

PSSARP

Psychological Strategies
for the Sexual and Affective
Re-education of Prisoners



European perspectives: recommendations for an affectivity-sensitive enforcement policy

Introduction

The promotion of affectivity in the prison system is not a „luxury problem“, but a necessity in terms of human rights, social policy and security. While individual countries such as Romania are pioneers, there is great heterogeneity across Europe. The Erasmus+ project PSSARP is therefore committed to developing common guidelines. What would it take to establish an affectivity-friendly prison model at European level?

Common challenges in a European comparison

The initial situation is complex: in many member states, affective rights of prisoners are legally recognized but practically restricted. Common problems are:

- Lack of intimate visiting opportunities
- Inadequate infrastructure (e.g. no rooms suitable for families)
- Cultural taboo on sexuality in prison
- Inadequate psychological or educational services
- Differences in federal or regional enforcement models (e.g. Germany)

At the same time, there are no Europe-wide minimum standards or recommendations for promoting affective relationships in detention.

Key demands of the PSSARP project

The project has developed the following recommendations based on its transnational research and the workshops in Germany, Italy and Romania:

1. Introduction of minimum affective standards

The EU should develop guidelines to promote emotional health in the prison system - for example as part of the European Prison Rules. This includes:

- o Regular, unsupervised visits for spouses and partners
- o Child-friendly visiting rooms and family programs
- o Psychological support for maintaining relationships

2. Professionalization and training

Judicial staff, social workers and educators need targeted further training on topics such as

- o Couples and family counseling in custody
- o Sex education

- o Dealing with taboos and cultural differences

The online course for adult educators developed in the project can be a valuable tool here.

3. Promotion of European pilot projects

The EU and national authorities should specifically promote innovative pilot projects - such as affective training programs, visiting living rooms or digital contact formats for separated families.

4. Integration into national resocialization strategies

Affectivity should be included as a mandatory element in national prison laws and reintegration strategies. Exemplary elements:

- o Reward systems for positive relationship management (as in Romania)
- o Piloting of „Family Life Education“ programs (as in Scandinavia)

5. Reducing social stigmatization

Public relations work, films, school materials and participatory media projects with (ex-)prisoners can help to remove taboos from the subject of affectivity and relieve the burden on relatives.

Conclusion

Affectivity is not a soft issue - it is the social infrastructure of resocialization. Europe needs a common framework that not only allows emotional relationships, but actively promotes them. The success of the penal system should not only be measured in terms of security figures, but also in terms of whether it contributes to the restoration of human bonds. PSSARP provides an important basis for this - and an urgent mandate for action.

Europe Unlimited e.V.

Mr Dirk Leisten (CEO)

Am Dorfweg 2

52525 Heinsberg

Deutschland

www.europe-unlimited.org

E: erasmus@europe-unlimited.org

T: +49 177 5276108

**The following partners have
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