

30a. Project Description English

Beschäftigt sich das Projekt mit neuen sozialen Lösungsansätzen?

The UN convention of the rights of persons with disabilities (UN-BRK) accurately defines the minimum of dignity which is assigned to inmates. We are committed to implementing this approach, which is a human-rights-oriented approach. Unfortunately, this is not a matter of course, since the current situation wouldn't be able to withstand the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

We actively support the resocialization of inmates with high effort and success. In fact, we see an important contribution to the protection of the victims through a successful resocialization. In particular, the follow-up of the released detainees in dignified institutions, instead of mass-housing communities is important for us.

Beschäftigt sich das Projekt mit neuen sozialen Problemstellungen?

As a result of ratification of the UN-BRK, Austria has undertaken the obligation to comply with minimum standards in dealing with vulnerable persons. This isn't currently available. We call for the implementation of the UN-BRK in its preventive detention, a special form of the prison system. We are currently working in a team on the drafting of an EU directive on the treatment of vulnerable persons from the time of imprisonment to the main hearing. They didn't have any representation in the execution of the measures and thus didn't have any realistic means of combating arbitrariness and repression. Inadequate expert opinions and prolonged trials often lead to disproportionate stopping times, far beyond the extent of the sentence.

Beschäftigt sich das Projekt mit bisher wenig beachteten Zielgruppen?

Prisoners in preventive detention were generally regarded as mentally abnormal legal offenders, an extremely questionable wording, which has to be changed to vulnerable persons). As mentally abnormal law-abusers, they came to the end of social dialogue as the culmination point in a court reporter or in a completely wrong context. We were able to positively influence the awareness of prisoners in the preventive detention of measures in large parts of the Austrian population through media work, the publication of the book „preventive detention“ and the organization of events.

Welchen konkreten und nachhaltigen Nutzen hat das Projekt für die Zielgruppe?

Prisoners have a reliable contact with us when it comes to specific issues. Legal adviser, visiting services, personal assistance, assistance with the release of the imprisonment. Financial support also helps prisoners on the road to resocialization. Through our presence, detainees are dealt more dignifiedly and thus have better access to the legal system, which unfortunately wasn't always self-evident. We also represent a functioning social network for many former detainees, which can often help on a very personal level in case of need, and already very concrete further crimes have been prevented. Cautious work with the perpetrators is an effective sacrifice.

Werden die Potentiale der Zielgruppe durch das Projekt gefördert?

We are working with the detainees to develop the most sensible solutions for a successful resocialization. In the course of our personal care, we advise in many cases to professional training or reorientation in order to make the most of the time of imprisonment as sensibly as possible. Of course, we also help with implementation in order to make a hopelessly effective situation more bearable and as constructive as possible.

Wie wird die Zielgruppe in das Projekt einbezogen?

SiM was founded by former detainees. Within a very short time, we were able to win many supporters who have never had anything to do with the preventive detention. The association currently has four former prisoners, three relatives and twelve volunteer supporters. The work of SiM is supported by a special-purpose advisory board of well-known lawyers, sociologists and psychologists. We are in permanent contact with about 90 prisoners. We look after them at regular intervals. Some of the detainees are involved in production of our magazine „Blickpunkte“, they also publish some articles of their day-to-day life.

Leistet das Projekt einen Beitrag zur gesellschaftlichen Wertschätzung der Zielgruppe?

Detainees of the preventive detention were generally regarded as insane in the social perception as dangerously disturbed prisoners, already despised. Since the publication of our magazine for prisoners, called „Blickpunkte“, in 2011, we have been working very successfully to positively influence the sensitivity to mentally ill people. Our success is because of the efforts of our media work and the publication of our book „Maßnahmenvollzug“ will also be an important topic for lawyers and journalists. This has the effect of increased reporting and increased treatment in the academic discourse on the preventive detention and thus also to a better understanding of detainees in this preventive detention.

Ist die Umsetzung der Projektidee einfallsreich, schöpferisch, kreativ und mutig?

We use all communication channels to raise the issue to social awareness. In September 2016, in cooperation with the Mandelbaum Publishing House, we published our book „Maßnahmenvollzug“

It is the standard work on the subject. It was funded by crowdfunding, sold itself very well and finances the activity of SiM to a good extent. In the first quarter of 2017, we will also begin selling merchandising items.

In order to point out the problems in the preventive detention, we convey the problem by the publication of one-time fates, which are often shocking because of the often intolerable as well as often inhumane circumstances. Through the publication of broad media such as ZIB 2, KURIER, HEUTE, nzz.at and other media, we were able to reach more than 5 million people in the shortest possible time. With the implementation of some project ideas, we want to create jobs for former prisoners. In autumn 2016, we were able to take over the magazine „Blickpunkte“ with all rights. We are about to carry out a relaunch and to appear in the future as a newsletter on the one hand and as a magazine on the other hand. Through the organization of readings, many people could be reached who had nothing to do with this topic.

Welche Wirkungen können durch die soziale Innovation für wen beobachtet werden?

Prisoners are better treated and their access to the legal system is guaranteed. Future law enforcement officers will be better trained and the roses of psychiatric and psychological services will counteract those of the pure custody of detainees. Prisoners are no longer simply decided at the annual hearings on conditional dismissal. Individual solutions are found through the addition of legal helpers and our consultations.

Reagiert das Projekt auf geänderte Anforderungen zum Beispiel bei der Zielgruppe, der Problemstellung, den Rahmenbedingungen?

Since the requirements of our clients are fundamentally completely different, we have to adapt continuously to the circumstances, so we are flexible in finding individual solutions. Particularly in the follow-up care of dependent persons who had to be deprived of their protection, we were able to adequately accommodate even hopeless cases through co-operation, and thus to promote the resocialization effectively and sustainably. In the course of the reform of the preventive detention by the Federal Ministry of Justice since the beginning of 2016,

we will contribute our opinion to the framework conditions in the legislative process. We are also looking for a dialogue with the lawyers of all parliamentary parties.

Gibt es eine Zusammenarbeit verschiedener Disziplinen / Kompetenzen / Berufsgruppen?

In order to provide optimal support for our members and clients, continuous interdisciplinary cooperation between lawyers, social workers and psychologists is a prerequisite for a successful support. We can ensure this by our employees from these disciplines.

Wie ist das Projekt in lokale und regionale Umwelten integriert?

Since our clients and members are imprisoned in judicial institutions throughout the Federal territory, we also offer our services throughout Austria. From the first visit to the detention center to find any employment opportunities and a conditional release into an assisted living facility. We also look after our members and clients at regular intervals. We cooperate locally with existing institutions and associations in order to raise awareness on the subject.

Pflegt das Projekt den Dialog / die Kooperation mit anderen Institutionen / Organisationen?

To achieve our goals, we have to stay in close contact to the ministry of justice, their sections and the prisons.

We are also part of the commission of the monitoring agency about the implantation of the UN convention of the rights of persons with disabilities and in a project group of the European Commission to improve the treatment of persons with disabilities when they get arrested.

We cooperate also with other institution e.g. disability organizations like BIZEPS, organizations for custodianship like VertretungsNetz, the patient's advocacy, follow-up assistance and the bar association and their members.

Werden andere Organisationen, Medien, FördergeberInnen, PolitikerInnen neugierig gemacht?

As a result of our activities, reporting on measures has continued to increase. In the meantime, journalists are self-employed if they have any questions about the preventive detention. We also advise lawyers about the specificities of the Austrian implementation of the law and are also in dialogue with the law firm to provide specific training for lawyers in the near future. We are in dialogue with the Swiss Straniak Foundation to receive funding for our work and projects. At our readings, we were proud to welcome the speaker of the Green Party, Mr. Albert Steinhauser. There is also a good cooperation with the NEOS. In the meantime, cases sent to political parties are forwarded to us, so that we can solve any problems for them. Scientists have also been asked to help with their work on the preventive detention.

Werden neue Wege im Umgang mit der „Außenwelt“ gegangen?

A special focus in dealing with the populace is the spread of the topic in the social networks and our internet presence (www.massnahmenvollzug.org). In addition, we are approaching target groups with readings, discussion events, which hitherto haven't been aware of the preventive detention and their existing problems.