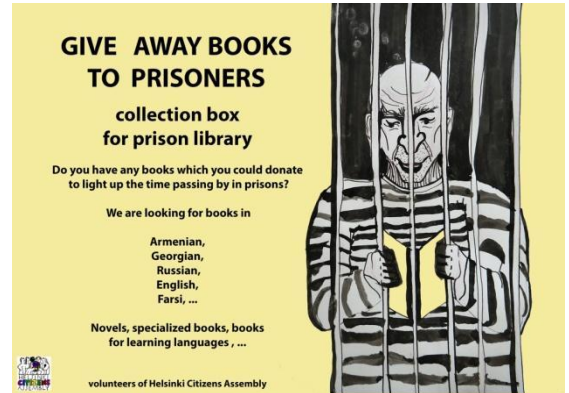


Book Collection for Prison Libraries

Project Description

This project is initiated by Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor. It is designed to expand and ameliorate the stock of libraries in Armenian penitentiary facilities by collecting literature of different genres and languages. We are mainly looking for books in foreign languages ranging from Russian and Georgian to English, Farsi and any other language available. All genres are welcome; however, books for learning languages or acquiring other skills as well as other specialized books or novels are highly appreciated. The Book collection is conducted within the “Austrian-Armenian Youth for Peace and Human Rights Project” and supported by European Voluntary Service of Erasmus+ program. Erasmus+ is a program of the European Union for education, training, youth and sport, which offers opportunities to learn, train, gain experience and volunteer abroad.



Current Situation of Libraries in Penitentiary Facilities

While all of the penitentiary facilities possess libraries, the majority of the stock is outdated and only offers a small variety of literature. As there is no existing state program, which could provide the libraries with new books, adding to the stock has proven to be a serious problem. Charitable and religious organizations donate a limited number of exemplars, but the current demand especially for foreign literature is far from being met. Additionally, the assortment requires improvement, due to the minimal variety of genres. Semi-open correctional institutions enable the convicts to visit the library themselves, while closed penitentiary institutions only allow the prisoners to order books into their cells, for which an existing list of books is necessary, in order to enable a selection process¹.

¹ Cp.: Report on Penitentiary System of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia in 2008. In: <http://www.osce.org/yerevan/38569?download=true> [access: 13th of October 2017]