

OPEN PRISONS – PART OF FINNISH PENAL SYSTEM



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BRIEFLY ON OPEN PRISONS

- The Criminal Sanctions Agency aims to enforce sentences in more open conditions
- Gradual release = transfer from closed conditions to more open conditions
 - The prisoners' own responsibility increases as the control from outside decreases
- Open prisons are either separate units or open prison wards in closed prisons

- 33% of the prisoner places are in open prison or open prison wards
- Requires commitment to abstinence from intoxicating substances and its control
- Obligation to participate in daily activities according to abilities and wishes:
 - work
 - vocational education
 - rehabilitating activities
- Cost of one prison day €130
(in closed prisons €200)



PLACEMENT IN OPEN PRISONS

- The requirements are defined in law
 - suitability, motivation, readiness to comply, and abstinence
- Activities arranged in open prisons vary - activities that support the prisoner to live without crime have to be determined before the placement
- Prisoners in open prisons have different nationalities and criminal backgrounds
 - Deportation order dated after the sentence term does not prevent the placement
- On certain conditions, a sentenced person can be placed in an open prison directly on arrival from freedom if the sentence is under two years

ACTIVITIES IN OPEN PRISONS

- Versatile activities including education, work, rehabilitation, and programmes
- Participation in activities is required in open prisons
- Working or studying outside the open prison is also possible (so-called *civilian work*)
 - The goal of the civilian work is to promote the prisoner's reintegration into society and prevent the adverse effects of imprisonment
 - A permission to study outside the prison is possible if it promotes the implementation of the sentence plan

EDUCATION

- Possible to complete fully or partly
 - basic education
 - general upper secondary education
 - vocational education
- Preparatory education for vocational training
 - High number of participants because many prisoners have poor study skills
 - Develops research and study skills and introduces different professions
- Higher education and apprenticeship training are also possible

WORK

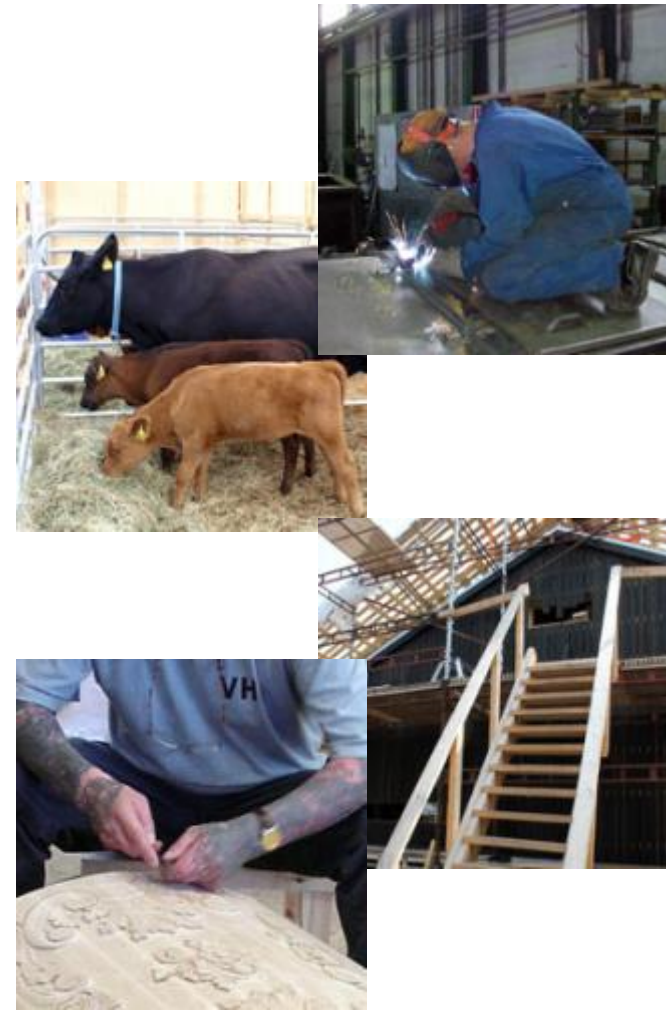
■ Work branches

- Wood and metal workshops
- Agriculture and horticulture
- Real estate maintenance
- Assembly work
- Traffic sign production
- Handicrafts

■ Possibility to complete vocational education as part of work

■ Products are sold to consumers and companies (according to the principle of normality)

- Stores and online shops organised in cooperation with education institutions



OPEN PRISON WORK OUTSIDE THE PRISON

- Renovation of historical buildings and maintenance of conservation areas
 - E.g. renovation of the Fortress of Suomenlinna (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and maintenance of Nuuksio National Park
 - Separate open prison appropriation in the budget for open prison work
- Long-term cooperation partners, such as Metsähallitus - State Forest Enterprise, National Board of Antiquities, Governing Body of Suomenlinna, and some cities (e.g. Hämeenlinna and Helsinki)
- Prisoners are paid wages that are liable to taxation

REHABILITATING ACTIVITIES

- Wide variety of rehabilitating activities, such as programmes and substance abuse rehabilitation
- Programmes, courses, or activities included in the daily schedule of the ward aim to improve the abilities to live without crime
- Examples of available programmes:
 - Kalterit taakse (substance abuse programme)
 - Kisko Community Treatment (substance abuse programme)
 - Anger Management
 - Behaviour-Interviewing-Change Programme

PREPARATION FOR FREEDOM

- Started well in advance of the release
 - In short sentences, fairly soon after arriving in prison
 - In long sentences, about six months before release
- Often includes probationary liberty under supervision



PROBATIONARY LIBERTY UNDER SUPERVISION (1/3)

- A sanction form applied at the final phase of unconditional imprisonment when a prisoner is placed outside the prison under supervision
 - Supervised electronically or by other means
 - Part of the prison sentence but includes also features of community sanctions
 - The aim is to support the release phase of prisoners serving a long sentence in particular
 - The preparation emphasises the planning of support measures and the cooperation with different operators in the prisoner's home municipality
- Commitment to abstinence is required

PROBATIONARY LIBERTY UNDER SUPERVISION (2/3)

- A maximum of six months before conditional release or the release of those serving the entire sentence
- Open prisons aim to release as many prisoners as possible through probationary liberty under supervision
 - Probationary liberty under supervision has to promote the implementation of the sentence plan
- According to research, probationary liberty under supervision reduces recidivism
 - About 85% of probationary liberties under supervision are completed successfully

PROBATIONARY LIBERTY UNDER SUPERVISION (3/3)

- The daily schedule prepared beforehand includes daily chores and the activities the person is obligated to participate in:
 - Work, studying, employment services, or substance abuse services



Suomenlinna Prison

Road to Freedom – Work Supervisor’s Story (video)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3vzDyi7xsc>

STATISTICS

Table 1. Prisoners in prisons according to gender, prisoner group, and prison type in 2016

Prison type	In prison registers							
	Total		Sentenced prisoners		Fine default prisoners		Remand prisoners	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
At the beginning of the year								
All prisons	3002	199	2375	149	46	5	581	45
Closed prisons	2122	133	1497	83	44	5	581	45
Open prisons	880	66	878	66	2	0	0	0
At the end of the year								
All prisons	3131	242	2439	173	79	17	613	52
Closed prisons	2121	152	1435	84	73	16	613	52
Open prisons	1010	90	1004	89	6	1	0	0



Table 2. Escapes and unauthorised leaves in 2007–2016

	Escapes				
	Total	From closed prisons	From inside prison walls	Unauthorised leaves from open prisons	Unauthorised leaves from rehabilitation institutions
2007	8	6	0	51	9
2008	16	14	8	55	9
2009	17	13	1	67	4
2010	12	10	1	54	9
2011	12	7	1	82	5
2012	17	11	6	62	15
2013	15	9	5	56	16
2014	14	13	7	39	9
2015	10	8	2	42	29
2016	10	9	4	55	9



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