

**Annual report**  
**&**  
**Financial statements**  
**2022**



## Foreword

I hereby submit the annual report of 2022 of the PrisonWatch foundation, its fourth year! This report provides information regarding activities carried out in 2022 together with the financial results.

Fortunately the covid pandemic faded out in 2022. As opposed to 2020 and 2021, we were able to welcome external visitors and have physical meetings. We have been able to start creating a network of volunteers who visit their countrymen in prison. In mid-September we welcomed our first external volunteer! We have taken the first steps to create awareness and extend our activities to other penitentiary institutions during lectures which we've given to relevant partners.

Besides this, the foundation expanded its activities in the penitentiary institution of Alphen aan den Rijn (PI Alphen) still further. Multiple multi-lingual prisoners became PrisonWatch Hosts communicating and helping other prisoners in their own language to settle in, both at the Eikenlaan and Maatschapslaan locations. These volunteer Hosts are easily recognisable in their red safety vest and their work is gradually becoming common practice in the institution. The PrisonWatch Team, which consists of members of staff in PI Alphen, grew again in number and continued to carry out a variety of activities and hold regular meetings.

I thank the Hosts and the PrisonWatch Team in PI Alphen for their time and dedication in addressing the needs of foreign nationals in prison. Furthermore, I am thankful for the support and advice of the members both of the Supervisory Board and Advisory Board. I would especially like to thank Astrid de Jong (Engagement Partner) and Ana Bibic (PrisonWatch-coordinator in PI Alphen) for their work and Cees Niessen, prison governor of PI Alphen, for allowing Ana Bibic and myself a few hours per week to spend on PrisonWatch-activities.



Dr. Femke Hofstee-van der Meulen  
Founder PrisonWatch

*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.*

## 1. Activities

### Enlarging our scope

In 2022 PrisonWatch extended its work from unit West (pre-trial prisoners) at the Eikenlaan to unit South (pre-trial prisoners and special care unit) at the Maatschapslaan of the penitentiary institution Alphen. This is because its involvement has been regarded as having a positive impact on foreign national prisoners and on daily prison life. During the year over 100 foreign national prisoners received direct support from a Host and by members of the PrisonWatch Team.

*“The fact that you can seek support via PrisonWatch is positive for both prisoners and staff.”*

Member of staff at a wing

### Visibility of PrisonWatch

We have been able to further strengthen the presence of PrisonWatch within PI Alphen and also within all other Dutch Penitentiary Institutions (PIs). When staff of whichever PI opens the intranet, there is a one-pager flyer specifically focused on our work. The page contains information on the goals of the foundation and translation of the prison rules and procedures in different foreign languages.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the DJI Intranet - PI Alphen aan den Rijn. The main content area features a section for PrisonWatch with a heading, a paragraph of text, a red logo, and a sub-section titled 'Aanleiding' with a paragraph. On the right side, there is a list of links for PrisonWatch Team PI Alphen, PrisonWatch Hosts, PrisonWatch deelnemers, and various translation services.

**DJI Intranet - PI Alphen aan den Rijn**

Home Nieuws Organisatie Personeel Landelijke thema's Overige diensten  Zoek

Home  
**PrisonWatch**

Een aanzienlijk deel van de gedetineerden in PI Alphen is de Nederlandse taal niet machtig. Om de situatie van buitenlandse gedetineerden te verbeteren is stichting PrisonWatch sinds januari 2020 actief binnen onze PI.

**Aanleiding**

In Nederland heeft ruim één op de vijf gedetineerden een buitenlandse nationaliteit. Zij zijn vaak de Nederlandse taal niet machtig en de fysieke afstand tot familie en vrienden is groot. Hierdoor krijgen ze zelden bezoek. Als gevolg van de lastige communicatie met anderen voelen zij zich vaak sociaal geïsoleerd. De taalbarrière zorgt er daarnaast vaak voor dat buitenlandse gedetineerden minder goed hun weg kunnen vinden in de inrichting, onvoldoende bekend zijn met de regels en procedures en moeite hebben om zich goed voor te bereiden op terugkeer in de samenleving.

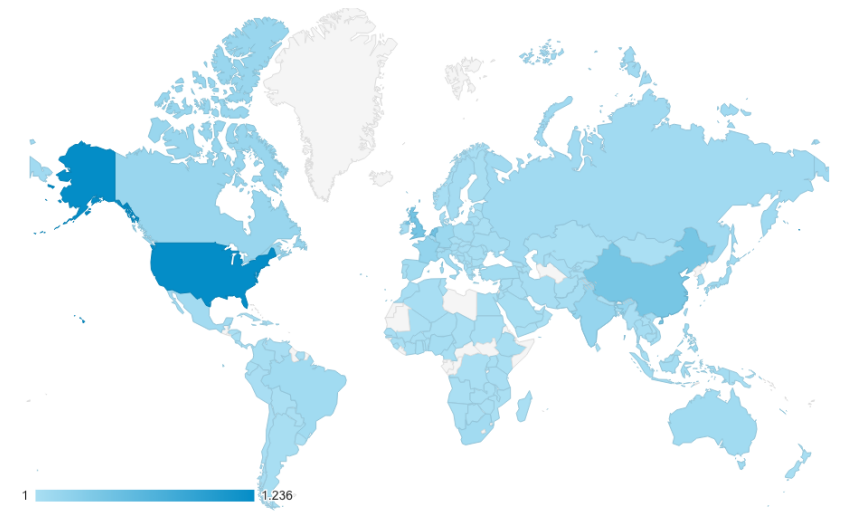
- PrisonWatch Team PI Alphen  
Het team van collega's en de talen die zij spreken.
- PrisonWatch Hosts  
Gedetineerden die kunnen worden ingezet om anderstaligen te helpen.
- PrisonWatch deelnemers  
Gedetineerden die graag hulp willen van een host.
- Vertalingen huisregels
- Vertalingen introductiemap
- Vertalingen my Telio
- Contactbriefje

In addition to this, a short movie was produced to show our work in prison in a more impactful way. The movie is on our general website:

<https://prisonwatch.org/prisonwatch-the-human-connection/>

### Website

In 2022 the PrisonWatch-website was visited 3.700 times from 157 different countries, mostly the United States of America, United Kingdom, The Netherlands and China. The page with background information on foreign national prisoners is the most frequently visited.



### Annual volunteer event

In 2022 the yearly volunteer event hosted by the Department of Justice (DJI) was held in PI Alphen aan den Rijn. PrisonWatch was invited and had the opportunity to increase awareness of our work with Wim Saris, the Director General of the Dutch Custodial Institutions Agency (DJI).



### *Financial support*

During 2021 PrisonWatch approached the foundations Kansfonds and Haëlla Stichting for support. Kansfonds approved our application and provided support for 2021-2022. The Haëlla Stichting kindly approved and supported PrisonWatch in 2022. We now had the opportunity to print a good number of 'Picture it in Prison' booklets and included the logo of Kansfonds and Haëlla. Likewise we produced other necessary leaflets and documents.

## **2. Working methods**

### *The PrisonWatch team*

PrisonWatch works with a dedicated group of members of staff who specially address the needs of foreign national detainees. This team has grown from around 20 members in 2021 to 35 members in 2022. New members are working on the wing where Prison Watch has extended activities, i.e. de Maatschapslaan. Via intranet, all staff have now immediate and easy access to the PrisonWatch team, their languages and contact details. The coordinator updates the information monthly and a dedicated PrisonWatch internal email address is available.

The PrisonWatch Team met at eight weekly intervals to discuss their work. In June an outdoor social event was held to thank them and show appreciation for their work. They were issued Certificates of Appreciation, which they highly valued!



### *PrisonWatch Hosts*

At the intake phase, each new prisoner undergoes an interview by a casemanager and a wing mentor during which the prisoner's language requirement is assessed. If the prisoner does not speak Dutch and he/she shows an interested in participating in voluntary work, he/she is informed of the activities of PrisonWatch and handed a folder. If the prisoner is willing to become a Host this is discussed during a multidisciplinary meeting (MDO) with members of staff from different disciplines. If there are no objections, the prisoner is nominated to become a Host and appointed by the prison

governor in the 'Vrijheden Commissie', Thereafter the Host is visited by the coordinator and is given more information on what is required together with the do's and don't's.

Every month a meeting is organised by the coordinator, often attended by other staff members and Prison Watch team, to enable the Hosts to discuss their work. The Hosts and foreign national prisoners receive birthday cards in their own language and are awarded a Certificate of Appreciation, similar to the certificate mentioned above, which can be added to their work-portfolio and used for re-integration purposes. All staff have access via the intranet to a list of PrisonWatch Hosts specifying which languages the prisoner speaks, where they are located i.e. which wing and cell number. PrisonWatch information posters are visible on several wings.

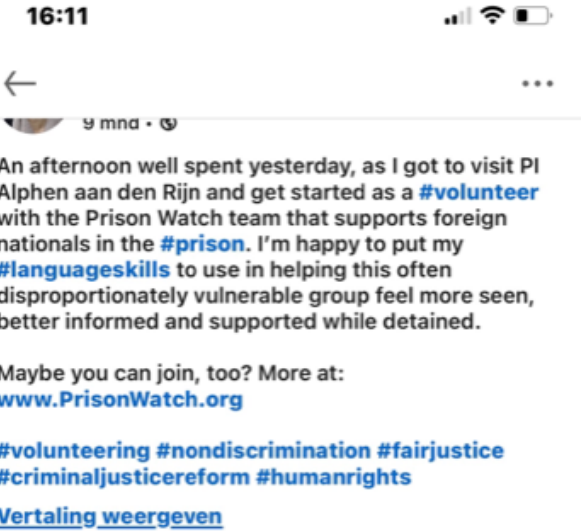
*The role of the PrisonWatch-coordinator*

In 2022 PrisonWatch was again able to involve Ana Bibic, quality officer and member of the team, as coordinator. She visited prison wings on a weekly basis to establish if newcomers are encountering language difficulties and needing support. She also assessed to what degree Hosts' work is effective whether the information on intranet is still up to date. Ana participates on a regular basis in team-meetings with prison officers and case managers to inform them of the work of PrisonWatch.

*PrisonWatch Visitors*

For the first time in the four years that we've been active, we have welcomed external visitors: that is people willing and able to visit a person who speaks their language in prison. The selection process of these external visitors included an introduction to PrisonWatch. They are required to provide a certificate of good conduct and a reference-check is carried out. Those recruited were then given a training manual and a half-day training session on do's and don'ts in prison. We now have four external visitors who speak mostly Eastern European languages.

Welcoming our 1<sup>st</sup> Visitor



## PI Alphen aan den Rijn

The penitentiary institution of Alphen aan den Rijn consists of two adjacent locations. The location at the Eikenlaan holds 'arrestanten' (short sentences) and pre-trial prisoners. And the Maatschapslaam holds pre-trial prisoners, prisoners who need additional care (EZV). PI Alphen has a capacity of over 1,100 places and it holds around 1050 prisoners daily. 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.

### 3. Financial situation

In 2022, PrisonWatch received financial support from the Haëlla-foundation (€ 2,400). In total € 7,851 was spend on printing materials, the movie, events for volunteers, other material and banking costs.

As in previous years, activities have been carried out by everyone on a voluntary basis or during working time.

#### Financial statements 2022

<b>Assets</b>		<b>Liabilities</b>	
Bank 1-1-2022	€ 12,893		
Bank 31-12-2022	€ 7.442		Reservations (return donation to Kansfonds <sup>1</sup> )
<b>Profit &amp; loss</b>			
<i>Income</i>			
Donations	€ 2,505		
<i>Expenses</i>			
Banking costs	€ 137		
Printing materials	€ 4,695		
Movie	€ 1,815		
Events volunteers	€ 770		
Keycards + frame	€ 438		
	----- +		
Total:	€ 7,851		

<sup>1</sup> PrisonWatch received in 2021 in total €12,600 of Kansfonds. Money that was not spent should be returned to Kansfonds by July 2023.

### **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 because 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. Research shows that social visits from volunteers have a very positive effect on their well-being and their reintegration into society after release. More information about foreign national prisoners can be found at [www.prisonwatch.org](http://www.prisonwatch.org).