



**SIVILOMBUDET**

Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud  
National Preventive Mechanism

# INMATES OPPORTUNITY TO CONTACT FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN NORWEGIAN PRISONS

Summary of key findings 2014–2024



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# **Investigations by the Norwegian National Preventive Mechanism on inmates' contact with family and friends**

## **Introduction**

Inmates in high-security prisons are generally permitted to use the phone for 30 minutes per week, and to receive a weekly visit of approximately one hour. Video calls are also possible, but the regulatory framework is unclear. In many prisons, inmates must choose between a video call or visits.

The National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) of the Parliamentary Ombud has conducted 29 visits to high-security prisons since 2014. A significant number of inmates we have spoken with during these visits expressed frustration about the limited opportunity to maintain contact with family and friends.

Some of these restrictions risk infringing upon the right to respect for private and family life. Where the prisons deny children meaningful contact with an incarcerated parent, they may also violate the principle of the best interests of the child. Maintaining relationships with family and friends is important for inmates' mental health, as a lack of social contact heightens the risk of suicide. From a crime prevention standpoint, limited contact with family and friends is also counterproductive. Regular contact with family and friends is a key factor in reducing the risk of violations of the prohibition against inhuman or degrading treatment.

This report has been prepared in response to these concerns and presents a summary of our findings regarding inmates' opportunity to maintain contact with family and friends.

## **Legal foundations**

All individuals have the right to respect for their private and family life. This right also extends to all inmates despite being subject to the limitations inherent in the deprivation of liberty.<sup>1</sup> The right includes the opportunity to maintain relationships with others. Any interference must be lawful, serve a legitimate purpose, and be "necessary in a democratic society".<sup>2</sup> Given that imprisonment significantly limits opportunities for such contact, authorities must therefore facilitate contact with family and friends.<sup>3</sup> This obligation is reinforced by Article 102, second paragraph, of the Norwegian Constitution, which requires the state to safeguard this fundamental right.

In addition to the general right to respect for private and family life in the Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), there are also specific rules applying to incarcerated individuals. According to the European Prison Rules, prison authorities shall assist inmates in maintaining contact with the outside world. Visiting arrangements shall be such that inmates can maintain and develop family relationships in as normal a manner as possible<sup>4</sup>. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has likewise emphasized that inmates should be able to maintain contact with the outside world, particularly with family and friends.<sup>5</sup> The CPT further highlights that the need for contact with family and friends should be a consideration when transferring inmates between different prisons.<sup>6</sup>

The UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners (Bangkok Rules) state that facilities should be made available to ensure that female inmates can maintain contact with family, children, and children's representatives. The rules also note that specific measures may be needed when women are placed in prisons far from their home.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (Havana Rules) stress that young people should be ensured the opportunities to connect with outside world.<sup>8</sup> These rules highlight that connection with the outside world is an integral part receiving a just and humane treatment, as well as preparing juveniles to be reintegrated back into society.

### **Children have a special right to maintain contact with incarcerated parents**

Both the Norwegian Constitution and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child affirm that in actions and decisions affecting children, the best interests of the child must be a fundamental consideration.<sup>9</sup> The Supreme Court has, among other things, referred to the Committee on the Rights of the Child's emphasis that "the child's interests shall form the starting point, be specifically brought forward, and take precedence."<sup>10</sup> Article 9, paragraph 3, of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children who are separated from one or both parents have the right to maintain a relationship with and have regular direct contact with both parents, unless it is contrary to the child's best interests.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors states' compliance with the Convention, has issued several clarifications, including:<sup>11</sup>

- Emphasized children's right to regular contact with incarcerated parents, provided it is in the child's best interest.
- Urged states to consider the rights of the child when implementing security measures toward incarcerated parents.
- Recommended that parents be imprisoned close to the child's place of residence to facilitate visits.
- Encouraged states to cover travel expenses for visits when the travel is long and/or costly.

Similarly, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has issued recommendations concerning children with incarcerated parents, specifically addressing children's rights to maintain contact, emphasizing that:<sup>12</sup>



- Children should have the opportunity to initiate contact themselves with the incarcerated parent.
- Inmates without financial means to pay for phone calls should have such expenses covered.
- Video and phone calls cannot replace physical visits.
- Children should generally be able to visit parents within one week after incarceration.

## SCOPE

This summary does not include findings related to contact with lawyers, helplines, or public authorities, nor contact through letters, written requests, or temporary leaves. It summarizes findings from visits to high-security prisons, and therefore does not reflect conditions in maximum-security facilities, lower-security units, or halfway houses.

Visits and phone calls may be subject to various forms of monitoring, such as audio surveillance or the use of glass barriers during visits. However, the National Preventive Mechanism's visits have not primarily focused on these control measures. That said, it is worth noting that in 2021, the Parliamentary Ombud issued a statement regarding, among other things, the monitoring of inmates' phone calls. Following this, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security issued temporary guidelines, including on phone monitoring in prisons. The Supreme Court heard a case regarding phone monitoring in a Norwegian prison in 2024, and updated national guidelines is expected in the near future.

## The importance of contact with family and friends

### › Inmates' need for contact with family and friends

Human contact is one of the most fundamental human needs and a prerequisite for a good mental health.<sup>13</sup> Both the quantity and quality of human interaction are vital. In a prison environment, social contact is severely restricted.

For inmates, contact with family and friends is not only a resource. It must also be viewed in the context of other existing opportunities for interaction and social engagement within the prison. The opportunities for social contact are limited by a widespread use of de facto isolation. As such, maintaining contact with family and friends becomes crucial for inmates who already spend significant time alone in their cells. As noted by the Parliamentary Ombud in the special report on cell confinement and actual isolation, inmates spend up to 17–22 hours a day confined to their cells. This is not due to individual behavior or disciplinary decisions.<sup>14</sup> Following visits to various prisons in 2023 and 2024, we found that more than half of the inmates were confined alone in their cells for large parts of the day.

Suicide risk increases when there is a lack of social contact.<sup>15</sup> The proportion of inmates experiencing mental health disorders has grown, particularly among women.<sup>16</sup> Incidents of self-harm and suicide attempts have also risen.<sup>17</sup> Maintaining contact with family and friends is therefore an important preventive measure. Research shows that peer mentoring programs, shared cells, increased family contact, and easier access to support hotlines can reduce these risks.<sup>18</sup>

Many are particularly vulnerable during the period immediately after incarceration. The risk of suicide is at the highest during the first day, and many suicides occur within the first three weeks of imprisonment.<sup>19</sup> Some inmates are transferred between several prisons during their sentence, either at their own request or due to the prison administration. Significant differences between prisons can lead to changes in daily routines and environments. For some, transfers result in being placed even further away from family and friends. In such situations, swift reestablishment of contact with loved ones is essential.

It is important to recognize that family and friends also have a need to maintain contact with the incarcerated person, particularly children with a parent in prison. Hearing about a child's day-to-day life is necessary to sustain a meaningful parent-child relationship. Many inmates' express grief and despair when they are unable to provide support to their children, partners, parents, siblings, or friends during difficult times.

› **Contact with family and friends may prevent reoffending**

Research has shown that contact with family and friends reduces the risk of reoffending.<sup>20</sup> Since prevention of new criminal offenses is a core aim of incarceration, the correctional system should prepare inmates for life after release.<sup>21</sup>

The opportunity to maintain relationships with family and friends may be a crucial factor supporting an inmate's transition to a crime-free life after release. A review of the available research confirms the beneficial effects of sustained family contact. It highlights that regular visits are associated with reduced symptoms of depression, particularly among women and younger inmates.



# Findings on inmates' contact with family and friends

## Regulations on phone time, video calls, and visiting hours

Inmates are entitled to a minimum of 30 minutes of **phone time** per week.<sup>22</sup> While those under the age of 18 have the right to at least three phone calls per week, each lasting 20 minutes.<sup>23</sup> The Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service (KDI) may increase the minimum phone time limits. Individual prisons may also choose to provide inmates with additional phone time. Extended phone time may also be granted upon application if there are special circumstances and sufficient capacity in the prison.<sup>24</sup> Inmates are responsible for covering the cost of their own phone calls. The price of calls outside of Europe may be particularly high.

The right to make **video calls** is not regulated by law or regulation. However, a 2017 circular provides guidelines for allowing inmates to conduct video calls. It states that video calls are a supplement to other forms of communication, such as letters, visits, and phone conversations. According to the circular, the purpose of video calls is to facilitate contact with immediate family members during incarceration.<sup>25</sup> However, the circular does not specify the number or duration of video calls. Video calls are conducted via the internet and are free of charge.<sup>26</sup>

Inmates have a right to receive **visitors**.<sup>27</sup> The law does not specify how frequently or for how long visits must occur, but the correctional service's guidelines state that, "as far as practically possible, inmates should be granted at least one visit per week [...], and each visit should last at least one hour."<sup>28</sup> Inmates may apply for longer or additional visits. As a general rule, relatives must cover their own travel expenses to the prison. Visiting may become expensive if the inmate is incarcerated far from home.

## Limited time for phone conversations

### › Approximately 30 minutes weekly phone time

The general rule in most of the prisons we have visited has matched the minimum time stipulated in the regulations. During some of the earlier visits, this was 20 minutes, but since 2023, the standard has been increased to 30–32 minutes. Most prisons appear to enforce this strictly. Some inmates reported that they are occasionally allowed to converse longer if needed. Two prisons extended the general phone time to 42 minutes as a pilot project, following our visits.<sup>29</sup>

Overall, the amount of phone time available to inmates to contact friends and family is very limited. Inmates frequently expressed frustration during our visits about how the allowed phone time is.

#### › **Limited opportunities to obtain additional phone time**

The guidelines to the Execution of Sentences Act state that extended phone time may be particularly relevant in cases where: the inmate does not receive leave or rarely has visitors, the sentence is particularly burdensome due to mental health issues, or other special circumstances make the sentence particularly heavy.<sup>30</sup> Particular emphasis should be placed on whether extended phone time could help maintain contact with the inmate's children.

In many of the prisons we have visited, inmates experience that the chances of being granted extended phone time are very slim. This perception alone may deter inmates from applying. In several facilities, both inmates and staff expressed the belief that only inmates with children are eligible for extended time, and that even then, any extension is limited to 10 minutes per week. This is also how the rules are applied in some prisons. However, there is nothing in the regulations that limits eligibility for extended phone time to inmates with children.

We have reviewed 33 applications for extended phone time along with the corresponding decisions from four prisons during 2023–2024.<sup>31</sup> The review revealed that all were generally restrictive in granting extended phone time. However, there were notable differences in who was granted extensions.

Rejections were typically poorly justified, and many did not meet the legal requirements for reasoning in administrative decisions. Most of the decisions did not address the specific circumstances presented by the inmate in support of the application. The best interests of the child were not mentioned in the rejection letters.

#### › **High phone costs**

The cost of phone calls affects how often inmates can speak with family and friends. This is particularly true for calls outside Europe, which are very expensive. Prisons do not use free internet-based calling services, even though the video calling system shows that such solutions can be implemented (see Chapter 2.4: *Inmates' Access to Video Calls*).

The cost of calls to Europe outside the EU is NOK 3.50 per minute, while calls to non-European countries, the U.S., and Canada cost NOK 7 per minute. This means that inmates can spend between a quarter and half of their daily allowance (for those in work or education), and even more if they are not participating in such activities.

#### › **Restrictions on native language phone calls**

Inmates who speak a language other than Norwegian or English with their family or friends may face extra hurdles. Prisons often require an interpreter or recording of the conversation if it is to be monitored. As a result, some prisons only allow 1–2 native language conversations per month. Alternatively, inmates are told to conduct the call in Norwegian or English, instead of their native language. This may impede communication, particularly with children or elderly parents.

**One prison rejected all the applications we reviewed without providing any concrete reasoning. Eight rejected applications involved requests for extended phone time to speak with children. Several inmates cited having multiple children.<sup>32</sup>**

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**A young inmate (under 24) had his application for extended phone time to speak with a close friend rejected. He explained that he struggled with poor mental health, and that the friend was an important support. Instead of granting extended phone time, the prison recommended him to contact the health unit when he needed someone to talk with.**

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**One inmate described in detail how his spouse was going through a period of poor mental health. He was worried and said that he experienced that the short daily calls helped. Without specific reasoning, the prison rejected his application for increased phone time.**



## **Practical barriers to phone contact**

### **› Waiting time to get phone numbers approved**

Inmates may only call phone numbers that have been previously approved by the prison. In some facilities, inmates report that it takes a long time for the prison to approve these numbers. As pointed out by the Parliamentary Ombud in the thematic report on suicide and suicide attempts in prison (2023), many inmates are in a particularly vulnerable and difficult phase during their initial period of incarceration. Quick access to contact with family and friends is therefore essential.

### **› Family and friends cannot call the inmate**

Only inmates can make outgoing calls to family and friends, not the other way around. Relatives often find it stressful not knowing when the inmate will call, as it makes it difficult to plan and set aside time for the conversation.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, this setup means that the inmate is unavailable when children, family, or friends need to speak with them.

### **› Few phones, many inmates**

Most prisons have a limited number of phones that are shared among the inmates. In a unit of 10-20 inmates there may be only one phone available. Because of high demand, inmates run the risk of missing their chance to use the phone until the next day or even next week. In its 2024 report following its visit to Norway, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) noted that several inmates complained about insufficient access to phones.<sup>34</sup>

In one prison visited in 2024, inmates in shared-living units were only allowed access to the phone every other week, and only in the morning.<sup>35</sup> This meant that inmates with children in kindergarten or school could not speak with their children every other week. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has ruled that a prison violated an inmate's right to private and family life under Article 8 of the ECHR by not allowing phone calls during weekends, which made it difficult to maintain contact with their children.<sup>36</sup>

### **› Phone calls must be made during communal time**

The general rule in many prisons is that inmates may make calls to family and friends during the brief time while their cell doors are open. However, that is a time that is intended for social interaction with other inmates. During several visits in 2023 and 2024, we observed that inmates are locked in their cells for large parts of the day. The short period when cell doors are open is often hectic as inmates must juggle tasks like cooking, exercising, showering, speaking with other inmates, and making phone calls to family and friends.

### **› Limited opportunity for private conversations**

Inmates who are struggling with daily life, often spending lot of time locked in, have a significant need to share personal thoughts with loved ones. In one prison, inmates had to share two landline phones placed in common areas. There was no privacy, and both inmates and staff could overhear the conversations.<sup>37</sup>

## **Inmates' access to video calls**

### **› Video calls used as a substitute for in-person visits**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person visits were temporarily prohibited. The Correctional Service enhanced the ability to conduct video calls with visitors using tablet devices as a temporary measure.<sup>38</sup> At that time, the Correctional Service referred to these calls as “video visits.” Tablets were distributed across all prisons to support this.

However, we have found that several prisons continued to offer video calls only as an alternative to in-person visits even after the pandemic.<sup>39</sup> This is contrary to directives from the Correctional Service (KDI) in a 2017 circular and in a letter dated 6 October 2021.<sup>40</sup>

### **› Restrictions on approval for video calls**

Rather than following the procedure for phone contact, many prisons apply the same approval process for video calls as for in-person visits. This requirement is difficult to justify since video calls do not involve physical contact. The Parliamentary Ombud has previously pointed out that approval procedures for video calls should resemble those of phone contact.<sup>41</sup>

Inmates whose immediate family members live outside of Norway are particularly affected by these video call approval requirements. It is difficult to obtain the documentation needed for visitor approval in many countries.

### **› Few and inaccessible tablets**

In some prisons, access to video calls has been restricted by the limited availability of tablets. In other facilities, video calls are conducted in specific rooms, which are also used for other purposes. In some cases, this dual use of rooms has restricted access to video calls.

## **Factors that limit the opportunity to visit**

The Parliamentary Ombud has observed that the general rule is one one-hour visit per week. Instances where some inmates have been granted longer or more frequent visits upon application has been observed.

### **› Booking visits**

Visitors must obtain approval and book a time slot in advance.<sup>42</sup> When relatives and friends apply for approval, the prison conducts a background check with the police. As a result, the approval processing times may vary. According to the cases we reviewed, processing typically took one week, but it could also take up to a month.

In some instances, the applications were rejected due to the applicant having a criminal record, without the individual assessment required by the regulations. Many inmates have relatives and friends with prior convictions. A Norwegian study covering 2000–2019 showed that one or both parents of one in ten inmates aged 15–34 had previously been imprisoned.<sup>43</sup> Others within the inmate's circle of family and friends may also have criminal records.

The method of booking visits can pose challenges for relatives. In some prisons, visits must be booked by email, while in others, booking is only possible by phone during a set timeframe. For example, some facilities only accept bookings on Sundays from 12:00–17:00, or Monday to Friday from 10:00–11:00. In addition, some prisons require that visits be booked one week in advance. Employment and school obligations may make it difficult to book during these narrow windows, and in general, inmates cannot book visits themselves.

### › Visiting Hours

Visiting hours vary from prison to prison. In one prison, we found that there was no regular visiting time on weekends. We have also observed that low staffing levels have led to the last-minute cancellation of scheduled visits.

Kindergarten or school obligations makes it difficult for children to maintain regular visits with a parent in prison during weekdays. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has considered a case where some prisons allowed visits only during daytime on weekdays.<sup>44</sup> This policy meant that children attending school were unable to visit their incarcerated parent. The ECtHR concluded that denying weekend visits constituted a violation of the inmate's right to family life under Article 8 of the ECHR. The Court emphasized that the prisons had not considered the interests of the inmates and their families. Instead, they had justified the restricted visiting hours solely on institutional capacity.

### › Distance to the prison

It is often challenging for family and friends to visit because of the considerable distance to the facility where the inmate is held. Many inmates serve their sentence far from their loved ones. Our findings indicate that this issue is particularly relevant for inmates with family and friends abroad, female inmates, persons sentenced to preventive detention, and minors under the age of 18.

- **Female inmates:** The only high-security prisons for women in Norway are Skien Prison and Bredtveit Prison and Preventive Detention Facility, which is currently operating out of Ullersmo Prison in Kløfta.
- **Persons in preventive detention:** The only facilities for men serving preventive detention sentences are Ila Prison and Preventive Detention Facility in Bærum and Trondheim Prison and Preventive Detention Facility, Nermarka unit.
- **Minors under 18:** There are two youth units in Norway, one in Eidsvoll and another other one in Bergen. A new unit at Agder Prison, Evje division, is scheduled to open in spring 2025.

After visiting Norway in 2024, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) highlighted in its report the difficulties female prisoners face in maintaining contact with family and friends.



The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has concluded that making visits difficult or impossible by placing an inmate in a prison far from their family, it may constitute an interference with Article 8, right to private and family life, of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).<sup>45</sup> The Court has held that authorities must make a concrete assessment of whether the inmate could be placed in a prison closer to their family, or whether compensatory measures such as longer visits or extended phone calls should be implemented.<sup>46</sup>

#### › **Travel costs and access to public transport**

Several prisons are located in areas without access to public transportation. This means that visitors must rely on private vehicles or taxis to reach the facility. In multiple cases, the timing of visits has been such that visitors must either cut their visit short or wait for long periods before they can travel home. This is particularly burdensome for older adults, people with health conditions, and children.

Expenses for train, bus, and taxi can constitute a significant financial burden for the inmate's family and friends, so much so that it may prevent regular visits altogether. Nevertheless, only the relatives of minor inmates are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses.<sup>47</sup>





**"I have a wife and three kids. And I had 33 minutes. The kids really depend on me, they're young: 8, 7, and 10 months old. At first I had just 33 minutes for the whole week to talk to four people. It was way too little. I felt so bad, I got really depressed and sad. The kids thought I didn't want to talk to them. If you divide 33 minutes over seven days, that's about four minutes a day. And you can't say anything meaningful in four minutes. The kid goes to school—you want to ask: How was school? What did you do today? Did you do your homework? Did you do well ? Stuff like that. It doesn't work."**

Inmate, in conversation with the National Preventive Mechanism

# Conclusion

When individuals are deprived of their liberty, they lose control over many aspects of their lives, including the freedom to maintain contact with those they love. The State has a duty to facilitate continued contact between inmates and their family or friends during imprisonment. Failure to uphold this right can contribute to conditions that amount to inhuman or degrading treatment.

Maintaining contact with family and friends during incarceration also plays a key role in reducing the risk of recidivism after release. Furthermore, many inmates provide vital support to both children and adults outside the prison. This is particularly true for incarcerated parents.

There is no justification provided for setting phone time at 30 minutes per week or for limiting visitation time to one hour per week. Our impression is that these limitations stem from a combination of factors, including:

- A long-standing practice of resource-intensive monitoring of all inmate phone calls in high-security prisons.
- The limited number of physical phones shared among inmates.
- Insufficient attention to the importance of maintaining contact for both the inmate and their loved ones.

Additionally, our investigations reveal numerous barriers that restrict inmates' contact with their family and friends:

- There is no consistent practice for assessing the best interests of the child in applications for extended call or visitation time. Prisons rarely consider children's right to maintain contact with an incarcerated parent.
- It is very difficult to obtain more than 30 minutes of phone time per week, due to the strict enforcement of the rules. Rejections of extension requests are often poorly justified.
- There is a shortage of phones and tablets in the prisons.
- High call costs disproportionately affect inmates with family outside Europe.
- There are specific limitations for inmates who speak a language other than Norwegian or English.
- In some prisons, calls are made in shared areas where others can overhear conversations.

- The designated phone-call slots do not take into account whether family members and friends are available. This particularly affects children who are at school. Family and friends cannot call the inmate.
- Approval for video calls follows the same procedures as in-person visits, instead of phone calls.
- Visiting hours are sometimes scheduled at times that make it difficult for family and friends to attend.
- Travel costs can prevent family and friends from visiting.

Inmates with immediate family abroad may face additional obstacles to staying in touch, due to high international call charges, and a cumbersome system that, among other things, requires a criminal-record check before free video calls can be approved. Such as requiring background checks to hold free video calls. Inmates with family abroad often receive fewer visits, making phone contact even more important. Language barriers can further reduce social interaction in prison, increasing the need for contact with family and friends abroad.

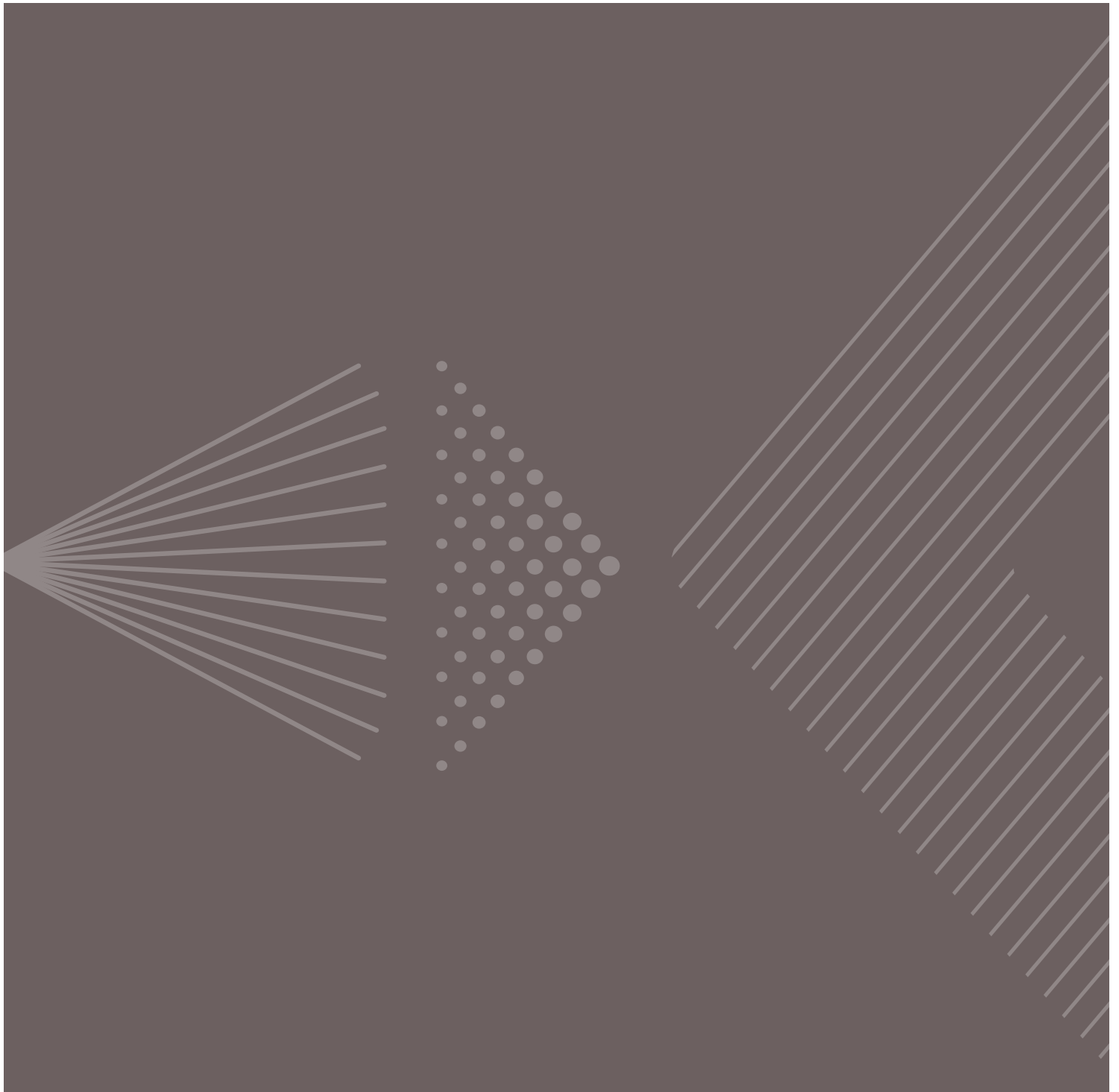
Throughout our investigations, we have noted a lack of awareness in prisons regarding the significance of contact with family and friends for the inmate's mental health, quality of life, rehabilitation, and reintegration into society. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) also recommended in its 2024 report that Norwegian authorities expand inmates' opportunities for contact with the outside world.<sup>48</sup> It is particularly serious that prisons often fail to assess or consider the best interests of the child, or children's right to maintain a relationship with an incarcerated parent.

For people living in a closed institution, private and confidential conversations with loved ones are essential. Contact with family and friends can help reduce the risk of mental illness and suicide. Increasing such contact should be seen as a proactive and preventive measure to strengthen inmates' mental health.

**Summarised, the findings point to an urgent need to strengthen inmates' opportunities to maintain contact with family and friends.**

## Notes

- 1 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 12, Norwegian Constitution § 102, ECHR Article 8, and ECHR judgment Khoroshenko v. Russia, application no. 41418/04, 30 June 2015, paragraph 106 and following references.
- 2 See ECHR Article 8(2).
- 3 See ECHR Khoroshenko v. Russia, application no. 41418/04, 30 June 2015, paragraph 106 and following references.
- 4 European Prison Rules, Rules 24.4 and 24.5.
- 5 CPT (1992), Imprisonment, CPT/Inf(92)3-part2, paragraph 51.
- 6 CPT (1992), Imprisonment, CPT/Inf(92)3-part2, paragraph 57.
- 7 Bangkok Rules, Rule 26.
- 8 Havana Rules, Rule 59.
- 9 Norwegian Constitution § 104, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 3.
- 10 HR-2015-206-A, paragraph 65.
- 11 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 30 September 2011, Report and Recommendations of the Day of General Discussion on "Children of Incarcerated Parents", paragraphs 38–40.
- 12 Council of Europe Committee of Ministers (2018), Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States concerning children with imprisoned parents, paragraphs 17, 25 and 26.
- 13 For example: Maslow, A. H. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50, 370–396.
- 14 Parliamentary Ombud (2025). Special Report on Cell Confinement and Actual Isolation.
- 15 Lisa Marzano et al., Prevention of Suicidal Behaviour in Prisons. *Crisis*, 37(5), 2016.
- 16 SERAF, Living Conditions, Substance Use, and Mental Health Among Individuals Who Have Been Imprisoned or Sanctioned in the Community, Report 5/2024.
- 17 Norwegian Directorate of Correctional Services, Annual Report 2023.
- 18 See, for example: Hall, B., & Gabor, P., Peer Suicide Prevention in a Prison. *Crisis*, (1), 19–26, 2004; Liza Marzano et al., 2016; Alison Liebling and Helen Arnold, *Prisons and Their Moral Performance: A Study of Values, Quality and Prison Life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004.
- 19 Anne Bukten and Marianne Riksheim Stavseth, Suicide in Prison and After Release: A 17-Year National Cohort Study, *European Journal of Epidemiology*, 36, 1075–1083, 2021; Yngve Hammerlin, Suicide and Suicidality in Norwegian Prisons: Suicide Prevention in Prison. Oslo: Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy (KRUS), 2009.
- 20 Karen De Claire et al., The Effects of Prison Visits from Family Members on Prisoners' Well-Being, Prison Rule Breaking, and Recidivism: A Review of Research Since 1991. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, Vol. 18(2), 2015.
- 21 See Execution of Sentences Act § 2.
- 22 Execution of Sentences Regulations § 3-29, second paragraph.
- 23 Execution of Sentences Regulations § 3-29, fourth paragraph.
- 24 Execution of Sentences Regulations § 3-29, third paragraph.
- 25 Directorate of Correctional Service Circular 3/2017.
- 26 Directorate of Correctional Service Circulars 3/2017 and 3/2020, section 6.
- 27 Execution of Sentences Act § 31.
- 28 Directorate of Correctional Service Guidelines to the Execution of Sentences Act, section 31.10.
- 29 See follow-up letters from Halden Prison (1 October 2024, section 9) and Trondheim Prison (10 January 2025, section 7).
- 30 Directorate of Correctional Service Guidelines to the Execution of Sentences Act, section 32.7.
- 31 Halden Prison, Trondheim Prison and Forensic Facility, Ringerike Prison, and Eidsberg Prison.
- 32 The increase from 20 to 30 minutes per week as the new minimum was introduced by letter from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to the Directorate of Correctional Service dated 1 February 2023, and is now included in Execution of Sentences Regulations § 3-29.
- 33 FFP, *On the Outside of the Wall – A Handbook for Relatives*, 2009, p. 44.
- 34 Report to the Norwegian Government on the CPT Visit to Norway carried out from 21 to 31 May 2024, CPT (2025) 49, paragraph 137.
- 35 Parliamentary Ombud (2024), Indre Østfold Prison, Eidsberg Unit, p. 20.
- 36 ECtHR, *Subaşı and Others v. Turkey*, application no. 3468/20 and 18 others, 6 December 2022, paragraphs 105–109.
- 37 Parliamentary Ombud (2024), Inspection Report No. 83, Ålesund Prison, section 4.2.3.
- 38 KDI Circular 3/2020.
- 39 Parliamentary Ombud (2024), Inspection Report No. 80, Ringerike Prison, pp. 21–22, and Inspection Report No. 78, Agder Prison, Froland Unit, p. 24.
- 40 Letter from KDI to the regional correctional offices and Correctional Service University College (KRUS), 6 October 2021, reference: 202004037-1253.
- 41 Parliamentary Ombud's Investigation: Safeguarding of Inmates in Prison During the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020), section 4.2.
- 42 Execution of Sentences Act § 31, cf. § 27, fifth paragraph.
- 43 Skjærvø, Ingeborg et al. (2024), Characteristics and Risk of Reimprisonment Among Children and Young Adults in Norwegian Prisons: A 20-Year Cohort Study, *Journal of Criminal Justice*, vol. 93, 2024, section 3.1.
- 44 ECtHR, *Subaşı and Others v. Turkey*, application no. 3468/20 and 18 others, 6 December 2022, paragraphs 80–93.
- 45 ECtHR, *İlerde and Others v. Turkey*, application no. 35614/19 and 10 others, 5 December 2023, paragraphs 212–215.
- 46 ECtHR, *İlerde and Others v. Turkey*, application no. 35614/19 and 10 others, 5 December 2023, paragraphs 216–220.
- 47 Execution of Sentences Regulations § 3-28a, third paragraph.
- 48 Report to the Norwegian Government on the CPT Visit to Norway carried out from 21 to 31 May 2024, CPT (2025) 49, paragraph 141.



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