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Ministry of Justice
Minister for Justice and Migration

European Prison Education
Association
Mrs Annet Bakker Chairperson

Dear Mrs Annet Bakker.

Thank you for your letter and the interesting presentation of your organisation. I would like to give you a brief picture of the situation within Swedish prisons regarding the Covid-19 situation and how this affects prisoners' opportunities to continue studying.

Covid-19 has been classified as a disease that is dangerous to public health and to society and the Public Health Agency of Sweden has assessed the risk of the spread of infection as extremely high. National authorities must take measures to handle and limit the spread of infection in their respective areas of activity. Taking into account the very special conditions that apply to conducting the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's activities in orderly and safe forms, spreading of the Covid-19 infection within those activities would seriously affect the service's ability to maintain good order and safety within the prisons.

Since the first case of Covid-19 in Swedish prisons was found on March 23, a total of nine prisoners have been found infected. Several have already recovered and there are currently three prisoners with confirmed cases of infection.

The present Covid-19 situation has not prevented prisoners in Swedish prisons from studying due to the extended use of distance teaching within the prison system. If a prisoner is infected or suspected of being infected with Covid-19 he or she must be isolated from other prisoners. Prisoners in isolation receive regular supervision and medical care to the extent that they need. The prisoners can also continue studying during their time in isolation.

In Swedish prisons it is compulsory to partake in occupational activities for six hours daily, Monday to Friday if the prisoner does not show symptoms of illness. Prisoners can study part-time or full-time. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service has its own school system with over 120 licensed high school professors. This enables prisoners to continue their education even if they are translocated to another prison facility.

Yours sincerely

Morgan Johansson

Minister for Justice and Migration