

CHAPTER 11

BOOKS OPEN WORLDS FOR PEOPLE BEHIND BARS: LIBRARY SERVICES IN GERMANY'S PRISONS RANGING FROM LOCAL BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES AND REGIONAL EXPERIENCES IN NORTH RHINE- WESTPHALIA TO STEADILY GROWING INTERNATIONALITY*

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ABSTRACT

The chapter “Books Open Worlds for People Behind Bars” by Gerhard Peschers gives an insight into library services in correctional facilities in Germany on different levels, ranging from local best practice examples (e.g., Berlin, Bremen, Dortmund,

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Exploring the Roles and Practices of Libraries in Prisons: International Perspectives

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and Würzburg) via regional experiences – focusing on longstanding experiences in North Rhine-Westphalia, in particular the outstanding former Münster prison library which was awarded the German national Library Prize “Library of the Year 2007” – and nationwide subjects to grown internationality based on long-term integration into the library community. Fundamental issues include history and the legal basis of prison libraries as well as practical experiences on various levels of responsibility and its diverse scope of tasks, such as collection development, data processing, interior design, events, and cooperation with city libraries.

The outlook provides the state of play and the challenges regarding digitalization for the development of prison libraries.

Finally, the author’s dream of the book tree on the prison wall, which found international resonance, invites you to share the vision of dialog and tolerance across dividing walls.

Keywords: North Rhine-Westphalia Prison Service; Münster Correctional Facility; Section 8 of the German Library Association; Prison Library Support Group; IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs; dream of the book tree on the prison wall

PRELIMINARY NOTE

This article will give an insight into an otherwise closed world of prison libraries based on best practice examples. Thus, the slogan “Books Open Worlds” is not only relevant for prisoners but also for all of those who have never seen a prison from inside and who want to gain an insight into this so far foreign world. The slogan “Books Open Worlds” applies particularly to persons under arrest. Through books, audio-visual media as well as digital media, prisoners can remain connected to the world outside the prison walls. They can make new discoveries that help them to spend their time productively while in custody and to better reintegrate into society after release.

1 HISTORY OF PRISON LIBRARIES AS A CONTEMPORARY WITNESS¹

The history of prison libraries is inseparable from the history of the penitentiary system as well as the history of libraries in society. The evolution of prison libraries reflects the spirit of the times and is a witness to history. In the nineteenth century, members of the clergy were in charge of prison libraries, which contained mainly religious materials, organized according to denomination. Materials depicting crime were prohibited. Prisoners were encouraged to read and discuss these religious texts. The main purpose of reading was considered to be the (positive) impact this activity would have on the reader. As Georg Michael Obermaier, inspector of

the Kaiserslautern central prison already stated regarding his reformatory procedures for correctional treatment of criminals in correctional facilities in 1835:

“Each reformatory should be provided with a library. Books should not be religious only but rather be teaching, instructive, educational, and suitable to the future life and the condition of an affected penitent.”²

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, prison teachers have generally managed the facility libraries. In the 1903 administrative regulations of the city of Münster in Westphalia, the former imperial state, the following reference is made to its prison libraries: “Each prisoner is normally given one library book per week from a teacher.”³ In addition to providing support for the pursuit of reading, the teachers worked hard to increase the literacy skills of the inmates.⁴ Occasionally, the library community on the outside reached into the prisons. It was only since professional librarians had been employed in the prisons that the institution libraries developed in a professional and consistent manner. These librarians were then also able to establish themselves as a distinct interest group with representation in professional associations.

Unfortunately, in most German federal states, the prisons do not employ professional librarians, a situation that makes it nearly impossible to share information and experiences. No systematic information about prison libraries in other federal states is available. Full-time professional librarians with an academic degree are employed in only three of the 16 federal states: in Bremen, Hamburg, and North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Comments from the general library community about this situation are rare, and the prison personnel who manage the libraries in the institutions are often on their own. Prison library management at a regional level exists only in a few places. On occasion, prison staff contact local public libraries or library systems for guidance and advice.⁵

Access to books offers prisoners the opportunity for constructive leisure activities. The prison libraries serve three purposes: recreation, education, and personal development of the prison population. The reading of books and the use of audio-visual materials give the inmates the chance to direct their thoughts away from the prison environment and create their own emotional space. The audio-visual materials are a source of information and education on a variety of subjects; they also improve language skills and increase self-awareness. A collection of relevant audio-visual resources provides people behind bars with a certain degree of cultural freedom and, at the same time, a small amount of privacy.

2 LEGAL RIGHTS OF PRISONERS TO ACCESS LIBRARIES

Since the Federalism Reform in Germany enacted in 2006, each of the 16 federal states in Germany administers its own prison system and is responsible for overseeing the incarceration of adults and juvenile offenders in both detention centers (pre-conviction) and correctional facilities (post conviction).⁶ At this point, the following should be noted⁷: Following the nationwide German penitentiary system which entered into force in 1977, the purpose of a criminal sentence is to

make the offender capable of living a responsible and crime-free life after release from prison and to protect the community from further crime (Federal Penal Code, StVollzG §2).⁸ During the term of imprisonment, every offender has the right to access a library during his/her free time (Federal Penal Code, StVollzG §67).⁹ Consequently, almost all correctional facilities in Germany have a library. The organizational structure and the resources of these libraries are not further specified in the Federal Penal Code. However, Article 28 of the European Prison Rules states explicitly:

“Every institution must provide an adequately stocked library accessible to all prisoners. It should offer a variety of books and other media items, suitable for both entertainment and education” (Art. 28.5); “Whenever possible, the prison library should be managed in collaboration with public libraries.”

For the sake of the persons affected, a constructive approach is required. On the one hand, regional library associations should actively advocate making appropriate library material available to incarcerated persons. On the other hand, the justice ministries of each federal state should assume their responsibilities and develop a basis for cooperation with local libraries.

3 TARGET-ORIENTED SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LIBRARY SERVICES FOR PERSONS IN PRISON AND UNDER ARREST

Socially responsible library services are aimed at people who live in disadvantaged circumstances and who need special assistance. These groups include the elderly, hospital patients, people with visual disabilities or other physical disabilities, as well as incarcerated persons. Socially responsible libraries see their mission as ensuring access for all citizens to information resources of all formats.¹⁰ UNESCO (1976) defines the functions of socially responsible library services in its “Recommendation on Participation by the People at Large in Cultural Life and Their Contribution to It.”¹¹ The basic principle is that all social groups must be afforded the opportunity to pursue cultural interests and be involved in cultural activities. This philosophy clearly encompasses libraries as they endeavor to fulfill their mission for cultural and social inclusion. The mission of the German public library system to guarantee access to information for all citizens presents a constant challenge as society changes and evolves. To succeed in providing equitable services to users with special needs requires, besides political support, skilled library staff and adequate funding. In general, the lack of a sound financial basis and human resources in library services in prisons is sobering. In most cases there is just a small budget available for the equipment of the libraries in correctional facilities and juvenile detention centers. Furthermore, the personnel responsible receive little professional and collaborative support and time. In conclusion, there is a substantial need for development in this area.

Incarcerated persons, however, attach great importance to their prison library, a fact that is reflected by usage data and reader surveys: more than 80–90% of prisoners regularly used the library services of the Münster Correctional Facility, the “Library of the Year 2007,” until its outsourcing in 2016. The user rate in juvenile detention centers is almost 100%. Thus, these small libraries are the most frequently

used ever. They reach a target group who has not found the way to a municipal library yet. Therefore, reading promotion achieved in prison libraries is remarkable. Judicial organizations as well as local libraries should be inventive in order to arouse the interest of these young people to use public library services in the future.

Since the closing of the German Library Institute (Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut) and the subsequent dissolution of the Commission for Special User Groups (Kommission für besondere Benutzergruppen) in 1999, the social role of libraries has been rarely discussed in the professional library community and has been taken to heart by only a few dedicated individuals. Additionally, lack of resources over the last few years means that public libraries are struggling to provide adequate services, and programs and initiatives for special user groups have been eliminated or substantially reduced. Under these circumstances facilities are more than glad to maintain their status quo. Due to the massive refugee movement in 2015, libraries were important focal points making library services for special user groups more visible and conscious again.

The German Library Association stated on May 22, 2019¹²:

“Libraries are places of lived democracy: The freedom of expression and the freedom of information in Article 5 of the constitution of The Federal Republic of Germany represent the constitutional basis for library practice. By facilitating basic information services for all citizens thanks to their non-partisan and quality-controlled media and information offer, libraries play a central democratic and socio-political role as most visited educational and cultural institutes.”

They promote the participation in our democratic society, teach reading and media competence against “fake news,” are non-commercial places for all citizens, and “guarantors for freedom of information.” Libraries are also centers of encounters and accompany the digital change in society. Libraries for special user groups also take on these challenges.

Section 8 of the German Library Association represents facilities for special user groups, such as prison libraries, audio libraries for the blind, patient libraries, and libraries in nursing homes.¹³

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing the interests of this target group in its Library Services to People with Special Needs Section (LSN).¹⁴

4 PRISON LIBRARY SERVICES IN GERMANY

4.1 Responsibilities of the 16 Federal States

In the Federal Republic of Germany, each federal state is responsible for their own penitentiary system. According to the German Federal Statistical Office of June 2020, about 58,000 prisoners are detained in approximately 180 correctional facilities¹⁵ in Germany – among them are about 51,200 men, about 3,200 women, and about 3,600 inmates in juvenile correctional facilities. In general, there is a library in every German correctional facility. Inmate workers under staff supervision generally perform tasks associated with the daily operation of the library. Throughout Germany, there are only four full-time prison librarians who take care of the concerns of prison libraries. In addition to Bremen and Hamburg, there are two positions in NRW (at the Cologne Correctional Facility and the Münster Correctional Facility).



Photo: Three federal states with full-time professional librarians in prison.
Graph: Stefanie Gärtner, 2013.

Since there is no information available regarding meetings of library staff from the individual correctional facilities of the federal states, no conclusion can be made in this regard. The feedback obtained leads to the suggestion that no regular meetings take place in the federal states. Library staff meetings of correctional facilities were stimulated in Bavaria in 2014. Initiated by the Ministry of Justice, library staff meetings have been taking place for the last 10 years in Rhineland-Palatinate and for more than 30 years in NRW.

Nationwide continuing education measures regarding prison library services in Germany have only been offered for the last 10 years. Based on the model of

a conference in Argentina, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) launched the first nationwide continuing education measure for prison library staff at the occasion of the Frankfurt Book Fair with the host country Argentina. This event gave the impetus for four further nationwide continuing education measures for prison library staff initiated by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in cooperation with the Book Fairs in Frankfurt in 2010, 2013, 2016, and in Leipzig in 2019.

Only a few outstanding best practice examples of awarded libraries in the different federal states can be mentioned briefly in this article: The modern library in the Heidering Correctional Facility near Berlin which opened in 2013 is the first prison library in Germany equipped with RFID technology for self-service registration; the library of the Berlin Juvenile Detention Centre was awarded “Detention Library of the Year 2016” and is best known for its events with famous Berlin personalities. Awarded by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in 2017, the Dortmund Correctional Facility is no. 1 “Prison Library of the Year 2016,” followed by Celle, Hohenleuben, and Würzburg (no. 2). The Münster prison library, once “Prison Library of the Year 2007” will be described in more detail at the end of the chapter about NRW.



Library of the Dortmund Correctional Facility, 2017
©photo: Gerhard Peschers



Library of the Würzburg Correctional Facility, 2019
©photo: Arnd Bartel



Library of the Bremen-Oslebshausen Correctional Facility, 2019

©photo: Andreas Gebauer

In 2017, the Bremen-Oslebshausen prison library was awarded by a foundation, (see 4.2 level III).

4.2 Daily Library Service Operation at Three Levels

Responsibility for library operations and services falls into three levels: inmate library assistants perform the practical tasks of daily operation on-site (level I); prison employees with various professional backgrounds supervise the library at each site (level II); and professional librarians coordinate the management and services of all the libraries in three federal states (level III).

Level I: Inmate Library Assistants

Inmate library assistants have limited access to computers and information technology. In their role as library assistants, they perform collection maintenance tasks, such as inventory, technical processing, cataloguing, handling circulation, and data collection. They are permitted to turn the computers on and off but can only use the library software. They are able to process bibliographic records as well as patron information. In some libraries, a word processing program is available, for example, to list order proposals, prepare signposts for current subjects at book exhibitions, or other additional documents for library services.

The inmate assistants perform circulation tasks under the guidance and supervision of civilian staff. Generally, the policy of open stacks and browsing is adhered to. In institutions with free inmate movement, inmates can select their own materials. In higher-security prisons with restricted movement, inmates are not allowed to visit the library and must submit written request to obtain library materials. In these cases, inmates have access to a print “catalogue” with more than hundred printed pages that contains short annotations or reviews. As far as possible open access areas should be offered in all facilities. When will time be ripe to replace such outdated practice by more effective digital catalogue search on suitable hardware for prison libraries?

The library assistants also perform necessary repairs of library materials and prepare reports of damage. The library collection is subject to extreme use and damage. The library enforces strict rules on the handling of materials and requires replacement for lost or damaged items.

The library assistants are involved in activities to promote library services and recruit new users, both through user surveys and simple word-of-mouth publicity. Similarly, they encourage suggestions for new acquisitions or library programs. In addition, they are responsible for the necessary cleaning.

Level II: Library Employees in Correctional Facilities and Juvenile Detention Centers

The library supervisors are prison employees who coordinate local library operations and services in collaboration with the prison administration, management services, and program specialists (social workers, educators, psychologists, health workers, and the clergy). The library supervisors at each site select, train, and supervise the inmate library assistants. It is difficult to find capable library personnel. This is a major problem, especially in juvenile detention centers with a short stay and a high fluctuation rate. The quality of library services therefore varies according to the skills and the reliability of the available labor pool. Strict operational procedures and professional standards are designed to minimize this problem.

Library supervisors define the functional parameters for library use and services. They are exclusively authorized to make decisions regarding the functions of the library system software, such as checkout periods, number of items to be checked out, holds on materials, hardware settings, and discarding books. Library supervisors are responsible for inventory and weeding of the collection, and for the purchase of new materials. The library assistants are encouraged to participate in these decisions. Finally, library employees are responsible for providing the necessary library supplies and equipment. In some federal states, the library supervisors work in close cooperation with the professional librarians in charge who can then directly address individual concerns and/or coordinate a response to all institution libraries, for example, public libraries.

Level III: Professional Librarians Coordinate the Daily Work in Correctional Facilities

Library Services in the Bremen Correctional Facility in Cooperation with the City Library¹⁶. The Bremen city library has been committed to the Bremen Correctional Facility since 1974. The offer of the Bremen city library in cooperation with the Bremen Correctional Facility comprises a central library holding 7,500 media items as well as several decentralized offers. They are located in a separate pre-trial detention, in a women's correctional facility, in a juvenile detention center, and in the Bremerhaven Correctional Facility for prisoners with short sentences. Since 2017, more than 1,500 DVDs have been offered and updated regularly. The Bremen city library runs its central library in Oslebshausen with 19 hours per week by professional librarians plus two former employees of the correctional facility who work on a 450 Euro basis.

All personnel costs, including overhead costs and personnel development expenses are borne by the public library. Trained inmates who are paid by the correctional facility do on-site work. In total, three positions for inmates for the library and one position for the women's correctional facility are required. The public library is responsible for the supervision while recruiting is done upon recommendation of the correctional facility. In conclusion, four high quality and demanded jobs are offered. In 2011, the cooperation between the Bremen Correctional Facility and the Bremen city library regarding the operation of a prison library was agreed upon and has since been a mutual desire for continuous and close collaboration.

In 2017, the library was awarded the German Library Prize by the VGH foundation (VGH-Stiftung) along with a 5,000 Euro cash prize. The money was invested in the renovation of the furniture and the rooms.

Library Services in the Hamburg Correctional Facility – The Prison Library Department of the Hamburg Public Library (Bücherhallen Hamburg)¹⁷. Currently, there are six correctional facilities in Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, which accommodate approx. 2,600 convicts. Every correctional facility is equipped with a library for the inmates (total holdings: approx. 18,000 media items). The Prison Library Department of Hamburg, in charge of correctional facilities has been responsible for the operation of these prison libraries since 1968. The Prison Library Department currently serves a central service center for six prison libraries in six correctional facilities with 1.5 specialists in media and information services. The employees of the Prison Library Department are in charge of collection development as well as updating, preparing for checkout, and cataloguing holdings in the individual prison libraries. Accounting in the libraries itself is done by hand on cards. No Internet access is allowed in the prison libraries, thus no electronic catalogues are available with computer-based accounting systems.

Prison Library Services in NRW – Coordination Made By Two Professional Librarians in Prison.

History and Development Following a report by the German Library Institute (Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut) about social library work and particularly library services in correctional facilities¹⁸ in 1986, the state of NRW created two positions for professional librarians in prison libraries. These vacancies were filled in the Cologne Prison Service, Rhineland in 1986 and in Hamm, Westphalia-Lippe in 1988. Thereupon, employees of the 37 individual correctional facilities were deployed as library supervisors, library regulations were issued in the facilities, library development plans were elaborated, and the prison library services have steadily been developed. Since 1992 a strong focus was placed on integration into the library community, for example the membership of the Prison Library Department in the Library Association of NRW (Verband der Bibliotheken des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen), in Section 8 of the German Library Association

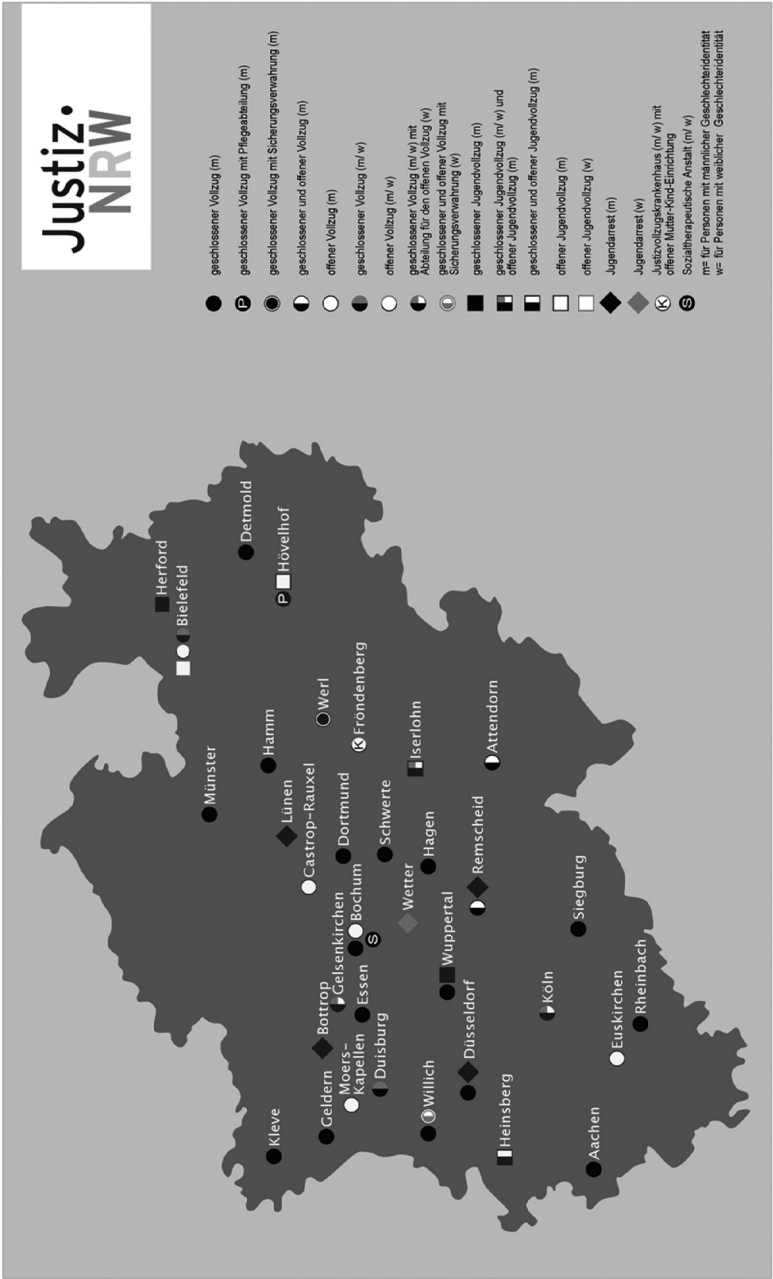
(Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e.V.), and in recent years by communicating with the IFLA. In 1998 a standard information technology for data processing in libraries was implemented which was professionally renewed between the years 2014 and 2019. Several initiatives were taken for the renovation¹⁹ and new construction of library space. Starting with the introduction of CDs in 1994 and DVDs in 2004, the range of audio-visual media has been extended and standardized. Due to the increasing number of foreign inmates, the offer of foreign-language literature in prison libraries was expanded. Thanks to the interdependence of the Prison Library Department and the library of the Münster Correctional Facility between 2013 and 2016, the Münster prison library as awarded the German Library Prize in 2007.²⁰

Responsibilities of the Professional Librarians The two professional librarians coordinate the prison library services in NRW for the Cologne Correctional Facility, Rhineland, and the Münster Correctional Facility, Westphalia-Lippe. In accordance with the Directives of 2009, their main responsibilities are as follows:

- assist in planning, organization and development of the prison libraries
- assist in planning the equipment of the library spaces
- assist in supervision by means of professional contributions
- assist in quality management
- assist in professional controlling
- establish library public relations
- provide basic and on-going training to library supervisors
- support the integration of library services in the daily prison life and encourage inmates regarding entertainment, education, and self-awareness
- recommend the purchase of media items
- assist regarding the purchase of foreign-language literature
- support data collection development, management of book donations, discard of books, library revision, purchase of materials
- support data administration, cataloguing, presentation and organization of checkout
- assist to continuing education of prison library staff
- hold specialized meetings
- coordinate the library data processing.

5 LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA (NRW)

NRW is the most populated of the 16 federal states in Germany with around 18 million inhabitants. In its 36 independent correctional facilities, there are 5 affiliated correctional facilities and 21 regional facilities, more specifically detention centers, with approx. 18,500 convicts: approx. 17,500 of which are for men, approx. 1,050 for women, approx. 4,300 for free inmate movement – on average



Correctional Facilities in NRW – © Justiz NRW²¹

16,000 people are in custody. In addition, there are five juvenile detention centers with 237 convicts, 27 of which are for female youth.²² In 2019, the share of foreign citizens in prison from more than 100 countries of origin was about 37% of the total occupancy. Women make up approx. 6% of the total occupancy, 7% in juvenile correctional facilities, 19% in pre-trial detention, and 72% adults in correctional facilities.²³

Library services are provided by law for the respective penalty system, for example, Federal Penal Code (STVollzG NRW), Federal Remand Centre Act (UVollzG NRW), Federal Juvenile Detention Act (JSTVollzG NRW), analogous to Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JAVollzO). From 1970 to 2007, the penitentiary system in NRW²⁴ was divided into three levels: the Federal Ministry of Justice, the State Ministry of Justice, and the correctional facilities. In 2008, the second level, the State Ministry of Justice, was dissolved and the two-level penitentiary system was reintroduced in NRW resulting in the assignment of the Cologne and Münster Prison Library Departments to the Federal Ministry of Justice.

Prison library services in NRW follow the development of the public library system while integrating it into the parameters of the prison libraries as far as possible. In April 2019, the Directives for library services in correctional facilities and juvenile detention centers in NRW came into force. They describe the organization of library services on each level between the Federal Ministry of Justice, the two regional Prison Department Libraries, and the library personnel in the 41 facilities. In connection with the final editing and the entry into force of the Directives, meetings with the library personnel of all facilities took place in the Ministry of Justice. At this occasion, the responsible division learnt more about the daily practice of the library services in the different facilities. Formerly such meetings were organized decentrally by the professional librarians of the Prison Library Department and held in small groups from time to time.

The distribution of the budgetary resources of about 200,000€ per year was made in agreement between the financial unit of the Federal Ministry of Justice and the two Prison Library Departments until 2016. In 2017, the financial responsibility was decentralized and assigned to the facilities by the Federal Ministry of Justice. Moreover, specifications for the library budget after consultation with the Prison Library Departments were abandoned. Since then, the correctional facilities are responsible for the budget of each prison library.²⁵

NRW's 36 correctional facilities, 5 affiliated correctional facilities, and 5 juvenile detention centers provide around 50 prison libraries comprising 1,000–12,000 media items and total holdings of approximately 240,000 media items. Depending on the size of the facility and the library, holdings differ from entertainment literature, non-fiction literature, foreign-language literature, and audio-visual media to newspapers and magazines. In 2019, easily readable literature was progressively introduced. Prison libraries are part of the leisure activities of each facility for the purpose of entertainment, individual continuing education, and personal self-awareness of the inmates. Incarcerated persons shall be animated to read and use media items creatively by means of the prison libraries and use public libraries after release. Libraries in correctional facilities and detention centers are a special type of public libraries and ensure a basic supply of media items for incarcerated

persons. Library administration is based on unified regulations according to the practice of public libraries by means of library software among others.

In the years 2014–2019, the professional library software BibliothecaPlus by OCLC²⁶ was introduced nationwide. After having tested the software in pilot facilities and configuring the necessary security settings by a team of administrators, all the remaining 30 correctional facilities were equipped with this new software and the latest hardware. Data were converted from the former media administration to the new program. The library staff and inmate library assistants received manuals for the program and were trained accordingly. Since then, the administrator team has been participating in an annual workshop to discuss the renewal of the IT equipment while being informed about the most recent software development. From 2020 to 2021, a centralized catalogue for NRW of all holdings of the round 50 individual libraries will be implemented, which can be researched on the Intranet by all employees of the correctional facilities nationwide. This central catalogue will enable new cooperation and specific exchange of media items among the national correctional facilities.

Since 1994, more than 20 library spaces were renewed in correctional facilities in Westphalia-Lippe, partly renovated, partly in refurbished new buildings.²⁷ In these cases, cooperation with architects has proven to be effective. Especially the spacial concept of the architects Bolles+Wilson for the Münster Correctional Facility contributed significantly to its renewal and its later award “Library of the Year 2007” as well as an increased use of the facility.²⁸ Initiated by Prof Julia Bolles-Wilson in 2008, two seminars focused on drafting spacial concepts for prison libraries at the Münster School of Architecture (MSA) led to the planning of 12 libraries in correctional facilities in NRW of which 7 were put into practice within the next few years, that is, about 60%. After a nationwide competition for prison libraries, the Dortmund Correctional Facility was awarded “Prison Library 2016” by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.).

Four more library spaces were put into effect: two were based on the blueprints of architecture students; the other two projects were based on the blueprint of an interior designer from the library purchase center.

The collaboration between libraries in correctional facilities and public libraries is highly recommended by the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers, IFLA and UNESCO.²⁹ However, this is more an exception to the rule in NRW as well as nationwide. The Gelsenkirchen city library cooperated for more than 40 years with a Social Therapeutic Department nearby. At that time, library staff visited the facility to check out books. At a later stage, a small book inventory was provided; since then, a suitable inmate went to the city library every now and then to borrow the desired media items for his/her inmates. With the facility’s relocation to Bochum in 2020, this cooperation came to an end. A new start in Bochum has not been successful yet.

During a meeting of the work group of the municipal libraries of NRW in 2018, readings for people behind bars were suggested. Putting such a reading project into practice has proven to be so cumbersome a procedure that just a few projects have been realized so far, for example, the bestselling author Sebastian Fitzek’s reading hour in Gelsenkirchen. The German Federal Culture

Foundation (Kulturstiftung des Bundes) invited for a supra-regional workshop called “Hochdrei” according to the motto “cooperation leads to a change,” which started in the Münster prison library and ended in the Münster city library after two more stages. During these workshops, best practice examples for cooperation were presented and further recommended by other federal states. However, there is still considerable need for further development to optimize cooperation.

Library public relations are essential for library services in correctional facilities in NRW proven by its membership in the NRW Library Association (Landesverband der Bibliotheken), German Library Association (DBV), and the IFLA. These memberships show clearly that prison libraries are an integral part of public library services. This implies a mutual responsibility to provide media items for incarcerated persons. Due to this joint responsibility, it would be most desirable and highly necessary for professional library collection development in correctional facilities if city libraries and library associations would cooperate more closely – especially for potential online associations with regard to digital media access, and the participation in social issues for prisoners. Since its foundation in 2006, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) has significantly contributed to a public sensitization and cooperation, for example, conferences and publications.³⁰

On the one hand, thanks to library services such as events, for example, author readings, incarcerated persons can participate in social life. They do not only face literature but also face the authors of literature.³¹ On the other hand, meetings with library experts from city libraries or library associations in correctional facilities sensitize to reality of life under the conditions of imprisonment.

Besides such one-time events there are also some continuous offers, for example, literature groups or writing workshops. A good example is the fairy tale reader who visited the Münster Correctional Facility and read to its inmates. Essays resulting from a literature group in the Werl Correctional Facility were published at the end of 2020.³²

The story of the library in the Münster Correctional Facility is both joyful and tragic at the same time. However, it is only briefly mentioned in this current



Münster Prison Library 2007, Flyer for “Best IFLA 2012 Poster Session”;

© photo by Michael Bönnte, 2007.

chapter. More information can be found in the publications of the years 2007, 2013, 2017, and 2019.³³

The Münster Correctional Facility was built in 1853 beyond the former city walls around the historic city. It is the oldest prison in NRW. With its star-shaped design, the panopticon represents an architectural curiosity and is protected as an architectural heritage building. Its changing history documents the dark and bright chapters in German history. In addition, it is a contemporary witness and mirrors the history of the following stages of the prison library's history: management by the clergy in the nineteenth century, by teachers in the twentieth century until the 1990s, by employees of the Prison Service and the administration until 2003, by a professional librarian of the Prison Library Department from 2003 to 2019, and since then by employees of the Prison Service again.

Around the year 1900, modern literature for inmates, for example, by Goethe and Schiller was discussed and finally released. During the years of National Socialism in Germany, the range of literature was determined by its ideology. At the end of World War II, national socialist literature was removed from the libraries and new books filled the holdings. In the 1970s, it was decided to add erotic literature to the collection.

In the 1980s, the approx. 500 inmates of the Münster Correctional Facility were permitted open access to the prison library. Thus, the prisoners could easily visit the library housed in the former panopticon in the center of the building from all five wings of the star-shaped facility. 70% of all inmates made use of this opportunity. In 2003, the Prison Library Department was removed from the dissolved Department of Correctional Services in Hamm to the Münster Correctional Facility. Then, the former Hamm professional librarian took over the library management. Supported by the works of the facility and the professional librarian as well as the donor, a blueprint for a library space drafted by the architects Bolles+Wilson, who had created the innovative Münster city library before, could be put into practice in 2005. At the occasion of the Writers-in-prison-day in 2005, the completely renewed library was inaugurated. This innovation entailed a conception renewal, update, and expansion of the media services. Consequently, the user rate rose to 80% of all inmates and climbed to 90% after the introduction of DVDs and further foreign-language literature.

The experience of the successful library renewal and its active support gave the impetus to found the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in December 2006 in order to support the development of media offerings for incarcerated persons nationally. Both, the library renewal and the founding of the Prison Library Support Group were two elements contributing to the award of the Münster prison library as "Library of the Year 2007." The award ceremony conferred by the German Library Association (Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e.V.) and Zeit-Stiftung took place on the national Library Day on October 24, 2007 at the Münster Correctional Facility with around 200 guests. Thanks to the national library award worth 30,000€, several projects could be realized: a reading with the author Erich Loest, a meeting for an international exchange of information about prison libraries, an exhibition

themed “Reading connects – Literacy as a human right,” the publication of the reference book “Books Open Worlds” about prison libraries in Germany and abroad in 2013 by the publisher *de Gruyter*, and a newly stocked reading and relaxation room. The 2007 national library award, which went to the Münster prison library, received the broadest press coverage ever for a “Library of a Year” award in Germany. This continues to have an effect today. Many groups of professional colleagues from Germany and abroad participated in the exchange of expertise and some well-known personalities paid a visit or joined an event, for example, the former Federal President Horst Köhler in 2012.

As a consequence of the evacuation of approx. 450 prisoners from the star-shaped Münster Correctional Facility due to structural concerns regarding the buildings’ safety, the library had to be outsourced in July 2016. Hence, the once awarded prison library has become history. What followed was an ineffective intermediate state with an uncertain future. After the renovation of one wing of the building in which detainees were housed at the beginning of 2018, the library could be used and reopened in October 2019, however under considerably changed overall conditions of the facility. Since then, the professional librarian of the Prison Department Library is no more responsible for the prison library but an employee of the Prison Service. New library regulations came into force, allowing the detainees in the wing next to the library open access while the inmates in other parts of the building are not permitted to visit the library by themselves and can only check out books by application. In the meantime, the decision has been taken to establish a new correctional facility on the outskirts of Münster, which is supposed to open in 2025. In this context, a new library is planned, too. A current highlight in times of the 2020 Corona pandemic was the visit of Peter Biesenbach,³⁴ Federal Minister of Justice of the State of NRW, to the Münster Correctional Facility, particularly the prison library, for a professional exchange of information with members of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.). In view of the tragic outcome of the recent history of this special library it ended with a surprising highlight. May the history and experience of this unique library be kept as a legacy for the future for incarcerated persons.³⁵

6 PRISON LIBRARY SUPPORT GROUP (FÖRDERVEREIN GEFANGENENBÜCHEREIEN E.V.)

On December 18, 2006, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.)³⁶ was founded in the Münster Correctional Facility. The purpose of this advocacy organization is to support the education as well as the care of people in prison or arrest by means of optimized library services in juvenile detention centers and adult correctional facilities, for example, public relations, collection development, data administration, data processing, spatial planning, the promotion of reading, and events. Excellent experience with the renewal of the library in the Münster Correctional Facility in 2005 gave reason for the foundation of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein

Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.). This experience contrasts with the national sobering reality of an almost marginal budget, a lack of personnel, and insufficient support of library services for incarcerated persons. The Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) aims at cooperating with other interested facilities to promote initiatives and projects to improve the media offerings for incarcerated persons. After its founding with 24 members, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) counts 130 members today, despite deaths and resignations. Members include representatives of the book trade, library sector, penitentiary system, former inmates, individuals, or authors. For more information on the projects of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.), please visit the website www.fvgb.de. After research carried out by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in 2007 on the situation of the new drafts of the Juvenile Detention Act, for which the 16 individual federal states have been responsible since the Federalism Reform in Germany, the German Library Association (Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e.V.) launched an appeal to all Ministers of Justice in favor of the integration of library services in the new Juvenile Detention Act. The founding of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) contributed, among others, to award the prison library of the Münster Correctional Facility "Library of the Year 2007." The Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) administered the national library award worth 30,000€ for several projects.

The 2008 dream of the chairman of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) about a book tree on a wall has been inspiring through to today as a vision of dialogue and integration over separating walls and will serve as an epilogue to this article. The book tree was translated in more than 20 languages and was expressed with over 100 picture contributions. In 2010, it was presented in traveling exhibitions as well as on the website www.libertree.eu. Moreover, it shall encourage the one or other initiative for cooperation across walls taken either by the library side or the penal side without expecting the other side to make the first move.

The architects Bolles+Wilson were awarded the German Library Prize in 2007 for their concept of the Münster prison library. Professor Julia Bolles-Wilson took this opportunity to discuss the research topic "library space beyond bars" at the Münster School of Architecture (MSA).³⁷ Some of the prison library blueprints developed by students of the university in cooperation with 12 interested correctional facilities in NRW were put into practice later. The results of the student's two-semester works were published³⁸ in a separate brochure by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in 2010.

Thanks to the Frankfurt Book Fair, the first nationwide conference for employees of the prison libraries as well as representatives of the Justice Departments could take place in 2010. At this occasion, the traveling exhibition "Libertree – Book Trees Bridge Walls," (see www.libertree.eu) was made and presented for the very first time. Three more national conferences about prison libraries took

place in cooperation with the Leipzig Book Fair in the years 2013, 2016, and 2019. Occasionally, meetings on state level for prison library employees could be stimulated and conducted.

The Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) celebrated its 10th anniversary in the ballroom of the Münster historic town hall in 2017. Before, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) had announced a prize competition to all correctional facilities in Germany to identify some awardable best practice examples. The award “Prison Library of the Year 2016” went to the correctional facilities of Dortmund, Celle, Hohenleuen (in cooperation with the Greiz city library), and Würzburg. The award “Detention Library of the Year 2016” went to library of the Berlin-Brandenburg³⁹ Detention Centre.

The following publications were produced: a flyer about the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in 2009, which was revised and updated repeatedly; the websites of the Support Group and the “dreaming of the book tree on a wall” in 2010; the brochure “library rooms beyond bars” and the traveling exhibition regarding the dreaming of the book tree on the wall in 2010; the reference book about prison libraries in Germany and abroad by the publisher *de Gruyter* in 2013; the brochure about the Münster prison library – Germany’s former “Library of the Year 2007” – in 2017. In 2020, the Support Group supported the UNESCO publication about prison libraries worldwide in a German edition.

The members of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) confirmed again their international orientation and potential impact at the general meeting in 2019. The UNESCO publication about prison libraries was inspired by the editor, who is a member of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.). Together with the chairman and another member of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.), the editor is also a member of a working group for prison libraries in a Section responsible for the IFLA, which is in charge of revising and updating regulations for prison libraries. In this way, a new internationality was achieved for the development of media offerings for incarcerated persons, and this chance should be used.

7 GROWN INTERNATIONALITY

In 2003, Gerhard Peschers participated in an international library congress of the IFLA in Berlin for the first time and gave a talk about the library services in correctional facilities in NRW based on best practice examples. Since that time, his contact to international colleagues has increased. In December 2006, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) was founded in the Münster Correctional Facility. Today, the Prison Library Support Group, which initiated and supported many projects, includes 130 members from Germany and other countries (see above).

In 2007, the Münster prison library was awarded the German Library Prize as “Library of the Year 2007,” which led to new international contacts. Visitors from different countries visited Münster for an exchange of expertise.⁴⁰ The Münster prison library was presented in a poster form at the international library congress of the IFLA in Helsinki in 2012 and was finally awarded the “Best IFLA 2012 Poster Session.”

In 2013, an international meeting took place in the Münster Correctional Facility. Shortly afterwards, the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) published the reference book “Books Open Worlds” about prison libraries in Germany and abroad including expert contributions from more than 20 countries by *de Gruyter*. Contributions were presented at the IFLA in Cape Town in 2015. Since then, there are plans to publish the reference book in English to promote the international exchange in this area of expertise.

In spring 2016, Gerhard Peschers participated in the midyear meeting of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN), which took place in Berlin. Afterwards he served as a corresponding member of the Section for about four years. Gerhard Peschers represented prison library services and always urged for an update of the IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners. As a consequence of the sudden partial evacuation of the Münster Correctional Facility at the beginning of July 2016, the awarded prison library had to be outsourced. Its unique history was published in an abundantly illustrated brochure in 2017 and introduced for the first time at the German Librarians Day in Frankfurt as well as at the IFLA 2017 in Wrocław, Poland. In-depth considerations for an international publication about prison libraries and an update of the respective guidelines were taken there in order to integrate them later in the process of the above-mentioned Section.

Lisa Krolak, Chief Librarian at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in Hamburg, Germany, presented the Institute’s first draft regarding a potential publication about prison libraries at the midyear meeting of the Section in Oslo in spring 2018, which was highly appreciated by the Section. Based on an international survey on this topic, the diverse feedback was evaluated and summarized to one publication. Following an invitation to a final editing meeting by Lisa Krolak at the UIL in Hamburg, Germany in spring 2019 together with Erland Ra from Norway and Gerhard Peschers, the final version of the publication was completed just in time for the IFLA 2019 in Athens and published in its original version by Lisa Krolak: “Book beyond bars: The transformative potential of prison libraries.” When a poster session was timetabled, Gerhard Peschers designed a poster as well as an English and German flyer in Münster in consultation and cooperation with Lisa Krolak. Thanks to this continuously built up expertise, Gerhard Peschers participated at the IFLA 2019 themed “Libraries: dialogue for change” in Athens with the following two foci: First, to cooperate with the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) and second, to present the UNESCO publication about prison libraries worldwide via a poster session together with Lisa Krolak.

Such targeted library services for the special field of prison libraries can only be successful if the professional library community is integrated permanently on a wider scale and if a positive response is given to this issue. To achieve this, the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) forms the core group, which in turn is interconnected in the IFLA's overall structure.

A good example of the work of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) is the World and Library Information Congress in Athens in 2019.



IFLA LSN 2019 in Athens, in front of the Megaron International Conference Centre, © photo by Gerhard Peschers.

The Section held two meetings in order to discuss various items on the agenda, which had been agreed upon. Furthermore, all congress participants were invited for a lecture event with several speakers while all presentations were translated simultaneously and transmitted on a special monitor with large writing to the deaf.

During the first meeting, there was a change in chair: Misako Nomura (Japan) handed over the chair to Nancy Bolt (USA). Samira Zahra (Goethe Institute Sofia, Bulgaria) and Lisa Krolak (UIL, Hamburg, Germany) were appointed as permanent members of the Section. Gerhard Peschers' mandate as a corresponding member had expired after four years. Due to the fact that the above two new colleagues with a close connection to the subject of prison libraries were integrated as permanent members of the Section and the fact that other projects had been completed in the meantime, it was time to found a working group focused on updating the international guidelines for prison libraries. Headed by Lisa Krolak

and in cooperation with Samira Zahra and Gerhard Peschers, the group's intention is to find further experienced participants from other countries in order to begin revising the guidelines with divided responsibilities. After the cancelation of the IFLA 2020 due to the CORONA pandemic, however, there is still hope that the first draft will be presented at the IFLA 2021 in Rotterdam, enabling the working group to present a fully developed final version at the IFLA 2022 in Dublin if possible, and to evaluate its response at IFLA in 2023.

Books beyond bars

Prison libraries are places in which the prison community can gather to read, borrow books and carry out research, take part in organized activities, or simply enjoy the company of other people in a relaxed and safe environment.

They can open up a world beyond prison bars, allowing prisoners to forget for a time the harsh reality of prison life and empower them to choose their own reading materials in an otherwise extremely restrictive and regulated environment.

This publication shows how reading and using a prison library can be a transformative and powerful experience with far-reaching and lasting effects. It highlights examples from selected prison library systems around the world, demonstrating challenges and best practice, and thus revealing their potential as informational, educational, cultural and recreational meeting and learning spaces.

The following policy directions have emerged:

- Prison libraries should model the library system that is used outside the prison walls.
- Prison libraries should be an integral part of relevant policy regulations and networks.
- Prison libraries need to be managed by trained prison library staff with access to sufficient resources.
- Prison libraries should contribute to a literate environment that encourages inmates to develop, enhance and sustain literacy skills.
- Prison libraries should use their materials and provide a space to offer interactive literacy activities.

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BOOKS BEYOND BARS

The transformative potential of prison libraries

The first UNESCO publication
on prison libraries worldwide



Free download:
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/p0000369835/PDF/369835eng.pdf.multi>



© Photo by Gerhard Peschers, 2019.

Lisa Krolak and Gerhard Peschers were present at the poster session during the IFLA 2019 in Athens for two days and were thus available for questions from the numerous visitors as well as for conversations, which in turn led to new impulses and encounters. Thanks to their joint presence at the poster stand they could work with each other during the many encounters. In autumn 2019, Lisa Krolak presented her publication at the general meeting of the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) in Münster demonstrating the Support Group's international potential and impact beyond Germany. Supported

by the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.), a German edition of the UNESCO publication themed “Books Beyond Bars – The transformative potential of prison libraries” could be published in 2020. This publication was supposed to be handed over together with Lisa Krolak via the Director of the UNESCO Institute in Hamburg to the Minister of Justice of NRW at the occasion of the World Book and Copyright Day in April 2020. Unfortunately, this event was canceled because of the CORONA pandemic. However, a formal handover could be made up during the visit of the Minister to the Münster Correctional Facility on August 10, 2020.⁴¹ The UNESCO discussed the topic of prison libraries in various formats, for example, on social media sites, in a webinar with several international speakers, in interviews, and blogs. In addition, the library purchase center had sent the flyer regarding the publication and the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.) along with its information package to approximately 2,000 libraries in May. The Conference of Ministers of Justice as well as all correctional facilities in Germany and in the German speaking neighboring countries were provided with the German publication by the UNESCO Institute. The publication is already available in English, German, and French; translations into Spanish and Portuguese are in work. Moreover, the UNESCO Institute published the “UIL Policy Brief 11: How prison libraries support rehabilitation efforts” in May, which is available as a policy brief “UIL Kurzdossier 11”⁴² in French, Spanish, and German. Due to this development, the topic of prison libraries has gained a new international dimension.

8 DIGITALIZATION IN PRISON – A CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE

As an outlook to the future, which will be significantly influenced by digitalization, this section will begin with two quotes by the highly experienced communication scientist, Univ. Prof. EM. Dr. H. C. Siegfried J. Schmidt (Professor Emeritus, Department of Communication of the University of Münster).

“[...] if you want to turn your back on the media – this is impossible. Media, i.e. by newspaper and radio, film and television, and electronic media determine our relationship to the world. Media create their own media typical realities; they do not portray reality itself. They make clear that everything could also be different and that we are responsible for our realities. We live in a media culture society that will soon cover the whole world.”⁴³

In contrast to the traditional media from printing to television, electronic media are available for anyone at anytime; and in principle everyone assumes that everybody else has such media at his/her disposal and uses them regularly. This paves the way to a permanent access to information as well as to persons worldwide whose use establishes far-reaching consequences for the individual and the society [...].

The mission of a prison library should not only be to intensify the use of books but also to evaluate the use of electronic media (offerings). In the current situation, such a massive educational and awareness-raising work in correctional facilities can neither be expected nor be accomplished. This work should, however, be seriously conceptualized in order to increase the chances of inmates for a change and personal development. We all have to learn more precisely what mediatisation means, what effect it has, and what opportunities the individual has.⁴⁴

In 2013, the national German newspaper *taz* ran the headline “No Internet in jail.” This headline describes widely the situation at that time. However, it can be put into perspective since there have been initial approaches to make digital media on a limited basis accessible to incarcerated persons – particularly the nationwide introduced e-learning platform in the penal system (ELIS).⁴⁵ What has long been standard practice in general library services remains a hesitant option associated with



Painted by a female inmate of the women's prison in Sao Paulo, 2009, © photo by Gerhard Peschers.

many security concerns under the conditions of the penitentiary system. The slowness and caution of the penitentiary system to permit incarcerated persons access to digital media may, however, give food for thought for the over-stimulated world on the other side of the wall and how they handle media. Reading will be a key competence regarding the handling of media and a prerequisite for media competence in the future. The Stavanger Declaration⁴⁶ of 2019 concerning the future of reading in times of digitalization summarizes the opinion of more than 130 researchers. Thus, reading promotion is an investment for the future. Preserving the culture of print media is a basis to develop offerings of digital media and to learn and teach its use, respectively.

Digitalization is a big challenge for everyone, for example, to spot fake news, to repel harmful influences, to protect copyrights, and to select and identify the currently necessary and essential information from the existing overabundance of irrelevant data. It is the mission of the penitentiary system to educate and advocate incarcerated persons for this challenge. That is why it is important to create appropriate technical, organizational, legal, and personnel conditions enabling incarcerated persons access to digital media to a justifiable extent under the framework of the penitentiary system. The city and district library of Greiz in Thuringia is a pioneer in giving incarcerated persons access to digital media. Since 2012 the Head of the library, Corina Gutmann has established an active cooperation with the Hohenleuben Correctional Facility and initiated something that has never been seen before: since the end of 2013 every inmate has been permitted to use the online public access catalogue (OPAC) of the Greiz library via a screen in his/her cell in order to retrieve and research data or to order some media items. Once a month recreation officers anonymously borrow or return the respective media items at the Greiz library.⁴⁷

Starting in Berlin, Germany in December 2016, the pilot project on “rehabilitation by means of digitalization” has made path-breaking experiences inspiring other federal states to initiate pilot projects build upon these findings. Since December 2019, the latest Berlin Correctional Facility in Heidering has been cooperating in a pilot project with the Berlin Central and Regional Library giving inmates of a selected unit access to approved websites via WIFI and tablets. These sites will be set on a white list. The Berlin House of Representatives comments the project as follows:

“The objective of the pilot project is to introduce incarcerated persons to the use of new media in a structured manner whilst complying with special security requirements of the penitentiary system, to support workflows in the facility by electronic media which are also used by inmates, to enable further training and continuous professional development programmes for inmates while using Internet services, and to access approved content from the world wide web. In particular, web content serving the purpose of facilitating the social rehabilitation of the sentenced person(s) shall be made accessible via identical reproduction with a slight delay on the correctional facilities’ servers to the inmates, e.g. sites concerning news, apartment search, advanced training offers, labour office, or Wikipedia. In this context, release preparation and transition management shall be taken into consideration, too. A concept shall be developed stipulating until when and under what conditions a possibly restricted email exchange with specific recipients could be permitted. The permission for Internet telephony is to be checked.⁴⁸”

The project has proven its worth and has a pioneering character nationwide. An examination will be made to find out how the project's experiences could be transferred to the regular operations in the future.

The cooperation between the correctional facility and the public library also acts a model. It shows clearly what opportunities cooperation between city libraries and prison libraries in joint online associations offers.

EPILOGUE

After diverse objective consideration of the topic of library services in the penitentiary system, Gerhard Peschers finishes this chapter with his dream of the book tree on the prison wall of spring 2008 as a vision of dialogue and integration between people separated by walls and invites the reader for a creative dialogue:

Invitation for creative dialogue

You are invited, to share dialogue and integration between people separated by walls.

What experiences do you associate with this, that you want to share with others?



Art work created by a German inmate the day before his release in 2009 after 20 years in prison. Commenting on his picture, he writes: „During my time in prison, books were like a good friend to me – always there for me, I could let myself ‘fall into them’, take time for them, they were comfort, joy, dreams, life. Through them I was able to escape reality, forget the bars, the warden and my fellow prisoners. Without books I would certainly not have survived all these years. They were and are a gateway to another world – for better or worse. While reading I was not locked up and locked away – I lived differently, in the books, with the books. Books have always meant freedom for me.“

Dreaming of a book-tree on a wall

On 26 March 2008 I have dreamt of a tree, growing on a prison wall.

The prison wall is sturdy and smooth. The roots of the tree glide down the wall on both sides, extend into the soil and meet again in the earth below the wall. The branches of the tree reach out to both sides and find each other. Instead of green leaves and fruits, books grow on the tree, which makes it appear colourful on the grey wall beneath the blue sky.

I awoke joyful with this picture in mind and shared it right away with my wife. At the same time the dream reminded me of a piece of the Berlin Wall, on which was written

„THE WORLD'S TOO SMALL
FOR WALLS“

On the website www.libertree.eu you can find the dream in over 20 languages, with over 100 picture contributions.

Everyone is invited to share the dream of dialogue and integration across the walls and to become inventive.

Please share the dream with interested people - preferably on both sides of prison walls. Libraries are encouraged to contact the library on the other side of the prison wall.

I welcome contributions about this dream - together with a declaration of consent that your contribution may be published. Then it will be posted on the website and possibly published later in publications to inspire others.

Contact:
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Website:
www.libertree.eu



NOTES

1. See Peschers, Gerhard: "Gefangenenbüchereien als Zeitzeugen: Streifzug durch die Geschichte der Gefangenenbüchereien seit 1850", in: *Ketten-Kerker-Knast: Zur Geschichte des Strafvollzugs in Westfalen*, publication accompanying the exhibition at the Gustav-Lübcke-Museum in Hamm. 2000 / Ed. Maria Perrefort, pp. 123–141 as well as the revised version of the article in the reference book *Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international*; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, pp. 28–51.

2. Georg Michael Obermaier, "Anleitung zur vollkommenen Besserung der Verbrecher in den Strafanstalten," Kaiserslautern: 1835, p. 117.

3. House regulations for prisoners of the Münster Royal Penitentiary in Westphalia, Münster 1903 with amendments dated 1918, p. 27.

4. Reference to the traveling exhibition "reading connects – literacy as a human right" which was established due to the initiative of the Münster prison library as well as the Prison Library Support Group in cooperation with the Federal Association Literacy and Basic Education in Münster, UNESCO Hamburg and the publishing house Klett-Verlag in Stuttgart in 2013. It consists of 22 posters (A2 size); checkout upon consultation.

5. Constructive cooperation between city libraries and prison libraries was established, e.g., in 2008 between the Wittlich city library and the Wittlich Correctional Facility (Rhine-land Palatinate); in 2012 between the Greiz city and district library and the Hohenleuben Correctional Facility (Thuringia); in 2017 between the Brandenburg city library ("Fouqué-Bibliothek") and the Brandenburg Correctional Facility as well as in 2019 between the Heidering Correctional Facility and the Central and Regional Library Berlin (ZLB) for initially offering digital media to be checked out. The Central and Regional Library Berlin (ZLB) was awarded Germany's "Library of the Year 2019."

6. See Federal Penal Code (StVollzG), Federal Custody Act (UVollzG), Juvenile Court Act (JGG), analogous to Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JAVollzO) of the German federal states.

7. In this respect, the legal anchoring of prison libraries in individual federal states in Germany should be mentioned in Prof Eric W. Steinhauer's expert contribution of 2017: Eric W. Steinhauer: Bibliotheken und Büchereien in den Justizvollzugsgesetzen. Eine Bestandsaufnahme, in: *Bibliothek – Forschung für die Praxis. Festschrift commemorating the 65th anniversary of Konrad Umlauf*; ed.: Petra Hauke, Andrea Kaufmann, and Vivien Petras; Berlin: De Gruyter Saur, 2017, pp. 503–518.

8. Primary law enforcement goals are defined as follows according to §2 of the Federal Penal Code (StVollzG § 2): "While serving the prison sentence, the prisoner is to become capable of leading a life in social responsibility without crimes (law enforcement goal)." "Enforcement of the prison sentence should also serve to protect the general public from further crimes." Since 1977, the national law has been applied, unless replaced by laws from individual federal states.

9. In §67 of the Federal Penal Code (StVollzG § 67), the prisoner's right to use a library in his/her free time is guaranteed: "The prisoner receives an opportunity to occupy himself/herself during his/her free time. He/she should have opportunities to participate in educational pursuits, including sports, distance education and other forms of continuing education, recreation groups, group discussions, and sports events, and have the opportunity to use a library."

10. See Motzko (January 2008). Reference is made to the discussion of updating user group definitions and the resulting consequences for user-oriented library services. In my opinion, this takes nothing from the basic community orientation of socially responsible library services and its focus on people in various life situations. Incarcerated persons

therefore constitute an especially concise and clearly defined target group. To Gerhard Peschers, the concept of “social” is valuable and must be preserved. Unfortunately, the connotations of “ineffective” or “charitable” detract from its positive meaning.

11. See www.unesco.de/154.html: Empfehlung über die Teilnahme und Mitwirkung aller Bevölkerungsschichten am kulturellen Leben (Recommendation on Participation by the People at Large in Cultural Life and their Contribution to It) – November 26, 1976.

12. See https://www.bibliotheksverband.de/fileadmin/user_upload/DBV/positionen/Positionspapier_Bibliotheken_und_Demokratie_final.pdf (retrieved September 23, 2020).

13. See <https://www.bibliotheksverband.de/fachgruppen/sektionen/sektion-8.html>.

14. See <https://www.ifla.org/lisn>. For information on internationality and cooperation with IFLA LSN, see chapter 7.

15. See <https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Staat/Justiz-Rechtspflege/Publikationen/Downloads-Strafverfolgung-Strafvollzug/bestand-gefangene-verwahrte-xlsx-5243201.html> und.

16. See chapter 2.3.1 of the reference book “Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, pp. 56–60. Information about this article was updated in consultation with the library.

17. See chapter 2.3.2 of the reference book *Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international*; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, pp. 61–64. Information about this article was updated in consultation with the library.

18. Under the direction of the Gelsenkirchen municipal library through Ernst Hugo Käufer, “Bibliotheksarbeit in Justizvollzugsanstalten” (1986) was published by the German Library Institute in Berlin. This report critically states that prison libraries resemble “literary flea markets” more than libraries. The report also includes guidelines for prison library services comparable to the guidelines for library services to prisoners of the IFLA.

19. See footnote 27: chronological list of renewed libraries in Westphalia-Lippe 1994–2020.

20. In 2003, the Prison Library Department of the Department of Correctional Services in Hamm was relocated to the Münster Correctional Facility where the former Hamm professional librarian took over the library management.

From 2003 to 2016, the certified librarian of the Prison Library Department managed the prison library of the Münster Correctional Facility. Thus, the prison library management was directly affiliated to the Prison Library Department. This interrelationship was an important prerequisite for a successful redevelopment and spatial as well as conceptual renewal of the Münster prison library in autumn 2005. When the librarian of the Prison Library Department took over the management of the prison library, the library played a central role of national importance. Münster offers a variety of cooperation options with other libraries, the university, and ecclesiastical libraries. The librarian took these opportunities to develop further cooperation step by step. As a result, cross-institutional networking between the prison libraries of the correctional facilities and the libraries as well as other organizations could be emerged. Therefore, the new interrelation and direct connection of the Prison Library Department with the prison libraries showed a constructive effect both in practice and in public. This was abruptly stopped when 450 prisoners of the allegedly collapsed star-shaped building of the Münster Correctional Facility had to be evacuated within 48 hours. As a consequence, many employees were seconded to other institutions and the library was outsourced. Hence, the once awarded “Library of the Year 2007” has become history. When the Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners came into force in North Rhine-Westphalia in April 2019, the professional librarian of the Prison Library Department was responsible for national tasks, independent of the management of the facility’s prison library.

21. See https://www.justiz.nrw.de/Gerichte_Behoerden/landesjustizvollzugsdirektion/statistik_und_forschung/zahlen_daten_und_fakten/index.php (retrieved September 10, 2020).

22. See https://www.justiz.nrw.de/Gerichte_Behoerden/zahlen_fakten/statistiken/justiz-vollzug/index.php (retrieved September 10, 2020).

23. See https://www.justiz.nrw.de/Gerichte_Behoerden/zahlen_fakten/statistiken/justiz-vollzug/index.php (retrieved September 10, 2020).

24. For more information regarding the Federal Penal Code in North Rhine-Westphalia, please visit www.justiz.nrw.de.

25. The Ministry of Justice of North Rhine-Westphalia has been reserving the right to approve sponsoring with regard to book donations for about eight years. The librarian of the Prison Library Department as well as the manager of the Münster Correctional Facility was refused to decide on the acceptance of book donations in 2015. Since that time, book donations have been accepted in exceptional cases only. Other administrative provisions led to multiple authorisation work and increased administrative effort, e.g., media procurement and other materials. This procedure turns out to be ineffective and less motivating for the library staff.

26. See www.oclc.com.

27. In 1994: Büren Correctional Facility (new construction, closed prison, detention pending deportation); in 1995: Bochum-Langendreher Correctional Facility (new construction, open prison); in 1998: Gelsenkirchen Correctional Facility (new construction, closed + open prison); in 1999: Hövelhof Correctional Facility (new room, open prison, juvenile prison); in 2000: Hamm Correctional Facility (new room, closed prison); in 2001: Bielefeld-Brackwede II Correctional Facility (new construction, open prison); in 2003: Social Therapeutic Department Gelsenkirchen (book corner, closed prison, social therapy); in 2004: Bochum Correctional Facility (new building, closed prison); in 2004: affiliated Correctional Facility Coesfeld (renovation, closed prison); in 2005: Münster Correctional Facility (renovation, redevelopment, closed prison); in 2006: Wetter Juvenile Detention Centre (shelf rack, juvenile detention); in 2006: Iserlohn Correctional Facility (new room, closed prison, juvenile prison, integration in the learning workshop “Lichtblicke,” introduction of open access library); in 2007: Herford Correctional Facility (new room, closed prison, juvenile prison); in 2009: Büren Correctional Facility (new room, closed prison, detention pending deportation); in 2010: Castrop-Rauxel Correctional Facility (new room, open prison); in 2011: Wetter Juvenile Detention Centre (new room, juvenile detention); in 2010: Attendorn Correctional Facility (new construction, closed prison); in 2012: Dortmund Correctional Facility (new room, closed prison); in 2012: Bottrop Juvenile Detention Centre (new room, juvenile detention); in 2012: Lünen Juvenile Detention Centre (new room, juvenile detention); in 2012: Münster Correctional Facility: reading room (additional new room, closed prison); [in 2016: Münster Correctional Facility (outsourcing of media after partial evacuation; end of Germany’s “Library of the Year 2007”)]; in 2017: Schwerte Correctional Facility (new room, rearranging of old inventory); in 2017: Attendorn Correctional Facility (new interior design, open prison); in 2018: Münster Correctional Facility (room concept for the planned new construction in 2025); in 2019: Münster Correctional Facility, B-wing (former library room, put into operation after relocated entrance); in 2019: Werl Correctional Facility, Preventive Detention Facility (new room in the new construction for preventive detention); in 2020: Social Therapeutic Department Bochum (new room in the new construction for social therapy).

28. Designed by architects, the innovative Münster city library was opened in 1993. In 2019, the new Luxembourg National Library was opened which the same architects designed.

29. Recommendation (2006) 2-rev of Committee of Ministers regarding the European Rules of Imprisonment (At their 952th meeting, on 11 January, 2006 adopted by the Ministers’ Deputies and at their 1380th meeting on July 1, 2020 revised and changed.): “28.6 Wherever possible, the prison library should be organised in co-operation with community library services.” See https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016809ee581 (retrieved September 14, 2020).

30. See reference book *Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international*; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, chapters. 2.4 + 2.5; Förderverein

Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.(ed.), *Bücher öffnen Welten: Die Gefangenenbücherei Münster als Deutschlands "Bibliothek des Jahres 2007"* – Wurzeln, Werdegang und Wirkung. Münster, Ardey 2017; UNESCO supported the German edition of the publication about prison libraries internationally 2020; for other, see next chapter about the Prison Library Support Group.

31. The following authors and personalities visited the Münster Correctional Facility: In 2006: Bernhard Schlink (bestseller: *Der Vorleser/The Reader*); in February 2007: Anant Kumar (Reading on both sides of the wall by inmates and students); in April 2007: Wolfgang Hohlbein (bestseller author); in April 2008: Sten Nadolny (Bestseller *Die Entdeckung der Langsamkeit/The Discovery of Slowness*); in October 2008: Erich Loest (1957–1964 in the GDR politically imprisoned author from Leipzig; first reading after 44 years of prison); in 2009: Ina Nienhaus (fairy tale reader) and Jiri Grusa (diplomat, writer, former President of the International PEN); in February 2010: Eberhard Lempelius (autobiography); in August 2010: Marga Spiegel (survivor of the Holocaust, 98 years); in 2011: Leslie Schwartz (survivor of the Holocaust), in March 2012: former Federal President Horst Köhler (subject: "Schicksal Afrika" reading and talk); in 2013: Hermann Wenning (former inmate, autobiography *Lauf zurück ins Leben*); in 2015: a series of readings in cooperation with the Münsterland Writers' Association: Rolffraffael Schröer, Alexander Richter, Molla Demirel, Peter Weidlich and in June 2016 Evelyn Barenbrügge (last reading for years, shortly before the evacuation of the facility at the beginning of July 2016); in October 2019: Hermann Wenning (see above) on the occasion of the reopening of the library; in 2021: a reading event with the Minister of Justice, Peter Biesenbach (tbc).

32. Lisa Swietek (editor.) | *Geschichten aus einer anderen Welt*, Gera: Edition Outbird, 2020.

A good example was the writing workshop initiated by the former Head of the Greiz city library, Corinna Gutmann who passed away in March 2020. She established a long-standing cooperation with the Hohenleuben Correctional Facility. As a result of the writing workshop the publication "Kopfkino. Geschichten aus dem Knast" was presented at the Leipzig Book Fair in 2019.

33. For information on the Library of the Year 2007, please visit <https://www.bibliothekerverband.de/dbv/auszeichnungen/bibliothek-des-jahres/preistraeger/2007.html>; **2013**: reference book "Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, pp. 66–101. **2017**: Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.(Hrsg.), *Bücher öffnen Welten: Die Gefangenenbücherei Münster als Deutschlands "Bibliothek des Jahres 2007"* – Wurzeln, Werdegang und Wirkung. Münster, Ardey 2017; reopening of the library in **2019**: Article in the local paper bearing the headline "Ausnahmestand als Normalität" on October 22, 2019, see <https://www.wn.de/Muenster/4005824-Baufaellige-JVA-Ausnahmestand-wird-zur-Normalitaet>.

34. For information on press releases regarding the visit of the Minister of Justice, please visit https://www.justiz.nrw/Mitteilungen/2020_08_10_Minister_Buecherei_JVA_Muenster/index.php (retrieved September 28, 2020), for a statement of the UNESCO: <https://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/reaching-out-policy-makers-impact-prison-libraries>.

35. Thanks to the initiative of the Prison Library Support Group some libraries were awarded best practice examples, see next section.

36. Homepage www.fvgb.de and for additions to the dream of the book tree on the prison wall see www.libertree.eu (further contributions are welcome); Email: kontakt@fvgb.de. See also: reference book *Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international*; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, pp. 117ff.

37. See Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.(editors), *Bücher öffnen Welten: Die Gefangenenbücherei Münster als Deutschlands "Bibliothek des Jahres 2007"* – Wurzeln, Werdegang und Wirkung. Münster, Ardey 2017, pp. 68–73.

38. "Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, p. 112.

39. Julia Bolles-Wilson, Gerhard Peschers, Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V. (editor): "Bibliotheksräume hinter Gittern," 23 students' blueprints; Münster School of Architecture (MSA): Münster, 2010.

40. Particularly on the initiative of the Goethe Institute, e.g., in 2007 from approx. 10 countries worldwide or in 2012 from several Central Asian countries as well as a group from the Philippines; moreover, repeated visitors from various European countries, e.g., groups from Norway or Hungary as well as individual guests from other countries.

41. See press release of the Ministry of Justice https://www.justiz.nrw/Mitteilungen/2020_08_10_Minister_Buecherei_JVA_Muenster/index.php (retrieved September 28, 2020) for UNESCO news see <https://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/reaching-out-policy-makers-impact-prison-libraries>.

42. See <https://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/reaching-out-policy-makers-impact-prison-libraries> (last retrieved September 28, 2020).

The allocation and numbering of the footnotes must be checked and adjusted!- The endnotes apparently only begin with the third original footnote, the first of which has been inserted here and the second of which has been moved to the listing "about the contributors".

43. Reference book *Bücher öffnen Welten. Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international*; ed. Gerhard Peschers / Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V., Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2013, p. 397

44. Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V. (editor), *Bücher öffnen Welten: Die Gefangenenbücherei Münster als Deutschlands "Bibliothek des Jahres 2007"* – Wurzeln, Werdegang und Wirkung, Münster, Ardey 2017, p. 75.

45. ELIS is a learning platform, which is specifically developed for digital learning in the penitentiary system. It is used in 13 federal states and in Austria. More than 200 offers are available for inmates, e.g., basic education, leisure time, job-related or interdisciplinary topics (see: https://www.bildungsserver.de/onlinereource.html?onlinereourcen_id=54555).

46. See <https://ereadcost.eu/stavanger-declaration/>.

47. Besides checkout options via online catalogues in the Greiz city library, several readings were initiated, poetry slam, a cooking course, a boxing event with the former imprisoned heavyweight boxer, a cookbook, and a text book with contributions from inmates. Commemorating gratefully the initiator and Head of the Greiz city and district library, Corinna Gutmann, who could inspire many people and was not deterred by resistances. She also accepted her serious illness with a positive approach to life. However, she passed away at the end of March 2020 at the age of 57 years.

48. See Abgeordnetenhaus Berlin (Berlin House of Representatives), printed paper 18/1988 dated 6 June 2019, see: <https://parlament-berlin.de/ados/18/IIIPlen/vorgang/d18-1988.pdf>.

Gerhard Peschers holds university degrees in Theology and Library Science. Since 1992, he has worked as librarian in Germany in the North Rhine-Westphalia Prison Service, where he is currently responsible for 30 libraries in 19 adult and 3 juvenile correctional facilities. Since 2003 until 2019, he has also been directly responsible for the daily operation of the library at the Münster Correctional Facility. Since 1996, he has been spokesperson for the Prison Library Workgroup, a unit of Section 8 of the German Library Association. Since 2006, he has been the Chairman of the Prison Library Support Group, which he also founded. From 2016 to 2019, he acted as a Corresponding Member of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN). Since 2009, he has been an Active Member of the IFLA Working Group on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) with a focus on updating the international guidelines for prison libraries.