

Foreign cooperation

The objective of foreign cooperation of prison service is to get to know the best international practices, to implement these here and after that pass on the experience acquired. During the last years, the main foreign partners have been Finland, England, Germany and Georgia.

Finland

The most active cooperation in terms of the prison system of the Nordic countries has been with Finland. Exchange programs of official on different levels, trainings of prison special equipment, joint operations of armed units, etc., are organized.

Latvia

The prison systems of two countries are efficiently cooperating. Contacts between Estonian and Latvian prisons have intensified and thematic workshops both in Estonia and Latvia have been organized.

England

Communication with the English prison system has taken place in the partnership and framework of the international development partnership New Horizons of the European Union EQUAL programme and the Crime Prevention Foundation. Officials are exchanged with the Manchester Prison, practical training is attended and study trips for prison officers, prison directors and the officials of the Ministry of Justice are organized.

Germany

The representatives of the Estonian Public Service Academy and the Ministry of Justice have been in Germany to get acquainted with educational institutions training prison officers in Germany. The Prisons Department of the Ministry of Justice has also visited the Bruchsal Prison. An effective cooperation formed as a result of the visit, in course of which the Estonian prison system has been advised, for example, in issues related to the execution of imprisonment.

Georgia

Ministry of Justice is participating in a two-year TACIS Programme administered by the European Commission, in the framework of which the employees of Georgian Ministry of Justice, the Prison Board and prisons are advised and trained, the organization of prisoners' employment and education functioning in Estonia, the resocializing programmes and the process of premature release is introduced, as well as the principles of imprisonment, surveillance and security work. In addition, a project for the development of training system for Georgian prison officers led by SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) is carried out with active participation of Estonia and Lithuania

Moldova has set an objective to create a European and modern prison system which is why the Estonian prison service has been repeatedly visited. This has been a project financed by the Council of Europe.

The Balkan countries

The delegations of the prisons of Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo have been on study trips in Estonia to get acquainted with the fast and very successful development of local prison service. This has been **a project financed by the European Commission of the Council of Europe**

IPCA

International Prison Chaplains Association unites the chaplains belonging to different churches who work in prisons all over the world. The organization makes the work of Christian chaplains in different countries more effective, supporting at the same time also chaplains from other religions. Thus the IPCA stands for professional and effective chaplain service in prisons, stressing with its principles human dignity and the protection of the freedom of religion. The European Section of the organization organizes international conferences on a regular basis that are mostly attended by over 100 chaplains from nearly 30 European countries. In 2003, the conference was held in Tallinn.

Cooperation with the Hague International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

Estonia has signed a treaty with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia pursuant to which one or two persons who have been convicted of former war crimes will start to serve their sentence in Estonia. UN formed the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 1993. So far, charges have been brought against 160 people, from whom 50 have been convicted of manslaughter and rape. Criminal offenders serve their sentence in the prisons of Finland, Norway, France and other countries. With this Estonia contributes to effective implementation of international humanitarian law.

Training programme of Iraq prison officers

Ministry of Justice is preparing in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs practical training for Iraq prison officers in Estonian prisons. This is the European Union training project EUJUST LEX the objective of which is to strengthen the state governed by the rule of law and promote the respect for human rights. With this Estonian contributes to effective implementation of human rights on the international arena, sharing its competence and good practices.

Transfer of foreign prisoner to country of nationality

Foreigners are divided into citizens of foreign country and people without citizenship. In case of foreign citizens it is possible to transfer them also during the service of their punishment. In case of people without citizenship this option is lacking, however, the prisoners are assisted upon application for citizenship. In international law, the transfer is regulated by the European Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and the Additional Protocol thereof. Pursuant to the Convention, a person may be transferred if both the sentencing and the administering states agree to the transfer. Upon transfer pursuant to the Additional Protocol the consent of the imprisoned person is not required. Ministry of Justice is actively cooperating with regard to foreign imprisoned person with the Citizenship and Migration Board and of the Internal Security Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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