conditions for learning in the prisons, based on the rights the inmates have, but also on the social capital they bring with them.

Knowledge of the demands of the workplace

One objective of education is to help the inmates to qualify for the workplace after prison. Even if many claim that they know the demands of workplace, we realise that our investigation only gives an impression of their perception of these demands. It is therefore important to investigate more thoroughly how well they know the demands of the society they are going back to after prison. Such knowledge will be useful when planning education, work and life after prison.

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