

Annual report
&
Financial statements
2020



Foreword

With pleasure I hereby present the second annual report of the PrisonWatch foundation. This report provides information about the activities that have been carried out in 2020 and the financial results.

Despite the covid pandemic the foundation was able to continue its activities in the penitentiary institution of Alphen aan den Rijn (PI Alphen). Several multi-lingual prisoners became PrisonWatch Host and helped other prisoners in their own language to settle in. The PrisonWatch Team which consists of different employees of PI Alphen grew in number and they carried out different activities like making contact with foreign nationals in need. They translated also the text of the prison rules and an introduction-package in several foreign languages. Unfortunately, the plans to start working with a network of visitors from different nationalities failed since access to prison was not allowed for external visitors. The same applies for the plans to start working in the female prison Nieuwersluis and the foreign national prison in Ter Apel.

I like to thank the members of the Supervisory Board and the Advisory Board for the kind support and advice. The members of the Supervisory Board are Lisette Heerze (chairman), Thomas Loudon (treasurer), Emily Bremers (secretary) and the members of the Advisory Board are Hans Barendrecht (Director Gevangenzorg), Peter van der Sande (President ICPA, former director of the Dutch Custodial Institutions Agency), Judith Swinkels (judge and former member of the Dutch Parliament), John Cameron Webb (British consul) and Robert de Leeuw (former ambassador). I especially like to thank PrisonWatch-engagement partner Astrid de Jong and Ana Bibic, PrisonWatch-coordinator in PI Alphen for their work and Cees Niessen, prison governor of PI Alphen, for allowing me to spend some hours per week to PrisonWatch-activities.

Dr. Femke Hofstee-van der Meulen
Founder PrisonWatch & deputy prison governor of PI Alphen.

The foundation has been established to watch over foreign nationals. The mission of PrisonWatch is to make a human connection with those detained abroad and to create awareness about their situation. By visiting them we can contribute to inclusiveness for those who are excluded. By doing so PrisonWatch likes to contribute to a humane, inclusive and fair society.

Why PrisonWatch?

In recent decades prison populations have become less homogeneous. In prisons all around the world a huge range of nationalities and languages can be found alongside cultural and religious diversity. Foreign national prisoners (FNPs) are detained in relatively large numbers. This is particularly true for countries in the European Union (EU), where on average nearly one in every five prisoners is a foreigner.

In daily prison life FNPs encounter many difficulties as a result of their foreign status, language difficulties and distance from their families. In practice, prison authorities are often not fully aware of the problems FNPs face and they do not address their special needs. As a result FNPs often feel socially excluded and are unable to exercise their rights. A PhD-study, conducted by Femke Hofstee, revealed that social visits from volunteers have a very positive effect on their well-being and their reintegration into society after release. More information about this study can be found at www.prisonwatch.org.



PrisonWatch Hosts

“Being a Host is a day-time job”

PrisonWatch Host

Activities

Pilot PI Alphen aan den Rijn

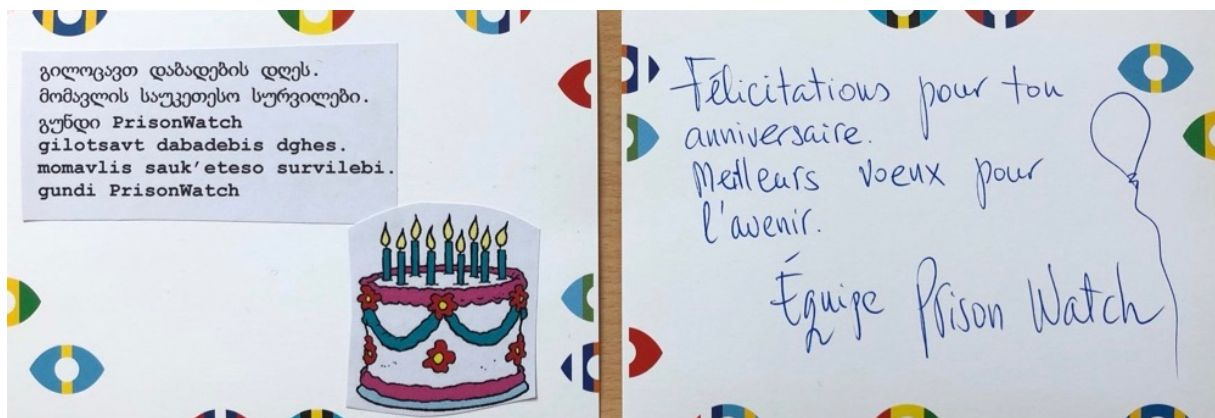
As planned we continued the pilot in the penitentiary institution (PI) of Alphen aan den Rijn. This institution has a capacity of over 1,000 places. Annually around 8,000 prisoners enter this prison and around 25% of them have a foreign background. Of

these 2,000 prisoners around 500 encounter language difficulties because they do not speak or read Dutch. As a result of the language obstacle it is hard for them to communicate with others and to understand the prison rules and procedures. To address this issue PrisonWatch works with a dedicated group of members of staff that have special attention for foreign nationals and try to address their needs. These members of the PrisonWatch Team speak over twenty different languages, and some come from a non-Dutch background. In practice they are often contacted by their colleagues to provide language support, for example during the intake in prison. The PrisonWatch Team met every eight weeks to do discuss the work. We also had a great social event in June, outdoors with adherence to all Covid-restrictions.

In the course of 2020 PrisonWatch started to extent its work across different units within the PI of Alphen. The reason for enlarging the scope of PrisonWatch work is that its involvement has been regarded as having a positive impact on foreign national prisoners and on daily prison life.

Also, PrisonWatch was able to involve a dedicated member of the team (coordinator), who visits the wings on a weekly basis to increase the visibility of PrisonWatch, to keep an eye on its activities and to ensure that no foreign prisoners felt left out.

Besides we also extended the team of prisoners who help other prisoners in their own language to get adjusted into prison life and to provide social support. The PrisonWatch Hosts received a simple intake before taking up this voluntary job. The Hosts and foreign national prisoners receive a birthday card in their own language.



It needs continuous attention to create and maintain visibility though, as both people from the PrisonWatch Team, as well as PrisonWatch Hosts do move around.

All in all, we can conclude that the pilot in 2020, with all its experiences and learnings, resulted in a good way of working. This will help to create visibility of PrisonWatch in other PI's, as well as implementation of its work.

"I swear... it is really necessary"

PrisonWatch Host

"I understand exactly how it feels"

PrisonWatch Host who was previously detained in France

ANBI

In 2020, the PrisonWatch request to become registered as a Dutch public benefit organisation (ANBI) was approved by the Dutch tax authorities.

Covid pandemic and PrisonWatch

As mentioned in the foreword, the Covid pandemic effected the work of PrisonWatch. Penitentiary institutions were not allowed to provide access to external visitors. This prevented us to build a network of an external network of volunteers. However, institutions have become more equipped to allow Skype-contact, which can be beneficial for PrisonWatch too.

We planned further meetings with staff in the penitentiary institution Ter Apel and Nieuwersluis. But again, as access by external visitors to staff was not permitted either these activities had to be postponed.

The same was true for activities directed towards creating awareness and visibility for PrisonWatch, such as advice, training, and lectures to relevant parties.

Financial situation

In 2020, PrisonWatch did receive financial support in kind. The materials used by the foundation were donated in kind by PrisonWatch Advice, which mounted to € 1,340. The hours spend on the different activities were carried out by all on a voluntary basis.

Financial statements 2020

Assets & Liabilities

Assets

Donations	€ 250
Bank	€ 136

Liabilities

Banking costs	€ -114
Accounts payable	€ 136