



Summary

Advisory report 'Bringing the outside world in', Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles (RSJ)

The Advisory Division of the Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles (hereinafter referred to as 'the RSJ') issued an advisory report on its own initiative regarding the importance of involving the outside world in detention for the purpose of resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation. In the advisory report, the RSJ addresses the question of how to better involve the outside world in detention so that it contributes to the fundamental objectives of resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation.

What do we mean by the outside world?

The importance of involving the outside world is addressed in this advisory report through the themes of external professionals (municipalities and probation service), labour and training, social network and volunteers.

External professionals

The municipalities and the probation service are important links for (former) detainees in the transition from inside prison to the outside world. The probation service is responsible for supervising ex-detainees after release from detention. When probation supervision is not imposed, the municipality has a managing role. Because this role of municipalities does not have a legal basis, it is filled in variably and not always adequately. For a gradual transition to the outside world, it is important that supervision by the probation service and municipalities starts during the time in detention.

Labour and training

Labour during detention takes place within the learning and working environment of the manufacturing company In-Made. Here, detainees can gain work experience, work on their employment skills, and undergo on-the-job training. For example, there are opportunities to work in wood and metalworking workshops, sewing workshops, laundries, bakeries, and bicycle repair shops. Despite the Custodial Institutions Agency's (DJI) aim for detainees to obtain practical certificates within DJI's recognized employment companies, not enough detainees are yet moving on to regular training or employment upon release from prison. The RSJ believes this could be improved by establishing more covenants to involve potential employers and educational institutions in the transition from detention to release. In addition, the RSJ sees opportunities to consider labour more as an integral part of resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation.

Social network

A (positive) social network is an essential part of resocialisation. It is therefore important to encourage and ensure contact with the social network as much as possible. This applies to children of detainees in particular. Initiatives such as the Parent-Child Detention Programme and the family approach provide space and opportunities to devote attention to restoring and maintaining the parent-child relationship. However, these initiatives are still (too) non-committal, resulting in substantial differences between penal institutions (PIs). The RSJ furthermore concludes that a considerable gap exists in the attention for the left behind children of detainees. To maintain contact with the social network, short-term reintegration leave can be requested by the detainee. To better evaluate these leave applications, policy frameworks are currently being developed. However, it is also important to consider the situation where a detainee does not have (or no longer has) a (positive) social network and the question arises whether this network can be (re)established.

Volunteers

Volunteers have an important and unique position within the Dutch prison system and are of great importance for resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation. By deploying volunteering broadly and not only linking it to reintegration through the detention- and reintegration plan (D&R-plan), the resocialisation programme can be given substance in a broad way. Volunteers can also add significant value to the reintegration of detainees into society, as they can build a bridge from inside to outside prison. It is important that this is encouraged, facilitated and structurally funded.

Conclusion

The RSJ concludes that involving the outside world in detention is not yet sufficiently embedded in the policy and implementation practice of the prison system. An integrated and future-proof vision on resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation. lacks when it comes to the execution of the prison sentence. As a result, the opportunities for resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation are insufficiently exploited. Just focusing on the basic conditions for reintegration is not enough.

Resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation should be taken as a starting point in the execution of prison sentences and the return of detainees to society more than they are today. The RSJ therefore advocates for a proper elaboration of the broad objectives of resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation in an integral vision on the execution of prison sentences.

In addition, anchoring resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation in practical implementation, through a recovery-oriented detention climate, national policy and steering for uniform implementation in the PIs, is necessary. This should include the guarantee that the outside world is structurally involved in detention. After all, the responsibility for resocialisation and restorative rehabilitation lies not only with DJI, but



- ii. involving parties such as the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) and the municipality already during detention and ensure close cooperation with the prison case manager;
 - iii. requiring DJI, both nationally and locally, to make efforts to reach agreements with employers and educational institutions in the region, where detainees can apply for jobs and education even after detention. In doing so, funding opportunities and appropriate guidance should be offered, if necessary. Consider to what extent this falls under the responsibility of adjacent ministries.
- d) From the first day in detention, detainees' contact with their social network should be guaranteed and encouraged, especially with their child(ren), by:
- i. national coverage of successful initiatives;
 - ii. structurally investing in digital resources, as this provides additional opportunities to maintain and improve the connection between detainees and their social network;
 - iii. developing a policy framework for leave aimed at maintaining contact with the social network, also considering options for this form of leave for detainees without a (positive) social network.
- e) Guarantee the intrinsic value of and access to volunteers for all detainees and do not limit this access by using them only for reintegration purposes. Drop the condition that the volunteer contact must be included in the D&R plan. Also provide structural funding for projects with volunteers that are demonstrably of added social value.

The advisory report can be consulted on [the website](#) of the Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles.

