

Prisoners

Activity Box 1.12

Module 1: Target Group



INCLUSIVE.
INSPIRING.
SPORT FOR ALL.

Key Facts

- About ten million people are imprisoned around the world (82)
- By 2016, the number of inmates in France reached 69,375, well over the allotted space limit of 58,000. In some prisons in the Paris region, the occupancy rate reaches 200% (78)
- Between 2016 and 2017, [48.3% of adults and 64.9% of juveniles released from custody reoffended within one year](#) in England and Wales (77)

Specific groups this Activity Box applies to:

- Prisons (for males and females), with prisoners from different contexts, backgrounds, conditions
- Female prison that allows mothers to raise their children
- Youth reclusion centres
- Provisional prisons
- Other reinsertion places

Why is it so important

Contribution

Sport can be an efficient tool to enhance the effectiveness of well-structured rehabilitative and educational programmes:

- Improving prisoners' wellbeing (reduction of tensions, improved morale, etc.)
- Helping the integration of individuals released into local communities: Sport help them to rebuild themselves through being part of a group, training and achieving an objective (78)
- Contrasting anti-social behaviours and fostering the learning of social values and rules
- Educational outcomes and life skills acquisition (during and after the incarceration)
- Offering an alternative means of excitement and risk-taking (76)
- Providing an alternative social network and access to positive role models. (76)
- Coping mechanism to combat mental and emotional distress

International endorsement

- Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (**United Nations, 1955**) and The European Prison Rules (**Committee of Ministers, 2006**) stipulate the right of prisoners to have access to Sport activities. (81)
- **Council of Europe:** Urge member states with a set of criteria that would allow them to evaluate, assess and plan specific (existing or future) Sport in prison projects, and to present a set of good practice examples illustrating this. (83)

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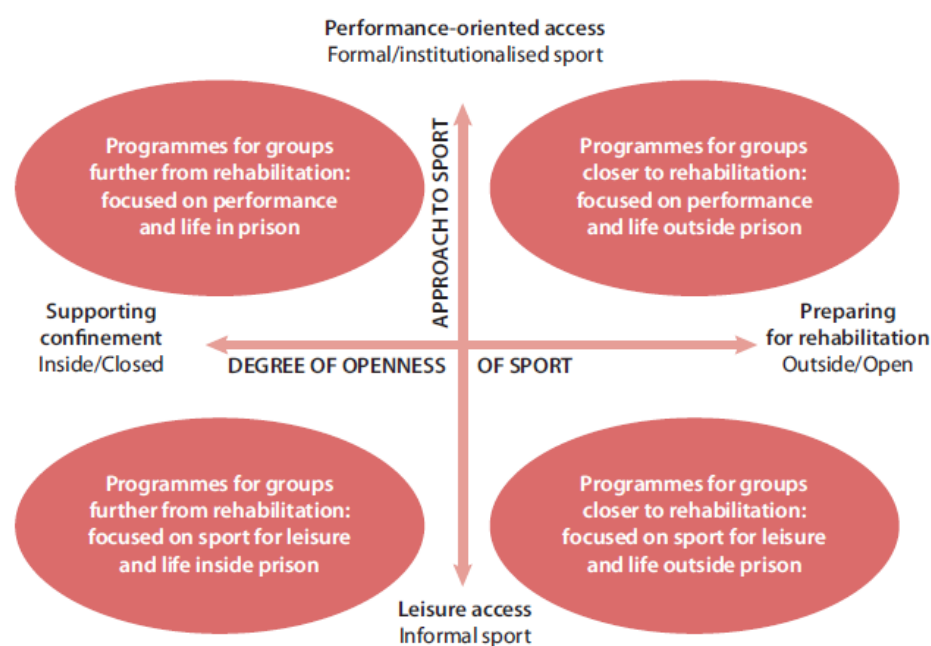
Barriers to Sport that should be overcome

- Lack of qualified professionals and lack of knowledge on how to administer the programmes
- The capability of prisons to host Sport infrastructure, facilities, water supplies and secure equipment
- Higher feelings of anxiety and depression
- Lack of internal information
- Prisoner's medical capacity, malnutrition or other health issues
- The available time that prisoners can devote to Sport: 60-90 minutes (79) and preferences for other activities
- Other psychological reasons to explain their nonparticipation: "Being afraid of physical fights" and "not wanting to compete with the faster and more agile younger inmates" (81)
- Women and girls in custody do not engage in physical activity to the same extent as men and boys, and as a result they are not benefiting from the social, physical and psychological benefits it offers (80)

Tips and key success factors

Dimension of Sport in prison (179)

Sport provision needs to respond to individual needs, with a focus on health, well-being and rehabilitation:



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Planning activities:

- Arranging a meeting with the management authorities is a must.
- Initial baseline study to assess the overall context of the target group.
- Equipment should be carefully provided. Objects that can be “used” afterwards by prisoners for harming purposes should be discouraged, e.g., sharp forms.
- When possible, combine Sport with other activities such as music, art, educational and vocational sessions.
- Bring role models and other people with stories of overcoming to develop resilience capabilities in them.
- If conditions permit, regular classes can be delivered through a suitable profile able to take the commitment.
- Develop a physical activity strategy for women. Consider many female prisons allow mothers to raise children.
- Preparing convicts to become coaches could be a key factor in ensuring the sustainability of the programme.
- Depending on the Sport, an internal league can be arranged with individual events and emphasize team competitions. Umpires and referees should receive proper instructions.

Other tips:

- Prepare a kick-off with a welcoming environment. Involving families could be a wise possibility.
- Creating and sustaining connections with staff.
- Provide nutritional advice as part of their physical activity and well-being provision.
- Do not do isolated interventions. The support of different partners: government, prison guards, psychologists, social workers, former prisoners, financial sponsors is substantial.
- Whereas martial arts and other contact Sport may bring positive results, do not start any programme without previous analysis.

Available Resources

- Sport and Prisons in Europe. [Click Here](#)
- Fight for Peace: Using a box in a Belize prison. [Click Here](#)
- Story of change: 1000 Mile Running Club. [Click Here](#)
- A Sporting Chance: An Independent Review of Sport in Youth and Adult Prisons. [Click Here](#)
- Street soccer academy, justice services. [Click Here](#)
- Get Onside project: Rugby as a tool for change. [Click Here](#) (page 9) and [Click Here](#)

Sample Case

Basketball in prisons (Fundación Real Madrid)

- Education of values through Sport contributes to the rehabilitation and reintegration of the prison population.
- The participants are selected by the Sport coordinators at each prison from amongst those who express an interest in the programme and are nearing the end of their sentence.

More information:

Article- Prisons and Real Madrid will promote Sport and its values among prisoners. [Click Here](#)

Programme in prisons. [Click Here](#)

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