

# Normality behind the Walls: Examples from Halden Prison



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### I. The Correctional Turmoil of the 1980s and 1990s

The principle of normality—the idea that life inside prison should be as close as possible to life in the community—is one of the cornerstones of the modern Norwegian correctional system. However, Norway’s current and successful implementation of a correctional environment focused on normality and humane effectiveness in corrections is a relatively recent development. These policies were first employed in response to serious challenges that mirrored those still observed in other Western countries today. To understand where things are today in Norway, it is therefore essential to consider some recent history.

Created in 1980,<sup>1</sup> the Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS) is a national-level governmental agency responsible for the execution of all criminal sentences and pretrial detentions in Norway. Its first decade was characterized by multiple challenges. For example, a major recidivism study conducted by Statistics Norway, in which sentenced offenders were followed for five years after their sentence ended, showed that 63% of those given “unconditional” prison sentences<sup>2</sup> reoffended within five years of being released. For persons with three or more previous sentences, the re-offense rate was closer to 80%.<sup>3</sup>

Violence often characterized the prison environment during the early days of NCS. On March 4, 1989, a female prison officer at Ila Prison in Oslo was killed by an inmate during a temporary leave from prison to visit the cinema. In December 1991, another prison officer was killed in Sarpsborg Prison. Investigations followed both incidents, and new restrictions were put in place to increase the safety of correctional officers.<sup>4</sup> The natural consequence for inmates was that their daily lives became more restricted.

Crime trends in the 1980s were also characterized by changes in overall crime rates and in the types of offenses committed. This, in turn, meant that the composition of the prison population changed. Drug abuse had become a major problem in society overall, and this development was reflected in the prison climate. The use of drugs also increased inside prison walls, organized crime became more common, and several prisons experienced riots and attempted escapes. HIV and AIDS also became a major health concern during this period. Taken together, these factors led the government to see an urgent need to “toughen” the prison policy at the time. In 1988 they drafted a new bill, which stated:

Prison policy should have the following starting points:

- The core of the prison sentence should be the deprivation of liberty.
- The security inside and outside prisons should be given the highest priority.
- It is necessary to fight the drug problem in our prisons.

Differentiation is a key word in this context. Early release, temporary leaves, parole, etc. should, to a larger extent than today, be a reward for inmates who demonstrate that they are motivated to desist from crime.<sup>5</sup>

After parliamentary approval, the result of this legislation was a direct increase in the number of security measures within, and financial support for, NCS. This directly translated to the hiring of an additional 200 correctional officers. This increase in staffing was explained as follows:

In recent years there has been a significant change in the prison population due to changes in the crime trends. There is an increasing number of inmates who serve long sentences for violence and drug crimes, and it is an increasing number of inmates who suffer from major mental disorders. Drug abuse in prisons has also increased, the same goes for cases of violence against officers. On top of this [NCS] have to handle the HIV/AIDS problem. Both the composition of the prison population and these other problems have changed dramatically over a few years, without the staff being increased accordingly.<sup>6</sup>

As was the case with the number of drug users under the supervision of NCS, the increase in the number of inmates with mental health issues can be linked to parallel changes in Norwegian health policies. On July 1, 1987, the Parliament closed a large psychiatric hospital, Reitgjerdet, in Trondheim. This facility had been the subject of continuous criticism regarding the conditions at the hospital and the extensive use of force by staff. At that time, many of the patients at Reitgjerdet were convicts who were serving their sentences in the mental institution because they were considered by a court to be psychotic or had other severe mental disorders that prevented their incarceration in

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a standard prison. These offenders were mostly transferred to various prisons across the country when Reitgjerdet was closed, and a large number of individuals were moved to Oslo Prison in particular. The health minister, as a part of this transfer, intended to provide appropriate psychiatric treatment to all the transferred patients; additional secure units were also planned in psychiatric hospitals for the care of extreme cases. Despite this effort, the decision led to large protests among the prison officers at Oslo Prison, and the case was discussed in the Parliament.<sup>7</sup> However, despite the increased focus on the mental health of inmates that followed from these efforts, the challenge of having a high proportion of mentally ill inmates in Norwegian prisons has been a persistent problem since the closure of Reitgjerdet. Efforts to establish cooperative arrangements between justice and health authorities have been largely unsuccessful, and, hence, this group of inmates continues to slip easily between the cracks in the current system. This failure has created an untenable situation in many prisons, where the inmates are often isolated—and, as a result, receive inadequate treatment—because of their behavior. The prison system is, at the same time, left with an inmate population that the employees are neither trained nor equipped to take care of. One result of this interaction, the use of isolation in Norwegian prisons, has been repeatedly criticized by the correctional oversight authorities, including the national Ombudsman.<sup>8</sup> Suicide, though not exclusively driven by the challenges of mentally ill inmates, has been (and still is) another problem for Norwegian correctional care since the 1980s and '90s.<sup>9</sup>

## II. A Paradigm Shift

The '80s and early '90s were a challenging period for NCS, with hostile climates inside of prisons for staff and inmates, many negative incidents, and increased public concern about the waiting list<sup>10</sup> for serving sentences that had built up during this period.<sup>11</sup> There was, in other words, a significant need to push NCS in a new direction. A significant effort was therefore initiated by the new director of NCS to develop a new framework for Norwegian corrections. The focus was to channel the available resources toward a more targeted, goal-oriented correctional service. The many goals for this effort included (1) reducing recidivism; (2) improving the professionalism of NCS and officers during the execution of sentences; (3) developing new methods for supervising, rehabilitating, and working with inmates; and (4) implementing organizational and administrative changes that would enable officers to work more actively and directly with inmates in order to make meaningful changes in their lives.

Pursuing these goals was a practically and philosophically complicated and sensitive process. Therefore, it was politically necessary to document the proposed direction of NCS in a parliamentary report. The result was White Paper no. 27 (1997–98) about NCS (hereafter “White Paper I”). Although this might sound both dry and bureaucratic, White Paper I signaled a transformative moment in the

modern history of Norwegian corrections. White Paper I generally—and its chapter on values, principles, main objectives, and performance goals in particular—determined the direction of NCS for the years to come. The set of policy and philosophical goals outlined in the document marked a paradigm shift for Norwegian corrections and remains the foundation for today’s NCS.

As a direct consequence of this new set of basic norms and principles, the approach to corrections was radically changed, and prison officers were given a much greater responsibility for the rehabilitation of inmates, not just their incarceration. This, in turn, led to a series of necessary changes in the educational requirements for and training of correctional officers.<sup>12</sup> Importantly, White Paper I was also focused on the dual goal of both reducing recidivism *and* working to reduce the unintended negative consequences of serving a sentence either in prison or in society. White Paper I created a common, cross-political understanding of Norwegian criminal justice policy and laid the groundwork for the development of the correctional service we have had in place for the past twenty years.

## III. The Norwegian Correctional Service Today

Although transformed since the 1980s and guided by more modern principles, NCS is still a governmental agency financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security. NCS is currently organized into three hierarchical levels for administrative purposes: the Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services (level 1), five regional administrations (North, South, South-West, West, and East regions) (level 2), and, within each of these regions, local prisons, parole/probation offices, halfway houses, and drug court units.<sup>13</sup> NCS is responsible for carrying out remands to custody at various levels of restriction and penal sanctions in a way that takes into consideration the security of all citizens and attempts to prevent recidivism by enabling the offenders, through their own initiative, to change their criminal behavior.<sup>14</sup>

In total, Norway has a prison capacity of nearly 3,900 cells distributed among forty-three prisons in sixty-one locations. This means that Norwegian prisons are relatively small; the average prison has about seventy cells, the smallest facility houses only thirteen individuals, and the largest houses about 400.<sup>15</sup> There is a one-man-one-cell policy in all Norwegian prisons, so the number of available cells is also the maximum capacity for the prison. The decision to have a relatively large number of comparatively small prisons is driven by the intention to allow offenders to serve their sentence close to their home, a goal that is challenging in light of the unique geographic layout and low population density of the country.

The prisons in Norway are staffed by a total of nearly 4,000 correctional officers,<sup>16</sup> and there is a high degree of variation between the characteristics of these prisons. There are three security levels: High Security (closed prisons), Lower Security (open prisons), and Transitional Housing. High Security prisons, which share many common features

with prisons worldwide (high walls, locked doors, security cameras, etc.), lock inmates in their cells, houses, or rooms only at night, and the prison campus is open internally, but inmates cannot leave the site; phone use is permitted, though all calls are intercepted. Lower Security prisons, on the other hand, encourage contact with the community, through safe means (e.g., increased visitation, supervised furloughs); they do not have restrictive walls, and inmates are able to leave the premises, with fairly liberal leave policies for low-risk inmates. Transitional Housing, the least restrictive incarceration option, designed to directly facilitate reentry into the community, is used when part of a sentence is completed; the prisoners are still in the prison system, but they are less strictly controlled. Two-thirds of all prisons are High Security facilities, and the remaining one-third are Lower Security or Transitional Housing. There are almost no escapes from any of these NCS facilities; almost every single prisoner on temporary leave returns to their “home” prison when instructed.<sup>17</sup>

Inmates in Norway receive fairly short sentences, compared to the norms in the majority of the Western world, though they are largely on par with sentences in the other Scandinavian nations. The longest possible prison sentence in Norway for any offense is twenty-one years, although the new Penal Code (effective as of October 1, 2015) provides for a thirty-year maximum sentence for crimes related to genocide, crimes against humanity, and some other war crimes.<sup>18</sup> The average sentence is around eight months, over 60% of sentences are less than three months, and almost 90% are less than one year.<sup>19</sup>

In Norway we also have the opportunity to provide preventive detention—that is, an indefinite sentence that may be given to dangerous, accountable offenders with the purpose of protecting the community against new, serious criminality. A basic precondition for preventive detention is that a general time-limited prison sentence is insufficient for protecting the community. Preventive detention can, in principle, lead to a lifetime in prison, but that has not occurred in practice so far. As of January 8, 2018, 105 men and three women are serving preventive detention sentences in Norwegian prisons.

Norway has no special prisons or units for individuals in pretrial detention (i.e., those who have not been convicted of a crime but who are remanded to the custody of NCS). Since detainees must, as a general rule, receive the same offers of treatment and services as inmates who are serving a sentence, these presentence defendants are incarcerated with the general prison population. This is provided for in section 49 of the Execution of Sentences Act regarding work, education, programs, and other measures: “Inmates have as far as practically possible access to work, training, programs or other measures.”<sup>20</sup> NCS cannot order pretrial detainees to participate in such activities. They may, however, be ordered to contribute to necessary cleaning and other housework in the prison. Section 4(3) of the Regulations on the Execution of Sentences<sup>21</sup> extends this: “Detainees without restrictions and other inmates under

this chapter have the same access as inmates who serve their sentence to participate in all measures and the leisure activities as the prison offers.”<sup>22</sup> This balancing of rights and obligations, which encourages integration into the prison community and may reduce the isolation of inmates, is particularly amenable for prisoners in pretrial detention.

In addition to the fully custodial prisons discussed above, there are seventeen central probation offices in a total of forty locations in Norway. These community supervision facilities are staffed by approximately 450 officers.<sup>23</sup> Probation offices are responsible for the implementation of community sanctions, including community sentences<sup>24</sup> and the program against intoxicated driving.<sup>25</sup> The same offices are also responsible for managing offenders released on parole (who, notably, spend significantly less time on parole and do so under less restrictive conditions than the average parolee in the United States) and, since 2008, offenders serving their sentence with electronic monitoring.<sup>26</sup> In 2016 a total of 5,701 sentences were managed by these probation offices, of which 58% were supervised by electronic monitoring and 33% were community sentences.<sup>27</sup> The high prevalence of community-based punishments, a common feature of corrections in all the Nordic countries,<sup>28</sup> sets up a penal environment that is quite different from that in the United States.

#### A. Central Principles in Norwegian Corrections

As a natural continuation of the development of NCS that began in the early 1990s, and as the tenth anniversary of White Paper I approached, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security decided to prepare a new parliamentary report on NCS (hereafter “White Paper II”).<sup>29</sup> White Paper II was intended to further guide the development of the foundational values and principles that were first detailed in White Paper I. This new document also had an additional and explicit focus on reentry work (*tilbakeføringsarbeid*). White Paper II was published in 2008, and in addition to updating and detailing the key principles of Norwegian corrections (see below), it also has an explicit focus on the collaborative and interdisciplinary work that is required to ensure a successful reintegration of former inmates. This entails a strong emphasis on the responsibility of other government agencies *outside* the correctional field to assist in facilitating the reentry phase from punishment to freedom.

**1. Principle of normality.** One of the foundational principles that define Norwegian correctional care is the so-called principle of normality, defined in White Paper II as follows:

Both in international conventions and recommendations and in Norwegian law it is stated that the convicted person has the same rights as other citizens. The [person’s] existence during the execution of the sentence shall, as far as possible, be the same as existence elsewhere in society. It is the deprivation of liberty that is the punishment. Serving a sentence

shall not be more burdensome than necessary, and no one shall be subject to conditions that are perceived as additional punishment.<sup>30</sup>

The normality principle—noteworthy because it takes the perspective of the inmate into account directly—is concretized in the following three components on the NCS web page:

- The punishment is the restriction of liberty; no other rights have been removed by the sentencing court. Therefore, the sentenced offender has all the same rights as all other[s] who live in Norway.
- No-one shall serve their sentence under stricter circumstances than necessary for the security in the community. Therefore, offenders shall be placed in the lowest possible security regime.
- During the serving of a sentence, life inside will resemble life outside as much as possible.<sup>31</sup>

**2. Progression toward reintegration.** In accordance with the principle of normality, progression through a sentence should be aimed as much as possible at returning the inmate home and limiting the negative impact this reintegration might have on both the inmate and the community. This principle is based on an underlying belief that the more isolated and confined a system is, the harder it will be for a person to return to freedom successfully. Therefore, during their period of incarceration, the inmate will transition through decreasing levels of custody. They will move from High Security prisons at the start of their sentence to Lower Security prisons later and, where possible, through halfway houses. Release on parole, which is possible once an inmate has served two-thirds of their sentence or a minimum of seventy-four days, is strongly encouraged—but not guaranteed. Generally, an inmate interested in parole must first apply for transfer to a less restrictive prison and then may request release to parole. Although inmates can also be released directly from a High Security prison at the expiration of their sentence, inmates are encouraged to participate in the graduated reentry process through the levels of custody. NCS can then grant or deny the application, based on a discretionary assessment of the individual's risks, needs, and resources. While on parole the offender will need to report to the probation office at regular times (usually once a week), refrain from the use of alcohol, and comply with any other specific conditions that have been imposed by NCS itself. The sentencing judge is not involved in the parole release process at all, with the exception of inmates sentenced to so-called preventive detention (an indefinite sentence reserved for the most dangerous offenders).<sup>32</sup>

Because of both the “reintegration guarantee” (*tilbakeføringsgaranti*) for former inmates<sup>33</sup> and the relatively short prison sentences in Norway, NCS has an explicit focus on reintegration work throughout each sentence. It is widely recognized that an inmate (who is not serving a preventive detention sentence or one of the rare twenty-

one-year prison sentences) must begin working on the process of leaving prison on the first day of incarceration. It is the goal that all inmates shall have an offer (if relevant to them) of employment, education, suitable housing, some type of income, medical services, addiction treatment services, and/or debt counseling when they leave prison. During incarceration, relevant services should be identified and included in the inmate's available program options in a way that optimizes their effect. This work is overseen by designated reintegration coordinators employed by NCS. This rather diverse approach to reentry work underpins that successful reintegration is supported by the whole government (not just the Ministry of Justice and Public Security) and requires successful collaborations between all relevant public institutions. At the same time, it is important to highlight that the successful reentry of former inmates remains a prominent challenge in the Norwegian system<sup>34</sup> and that reentry work remains high on the political agenda of the current government.<sup>35</sup>

**3. Import model.** The goals of NCS described above require that a large number of services be delivered within the prison walls. If NCS itself were responsible for providing these services to inmates, it might not be done in the same way as for Norwegian citizens in the community, thereby violating the goal of normality. Therefore, crucial services for reintegration are delivered to the prison by local and municipal service providers. This means that while prisons employ the correctional officers and prison staff, the staff delivering medical, educational, employment, clerical, or library services are “imported” from the community. These staff are hired by the local municipality but have their workplace inside a prison. They report to the municipality, not to the staff of the prison.

The main justification for this model is twofold. First, the services in question are delivered to the inmates as a function of their status as permanent residents of Norway. They are entitled to these benefits regardless of their criminal past. For instance, education is considered a basic right and not an optional program offered by NCS. Educational training should therefore be delivered by “regular” teachers—with the same qualifications that would be required in a community-based school—and not by specially trained correctional staff. As a consequence of this arrangement, these services and programs are financed by other governmental bodies. Second, the “import model” is designed to facilitate the continuous involvement of the community with the people who are under correctional control. This ensures a better continuity in the future delivery of services, as the offender will already have familiarity and established contact, before they leave prison, with the key people and organizations with which they will need to interact after their release (e.g., the Welfare and Labor Administration). It is also believed that this model improves the overall transparency of the prison system by bringing people who do not work for NCS into the prison. Similarly, exposing community members to the

correctional environment leads to less bias and prejudice against prison and the people who live there.

### **B. Activation of Inmates as a Means to Prevent Mental Disorders, Violence, and Suicide**

Ensuring that inmates are engaged in their prison community, referred to as “activation,” can give the inmates a sense of achievement, provide an everyday structure, and help counteract isolation and passivity in prison. Activation in Norwegian prisons is justified by the principle of normality and is considered very important for the success of rehabilitation efforts. No program is mandatory in Norwegian prisons, and making work training available and regularly making offers for meaningful activity (e.g., work, education, physical activity, cooking, games) can also help counteract incidents in prison that lead to exclusion. Inmates who isolate themselves in their cells and refuse to participate in work or other activities are presumably at an increased likelihood of having mental disorders, and it is generally seen as important to have inmates out of their cells and actively engaged in some form of work or learning from morning to evening.<sup>36</sup> Inmates should have the opportunity to voluntarily participate in these meaningful activities throughout the day (i.e., through work, education, and other programs and leisure activities). Inmates with mental disorders must also receive extra assistance through extraordinary measures. These may include therapy workshops, additional opportunities to connect with nature within the prison environment (e.g., healing gardens or walking in the woods), increased time in the sports facility, or music therapy classes.<sup>37</sup>

Preventing the aggravation of existing mental illnesses or the creation of new ones is an important goal for NCS. In 2014 the national Ombudsman, the agency responsible for the oversight of prison conditions, established a “Prevention Unit against Torture and Inhuman Treatment by Detention.” This Prevention Unit regularly visits all places where people are deprived of freedom in Norway. People who are deprived of their liberty are in a particularly vulnerable situation. Given this inherent vulnerability, these individuals often face an increased risk of torture and inhumane or degrading treatment. The Parliament has assigned the national Ombudsman a special responsibility for the investigation of how the rights of people who are deprived of their liberty are safeguarded and for setting up policies to prevent abuse.<sup>38</sup> In prison, during visits, there is a significant focus on practice regarding the use of restrictive measures and whether decisions to use them are in accordance with the current provisions of the Execution of Sentences Act. Therefore, all prison interventions shall be in accordance with the requirements of legality, necessity, and proportionality.

Although there has been significant progress in these areas, there is still room for improvement. In a report in 2015, for example, the Prevention Unit notes that there are issues with regard to how inmates spend their time and where they are allowed to be within the prison. A section of

this report, entitled “Activity Offerings and Measures to Counter Isolation,” considers whether NCS has met the relevant requirements set by Norwegian and European authorities. For example, section 49 of the Execution of Sentences Act states: “Inmates have as far as practically possible access to participate in work, training, programs or other measures.”<sup>39</sup> The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment recommends that prisoners be allowed to be out of their cell for at least eight hours each day, engaged in meaningful activities.<sup>40</sup> The eight-hour recommendation is specifically aimed at inmates who are in pretrial detention. For inmates who serve their sentence, the committee recommends even more time. Many prisons in Norway are having difficulty complying with these recommendations and, unsurprisingly, this failure has been a focal point for the Prevention Unit during their examinations of NCS prisons. This particular issue is also important in that it is directly related to a diverse range of other aspects of supervision and preventive work inside Norway’s prisons: activation prevents suicide, activation prevents damage by isolation, activation prevents violence and threats, and activation helps reduce the use of safety cells, segregation, and other restrictive measures.

### **IV. Halden Prison**

Although many of the challenges of the 1980s had been resolved or addressed, NCS continued to develop and to refine how imprisonment was used in Norway. In June 1996, there was a proposal from two parliamentary representatives for the establishment of a new prison in the Østfold County.<sup>41</sup> This proposal was designed to increase the prison capacity nationally and to provide that county (which is located on the country’s border, near routes commonly used by drug smugglers and other illicit traffic between Norway and Sweden) a much-needed increase in custody cells. After White Paper I was released, the Parliament began to seriously discuss the proposal to build a new prison in Østfold County, more specifically in the municipality of Halden. At the time, this was not a controversial decision. This was to be the first prison constructed in the era of White Paper I and was intended to reflect the modern ideals of NCS. The goal was to build a prison that would offer the full range of programs and activities and be “Norway’s most modern prison.”<sup>42</sup> The planners envisioned that Halden Prison would enable inmates to live a life without crime once they were released.

Halden Prison opened on March 1, 2010, and remains, to this day, one of the largest and most modern prisons in Norway. Halden is a maximum-security facility surrounded by a circular wall that is about 1.4 kilometers long and 6 meters high. It has a capacity of 252 male inmates, including a mix of inmates who are in pretrial custody or serving a prison sentence. There are 228 cells within, divided into three units and twenty-four places in a halfway house located directly outside the prison. The prison buildings cover 27,000 square meters of administration

offices, workshops, and housing units, as well as several buildings for activities. The total land area within the prison wall is approximately 150,000 square meters. The area between the prison and the forest—the so-called free zone, which is also considered a part of the prison, even though it is located outside the wall—is also 150,000 square meters. The layout of Halden Prison makes it, in many ways, a unique facility, even in Norway.

The prison comprises three residential units. The original idea was to use Unit A for pretrial detention—also called “custody” in Norway, where inmates who have not yet received their sentence have their cells—and to use Units B and C, with eighty-four cells each, as units for inmates who are serving judicially imposed, post-conviction sentences. However, the need for pretrial detention cells has proved greater than anticipated, so today each unit contains a mix of pretrial detainees and sentenced prisoners.

### A. The Vision of Halden Prison: Punishment That Works—Change That Lasts

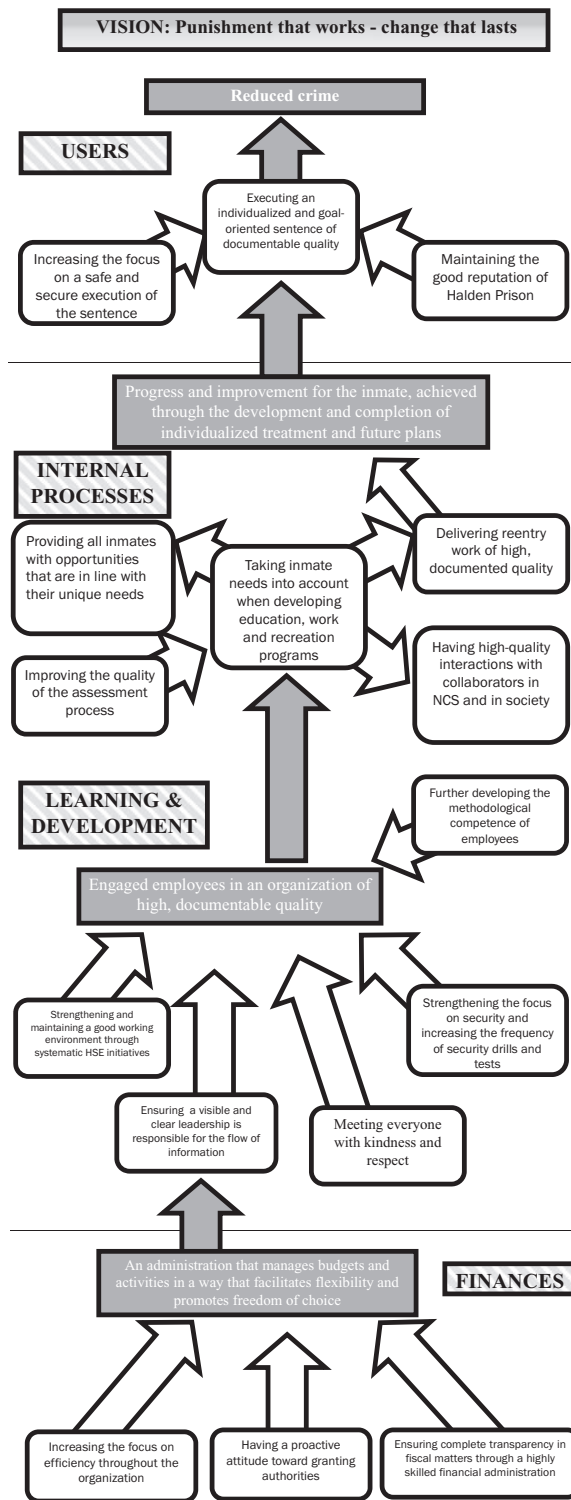
Although the deprivation of liberty can be hard for many people, it is an essential component of the purpose of punishment. The purpose of punishment in the Norwegian context, as set forth in White Paper II, is as follows:

Measures that are to work through specific deterrence include reduction of crime through the deprivation of liberty (incapacitation), deterrent measures, and rehabilitative measures. Through deterrent measures that are directed at the specific offender, the punishment will also have a general deterrent effect, and in the long term this should have an effect on the development of norms and attitudes [toward crime] in society as a whole.<sup>43</sup>

With regard to the rehabilitative effect of the penalty, White Paper II notes that “in recent years, the legislature has placed greater emphasis on the potential of punishment to improve or rehabilitate offenders. Here, the Execution of Sentences Act provides an example in that it emphasizes that [NCS] shall facilitate that the convict can make his own efforts to prevent new crimes.” This goal of providing the inmates with opportunities for change lies at the very core of the mission statement of Halden Prison. Yet it remains up to the individual inmate whether he wants to use these opportunities.

In this perspective, the time during incarceration is a promising opportunity to start the process of changing offenders’ lifestyle and behavior. The 340 employees of Halden Prison work diligently to assist inmates in becoming lawful citizens. Therefore, a central element of the vision of Halden Prison is the motto “Change that lasts.” The way the staff in Halden works with inmates includes a substantial focus on “change work,” which could help the inmate stop being a criminal and manage to live a lawful life when their stay in prison is over. In that sense, the goal is to balance care and punishment. These two goals are built into

**Figure 1**  
**Strategy Map for Halden Prison, Part 1.**



the practical and ideological foundation of the manner in which Halden Prison is managed, as summarized in what is referred to as a “strategy map” (*strategikart*; see Figure 1).

A strategy map is a graphic representation of the logical, cause-and-effect connections between strategic objectives

(illustrated in Figure 1 as the rectangles on each level of the strategy map). The strategy map can be viewed as hierarchical, with higher levels building upon the successful completion of the objectives on the lower levels that precede them. Accordingly, improving performance in the objectives found within the “Learning & Development” and “Finances” perspectives (Figure 1, bottom two rows) enables the organization to improve its “Internal Process” perspective (Figure 1, next row up), which, in turn, enables the organization to create desirable results in the “Users” perspective, the highest-level objective for the organization (Figure 1, top rows). With regard to Halden Prison, if this overall goal is successfully met, then the punishment has worked as intended, crime will be reduced, and the inmate will have reformed his life during the incarceration process.

The purpose of this strategy map is to focus on and measure what is *most important* for developing the policies that govern Halden Prison, and to ensure that the overall environment is in line with the strategic objectives of the facility’s leadership. The information contained in this system will provide the basis for determining and setting priorities and allocating resources. Regular evaluation should indicate whether the organization is on the right track with regard to the various focus areas and, when they are not, also provide the basis for implementing corrective measures where necessary. Because the key aims and important objectives are collected in one place, this framework ensures that the goal management system is simple, easy to communicate, and implementable. This strategy map has been used to shape the environment at Halden in accordance with the highest ideals of NCS.

### B. Architecture as a Rehabilitative Tool

The goal for Halden Prison is to replicate, to the extent possible, the structure of Norwegian society within the circular wall that surrounds the facility. As a result, Halden Prison consists of several divided buildings, many with a specific use (e.g., education, recreation, workshops), thus requiring external travel between the various units. This layout can be said to reflect, in many ways, our everyday movement *in the community*, where we travel between home, school, workplace, and so on. This reflects the normality principle “in action” and was an important step in creating both an exterior and an interior that are as minimally alienating as possible.

The prison is divided into “public” and “private” areas, which have various expressions. The designers described it this way: “The project’s intention and main focus is based on two mutually dependent opposites: ‘hard’ and ‘soft’.”<sup>44</sup> The word *hard* represents the harsh and restrictive prison spaces, which feature the means of detention and physical barriers, while *soft* represents the notion of rehabilitation, with community-like living quarters and collocation of employees and inmates. Accordingly, the administrative functions, the strictest prison units, and the sports field are located close to the main gate on the lower level of the prison grounds; this represents the

“hard” element. The “soft” features are located on the upper grounds of the prison, where the original forested landscape in which Halden is located remains nearly untouched. This means that the living quarters, workshops, and visitation house are grouped around the recreational and natural areas on the site. Placing these buildings in an almost countryside-like setting is intended to reinforce the “normality” of the arguably abnormal prison environment and was motivated by the somewhat untraditional motto “Yes, both [hard and soft].”

Halden Prison has received much attention, locally as well as internationally, because of its architecture.<sup>45</sup> The designers’ vision was that the prison “meets the inmates and employees in a friendly, and non-authoritarian way. Therefore, emphasis is placed on good relationships, good dimensions, qualities in material use and strength in the forms.”<sup>46</sup>

### C. Principle of Normality in Halden Prison

The facilities and structure of Halden Prison are designed to reflect the principles and ambitions of both White Paper I and White Paper II. Any determination of what the key elements of a “normal” life behind the walls of a prison are can, of course, be debated. Prison life can never fully parallel a life of relative freedom outside the walls; this is, after all, the purpose of incarceration. In Halden Prison, however, we have made an exceptional effort to bring these two versions of life as close together as possible. The designers put it this way:

The project is designed with clear parallels to the outside society. The main functions are divided into [their] own building complexes. This provides direct support for the rehabilitation of the “normal” life in the form of a necessary rhythm of the day with the relocation between housing, work and leisure activities. This is a new prison model in the Nordic context. . . . Halden Prison is perceived as a society in miniature. It appears as a clear aggregate facility, but with the wish to create differences in character in the respective areas. Variation gives richer experiences, wanting to explore and share, but also security through belonging and identity within the zone of the inmate.<sup>47</sup>

The prison has been developed from the ground up to make everyday life a more or less “ordinary.” This can be seen in the small living units with communal kitchen areas; in the cells with televisions, private toilets, and showers; and in the ability to go to work or school during the day, to eat meals at normal times, and to have recreational activities in the afternoon. Inmates at Halden, as in all of Norway, are able to seek a doctor, dentist, service center, library, shop, or chapel—similar to what they could do if they were living outside the prison’s walls. The inmates move around the area, and, although the distances between the building aren’t large, they are sufficient enough to copy the rhythms of normal life. At Halden, the overall intended effect of this

environment is to fill the whole day with meaningful activities; this is good for both inmates and employees. These are small but important elements for ensuring that inmates manage on their own. The challenge at Halden is to accomplish all of this without compromising key measures of security. Taken together, the unique way that Halden was designed allows for the maximum potential to limit the harmful effects of time in prison and facilitate an inmate's progression through the rehabilitative process.

#### V. Thoughtful Principles Implemented by Trained Staff Make All the Difference

Today's NCS is based on a fundamentally humanistic value that people are unique and inviolable. This means that individuals have the right to make their own choices and that they, in turn, are responsible for the consequences of these decisions. Such values are, of course, not unique to NCS and can be found in international conventions such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the UN's Human Rights Declaration, which states, in Article 1, that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." During the preparation of White Paper II,<sup>48</sup> which continues to regulate much of the activities of NCS today, inmates were asked what a good day in prison would be like for them. The response was essentially as follows: "A good day in prison is a day when [prisoners] are seen, heard and respected as they are."<sup>49</sup> The goal for NCS, therefore, is that this vision shall be reflected in the execution of all sentences.

Moving from the challenges of the 1980s and '90s—including high recidivism rates, many serious incidents of inmate violence, and poor living conditions in many prisons—to Halden Prison has not been easy. Much of this change started with White Paper I.<sup>50</sup> The employees of NCS played a crucial role in that transformation. White Paper I changed how staff and convicts were to interact, stipulating that prison officers should now work more directly with the individual inmates. This shifted their role from being "just a guard," focused on static security measures, to one that also required them to work directly with the inmates on their rehabilitation. This diversification of the prison officer role meant that the competencies required from prison officers changed as well; the educational programming for prison officers has developed substantially over the past twenty years to reflect this reform. Through a two-year educational and experiential learning process, the prison officer learns how to carry out legally mandated sentences in a way that promotes both a safe society (by means of incapacitation) and desistance (by implementation of relevant programming and rehabilitative activities for the inmate). In order to facilitate reentry, they also—while working under the time constraints imposed in a system characterized by relatively short sentences—collaborate actively both with the inmates and with partners inside and outside NCS. These are demanding tasks that require significant skills; accordingly, employment as a professional prison officer is held in high regard within Norwegian society.

The development of NCS over recent decades demonstrates two important factors that are essential to recognize if you want to change the fundamental nature of a correctional service. These likely hold true in any country in the world. First, it is important to take a step back and begin with a discussion about the fundamental values and principles that a correctional service should be based upon. In the Norwegian setting, it has been very valuable to have these values and principles clearly expressed in White Paper I and White Paper II, which are publicly accessible policy documents. It is important that these documents and the ideas they contain were discussed and approved both throughout the correctional organization and at the highest levels of the government. Second, and with these foundations in place, it is important that the competence of staff at all levels working within NCS is improved through educational and training programs. While rarely the primary focus of correctional reform, improving the attitudes and ensuring the professionalism and competence of prison officers is the most important key to the positive developments we have seen in Norwegian corrections over the past twenty years.

#### VI. Recidivism Today

As mentioned earlier in this article, Norway had a high recidivism rate in the 1980s, up to 80%. There has been a sharp reduction over the past thirty years. Today, new studies show that the recidivism rate is 20–25%. Recidivism is defined as new convictions that must be carried out in criminal proceedings after release from a prison sentence.

What is the reason for this reduction? White Paper II focused on the fact that reducing relapses into crime is a shared responsibility across several sectors and levels of administration. NCS, the cooperative agencies, and the municipalities must therefore better coordinate their instruments and make it possible for the convicted person to make their own efforts to change their criminal behavioral patterns. Norway has succeeded well in these ambitions. Combined with the focus on values and competence development for prison officers in White Paper I, this has been a successful formula that has contributed to good results for NCS.<sup>51</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> <https://snl.no/Kriminalomsorgen>.

<sup>2</sup> In Norway offenders can be sentenced to so-called "conditional" or "unconditional" sentences; the former is a suspended prison sentence and the latter an unsuspended sentence that must be served.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ssb.no/sosiale-forhold-og-kriminalitet/artikler-og-publikasjoner/\\_attachment/69997?\\_ts=137db272608](https://www.ssb.no/sosiale-forhold-og-kriminalitet/artikler-og-publikasjoner/_attachment/69997?_ts=137db272608).

<sup>4</sup> See [https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Storingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d\\_0411](https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Storingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d_0411); [https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Storingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d\\_0411](https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Storingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d_0411).



- 5 [https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d\\_0411](https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=4&wid=d&psid=DIVL776&pgid=d_0411), p. 3.
- 6 St.prp. No. 72 (1988–89). Retrieved from [https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=2&wid=b&psid=DIVL339&pgid=b\\_0035](https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=2&wid=b&psid=DIVL339&pgid=b_0035).
- 7 [https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=7&wid=a&psid=DIVL14&pgid=a\\_1134](https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Stortingsforhandlinger/Lesevisning/?p=1988-89&paid=7&wid=a&psid=DIVL14&pgid=a_1134).
- 8 <https://www.sivilombudsmannen.no/aktuelt/isolasjon-av-psykisk-syke-innsatte-er-uverdige/>.
- 9 <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/160399/selvord%20del1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>; <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2215-0366%2817%2930430-3>; <https://www.kriminalvarden.se/globalassets/publikationer/forskningsrapporter/prison-suicide-in-12-countries.pdf>; <https://www.journals.uio.no/index.php/suicidologi/article/view/1820>; <https://www.journals.uio.no/index.php/suicidologi/article/view/1371>.
- 10 In Norwegian penal facilities, there is a one-man-one-cell policy based on the principle of humane detention. This has created some problems in the sense that the total prison capacity has not always been sufficient to incarcerate the number of sentenced persons at certain points in time. A “waiting list” for sentenced prisoners occurs in those cases. When an individual is placed on the waiting list, they are not incarcerated after the passing of their sentence and instead return home, where they later will receive a letter indicating when and at which prison they are to report to serve their sentence.
- 11 White Paper no. 27 (1997–98) (“White Paper I”); see section 2.3.10 in particular: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/stmeld-nr-27-1998/id191585/>.
- 12 See, e.g., Abdel-Salam & Sunde (this issue), “Enhancing the Role of Correctional Officers in American Prisons: Lessons Learned from Norway,” 31 Fed. Sent. R. 67 (2018).
- 13 <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/jd/organisation/underliggende-etater/norwegian-directorate-for-correctionals/id426320/>.
- 14 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/index.php?cat=265199>.
- 15 *Id.*
- 16 Correctional Statistics of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, 2011–2015, English version, retrieved from <http://www.kriminalforsorgen.dk/Nordisk-statistik-7540.aspx>.
- 17 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/statistikk-og-noekkel tall.237902.no.html>.
- 18 <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2005-05-20-28>.
- 19 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/statistikk-og-noekkel tall.237902.no.html>.
- 20 [https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2001-05-18-21/KAPITTEL\\_6#KAPITTEL\\_6](https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2001-05-18-21/KAPITTEL_6#KAPITTEL_6).
- 21 <https://lovdata.no/SF/forskrift/2002-02-22-183>.
- 22 <https://lovdata.no/SF/forskrift/2002-02-22-183/§4-3>.
- 23 Correctional Statistics of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, *supra* note 17.
- 24 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/samfunnsstraff.237888.no.html>.
- 25 This is called the “program mot ruspåvirket kjøring” in Norwegian. See <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/program-mot-ruspaavirket-kjoering.237892.no.html>.
- 26 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/foftenke-elektronisk-kontroll.237889.no.html>; <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/index.php?cat=265199>.
- 27 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/getfile.php/3901470.823.edexesqyab/Kriminalomsorgens+a%CC%8Arsstatistikk+2016++ferdig+versjon.pdf>; see also Øster & Rokkan (this issue), “The Norwegian Approach to Electronic Monitoring: Changing the System and Making a Difference,” 31 Fed. Sent. R. 75 (2018).
- 28 Correctional Statistics of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, 2011–2015, English version, retrieved from <http://www.kriminalforsorgen.dk/Nordisk-statistik-7540.aspx>.
- 29 An English excerpt of White Paper II is reproduced in this issue, 31 Fed. Sent. R. 52 (2018).
- 30 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/getfile.php/757345.823.cyaedyurwd/STM200720080037000DDPDFS.pdf>, page 22; my translation.
- 31 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/index.php?cat=265199>.
- 32 Factsheet on preventive detention, retrieved from <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/publikasjoner.242465.no.html>.
- 33 [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/smk/vedlegg/2005/regjeringsplatform\\_soriamoria.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/smk/vedlegg/2005/regjeringsplatform_soriamoria.pdf), page 69.
- 34 <https://www.fhi.no/globalassets/dokumenterfiler/rapporter/2015/sirusrap.3.15.pdf>; [https://www.vista-analyse.no/site/assets/files/5703/va-rapport\\_2014-38\\_netterver\\_etter\\_soning\\_hva\\_kan\\_samfunnet\\_tjene\\_pa\\_bedre\\_ettervern.pdf](https://www.vista-analyse.no/site/assets/files/5703/va-rapport_2014-38_netterver_etter_soning_hva_kan_samfunnet_tjene_pa_bedre_ettervern.pdf).
- 35 [https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/3f8ac79225654863ad3f9b0e082bf9f0/g-0440-b\\_reduisert-tilbakefall\\_net.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/3f8ac79225654863ad3f9b0e082bf9f0/g-0440-b_reduisert-tilbakefall_net.pdf).
- 36 See section 17 of the Execution of Sentences Act.
- 37 See, e.g., <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1462474518794187#articleShareContainer> for an example of music therapy in prison.
- 38 <https://www.sivilombudsmannen.no/en/torturforebygging/>.
- 39 [https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2001-05-18-21#KAPITTEL\\_6](https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2001-05-18-21#KAPITTEL_6).
- 40 See European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment standards, section II, paragraph 47.
- 41 <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Innstillinger/Stortinget/1995-1996/inns-199596-277/>.
- 42 [https://www.statsbygg.no/files/prosjekter/haldenFengsel/1511\\_Fengselsmag\\_bm.pdf](https://www.statsbygg.no/files/prosjekter/haldenFengsel/1511_Fengselsmag_bm.pdf), page 2.
- 43 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/getfile.php/757345.823.cyaedyurwd/STM200720080037000DDPDFS.pdf>, page 19; my translation.
- 44 [https://www.statsbygg.no/files/publikasjoner/ferdigmeldinger/686\\_HaldenFengsel.pdf](https://www.statsbygg.no/files/publikasjoner/ferdigmeldinger/686_HaldenFengsel.pdf), page 8.
- 45 See, e.g., <https://www.archdaily.com/154665/halden-prison-erik-moller-arkitekter-the-most-humane-prison-in-the-world>; <http://www.designindaba.com/articles/creative-work/can-architecture-prison-contribute-rehabilitation-its-inmates>; <https://press.nordicopenaccess.no/index.php/noasp/catalog/download/31/126/991-1?inline=1>.
- 46 [https://www.statsbygg.no/files/publikasjoner/ferdigmeldinger/686\\_HaldenFengsel.pdf](https://www.statsbygg.no/files/publikasjoner/ferdigmeldinger/686_HaldenFengsel.pdf), page 8.
- 47 *Id.*, pages 9 and 24.
- 48 <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/stmeld-nr-37-2007-2008/id527624/>.
- 49 Stortingsmelding no. 37 (2007/2008), page 21, last section.
- 50 <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/stmeld-nr-27-1998/id191585/>.
- 51 <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2502761/DP%2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>; <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/160435/EuroVista-vol2-no3-6-Kristofferson-edit.pdf?sequence=3>.