

CZECH REPUBLIC

Women's programmes

In the Czech Prisons there are no specific programmes for women who have suffered gender violence within intimate partnerships and are in prison.

Men's programmes

In the prisons of Czech Republic there will be a programme for inmates perpetrators of (gender) violence. The programme will be prepared as a pilot programme and will be implemented at the turn of 2009/2010.

The programme is called 'Standardised therapeutic programme for offenders of domestic violence'. The main aim of the programme is to decrease risks of recidivism of convicts and, therefore, to protect potential victims. The partial goals are:

- To detect level of riskiness of the convicts
- To make prisoners to take responsibility for their acts
- To change attitudes and ways of behaving

During this first experimental phase, the programme is going to be developed in two different prisons: a medium security male prison and a high security male prison.

The programme was developed by the Unit of Psychology of the Prison Service of Czech Republic in cooperation with the independent Institute of Forensic Psychology and a non profit organisation (White Circle of Safety¹ and Consultancy Nymburk) in a form of standardised therapeutic programme. From this standardised version, each prison will be able to create their own projects adapted to their needs. The prison governors shall be responsible for implementation of the programmes. In each prison the programme shall have a professional guarantee, i.e. a psychologist.

The duration of the programme will be 12 month and it will be implemented once a year (at least during the pilot phase, afterwards it will depend on the capacity of the prisons).

¹ The White Circle of Safety ran a training for selected specialist working for Prison Service. The training was focused on methodology SARA. The training was done in 2008. The trained personnel will participate in preparation of standardised treatment programmes for this group of offenders. The method SARA (Spousal Assault Risk Assessment –Kropp and Befrage) is a diagnostic method aimed at offenders of gender violence.

The target group is male prisoners who have committed some violent crime, most of the time against women (in particular against spouses, mothers, grandmothers, etc.). The programme is voluntary based. The selection criteria to participate in the programme are the following ones:

- To have committed some violent crime against somebody else
- Participants must have, at least, one year of sentence left
- Motivation to participate in the programme
- To not suffer any drug addiction
- To have a regular intelligence quotient
- To be able to communicate (regarding language skills)

The programme is based on a risk/assessment and R/N based treatment, delinquency oriented therapy and a psycho-dynamic approach. It is a psychotherapy and psycho education programme. It is not primarily gender oriented.

Regarding the methodology, the programmes will be implemented through individual and group sessions. 21 hours per week, and are dedicated to special-educational activities related to the programme.

The professionals implementing the programme will be psychologist, a therapist, an educator and a pedagogue. And the agreement existing between the professional and the participant will be a therapeutic contract. Inmate's participation does influence the conditions of his sentence.

The phases of the programme are:

1. Initial assessment
2. Adapting and taking responsibility
3. Acquiring self-opinion

The programme is thematically pre-structured by the professionals, but it is flexible and adaptable to the needs of each participant.

The topics addressed during the programme are:

- Violence and gender violence (including definitions and specifications)
- Aggressiveness
- Conflict resolution
- Self control and self opinion
- Social communication



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The professionals implementing the programme will receive supervision. There is a compulsory period of supervision of 24hours per year. The supervision will be provided by the Czech Institute of Supervision created by the General Directorate of the Prison Service.

Each phase of the programme will be evaluated, as well as the standardised diagnostic tools and the tools for measuring change of attitudes. The methods that will be used are interviews with the participants, observation and standard tests before and after the programme.

The monitoring or follow up of the inmates once the programme is finalised is not foreseen, except for those convicts to whom supervision by Probation and Mediation services is imposed. The Prison Service is thinking that it might be a good idea to set up collaboration with NGOs.

The main benefit of the programme is that it might help to reduce relapse.