



Foreign inmates: They wish to start an education but face too many barriers

Terje Manger

The research group Bergen Cognition and Learning Group
University of Bergen, Norway

Kariane Gärtner Westrheim

The research group Power and Differences in Education
University of Bergen, Norway

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Human rights vs civil rights

- As a human right everyone has a right to education, including those who are serving sentences in prison – irrespective of their nationality.
- However, to a certain extent there is a tension between education as a human right and education as a civil right, applicable to citizens of the country.

Prohibition against discrimination

- Both national and international law contain a general prohibition against discrimination which implies that all those in analogous situations, such as prisoners serving time in a Norwegian prison, must be given an equal offer of education (Gröning, 2014).

NUMBERS ...

- Statistics from the Council of Europe and Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services (NDCS) show development features of imprisonment.
 - According to CoE there were, **3081** people in prison in Norway January 2022. Of these **742 (24 percent)** were foreign nationals.
 - According to NDCS statistics there were **3045** inmates in prison in May 2023. Of these **829 (27 percent)** were foreign nationals
- The last years there has been a certain decrease in the number of foreign inmates
- **Why is it important to focus on this group of inmates?**

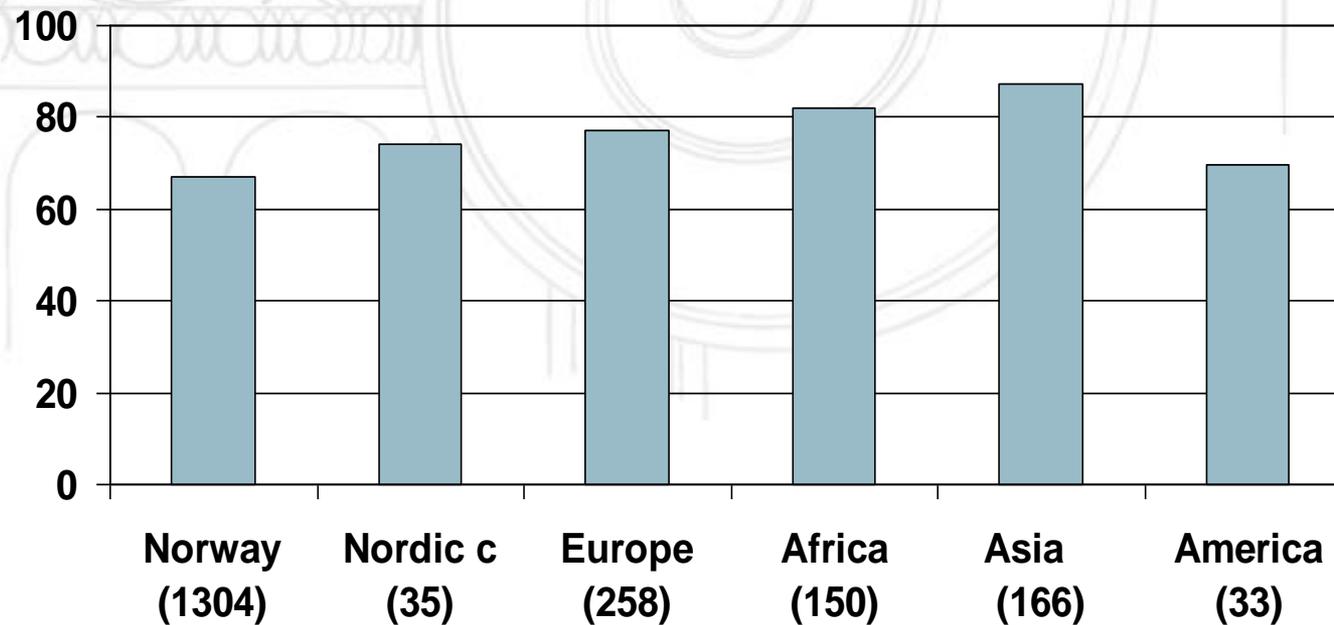
The low-priority incarcerated persons

- Minority rights are under-communicated in Norwegian prisons (Bygnes, 2014).
- Are foreign inmates the "forgotten prisoners"? (Ugelvik, 2014)

What do we know?

Percent inmates from different continents who wish to start an education while in prison in Norway

(Eikeland, Manger & Asbjørnsen, 2010)





What, and why do foreign incarcerated persons want to learn?

What?

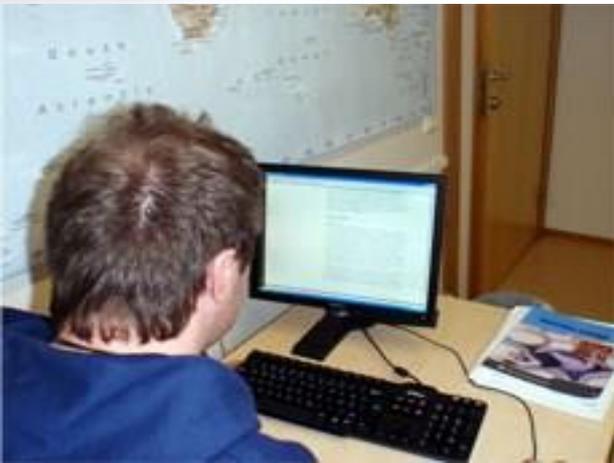
- Language (Norwegian and English)
- Computer skills
- Vocational training
- Complete studies

I prefer to finish high school and perhaps continue at the University
Russia (Finland)



Why?

- Creating meaning during sentencing
- Support children and family
- Prepare for future working life





Inmates from Albania, Lithuania, Poland, and Norway who participated in prison education in Norway. Mean academic motivation scores.

Academic Motivation Scale	Norwegian citizens (N = 529)	Albanian, Lithuanian and Polish citizens (N = 79)
External regulation	4, 7	4, 5
Introjected regulation	4, 3	4, 3
Identified regulation	5, 0	4, 5
Intrinsic motivation	5, 4	5, 6

The Academic Motivation Scale – a seven-point scale
(1 = lowest possible score; 7 = highest possible score)

(Manger, Eikeland, & Asbjørnsen, 2016; Manger et al., 2020; Eikeland, Manger, & Asbjørnsen, 2017)

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation



“I would like to learn to speak Norwegian, everyone in here wants to learn it. I couldn't get a place on a course, so I got the book "New in Norway" and started learning Norwegian myself“. (Iraq)

“The most important thing is to get a job. But it's easier to get a job if you know something very well, so I want to learn and maybe get an education while I'm in prison.” (Russia)

Inmates from Albania, Lithuania, Poland, and Norway who do not participate in education. The 5 most important reasons for not participating. Percent who ticked the boxes ‘exactly true’ or ‘true’.

(Eikeland, Manger, & Asbjørnsen, 2017; Manger, Eikeland, & Asbjørnsen, 2016).



Reasons	Albania, Lithuania and Poland N=97	Norway N = 786
There is inadequate access to software and the Internet	57	54
I prefer working here	49	47
I am waiting for a place	40	16
I have not been given enough information about education	52	33
The education I am interested in is not offered here	39	36



High educational motivation, but too many obstacles (Westrheim & Manger, 2012; 2014; 2019)

- Poorly adapted educational programmes
- Language barrier: “ I want information in my own language”
- Lack of translation / interpretation services
- Transfer between sections - poor coordination
- Complaints and requests are not often heard

Prison officers and the school

“The prison officers lack general knowledge of the school and the school system” (Westrheim & Eide, 2019)

Multicultural competence



- Norwegian/Nordic prisons are *multicultural*, but the education services are still organized as if they were *monocultural*.
- Correctional services and education authorities must facilitate educational provision in accordance with the multicultural reality.
- All foreign incarcerated persons must be offered Norwegian courses and other relevant education/training
- It is assumed that there is multicultural competence in the staff - in school and in prison
- This must apply to all subjects and courses offered in prison

Nasjonalt senter for flerkulturell opplæring (NAFO) (2009). *Idehefte. Tiltak for språklige minoriteter innenfor kriminalomsorgen* [Help to language minorities in the Prison and Probation Services]. Oslo: NAFO.

Mapping of foreign incarcerated persons with a view to holistic education/training

- Crucial to understand the background and context in the countries they come from.
- Create a basis for adapting the training offer as best as possible to the needs and level of the incarcerated person
- The best possible overall picture of their professional and linguistic competence
- Overview of which subjects they wish to complete
- Knowledge of the inmates' real competence within a subject area

Language... Despite deportation decisions, the opportunity to be able to communicate socially with other inmates, teachers and officers will increase motivation to participate in educational activities

(Croux et al., 2018)

FUTURE



- ... For many foreign incarcerated persons - future is regarded as a dream and unrealistic vision
- Incarceration reduces beliefs in the future:
 - ... society does not need you
 - ... criminal history complicates the job search process
- Still, most foreign incarcerated persons wish for a job or education
 - To support themselves and family
 - To get a fresh start
- Expulsive decisions are central and closely related to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

I wish for many things, but since they are only dreams, I can not say it out loud" Iraq (incarcerated in Norway)





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