

Principles and Aims of Confinement

The term "confinement" hereinafter means the enforcement of a prison sentence or juvenile prison sentence or placement in preventive detention, pretrial detention or juvenile detention.

On 1 January 2008, the Lower Saxon Confinement Act (Niedersächsisches Justizvollzugsgesetz, NJVollzG) came into effect. This Act regulates the enforcement of prison sentences, juvenile prison sentences and preventive detention in the designated facilities of the State of Lower Saxony.

For the enforcement of prison sentences, this act formulates 2 equal aims:

Those confined should be enabled to lead socially-responsible crime-free lives in the future. The enforcement of such confinement should also protect the public against further crimes.

Most of those confined serve temporary prison sentences after which they return to their previous lives. By working with those in confinement, confinement contributes to the protection of society after sentences have been served. Successful rehabilitation helps prevent further crimes. This is the best protection for victims.

Enforcement of juvenile sentences must be educational. Those confined must especially learn how to be members of society and integrated into the workforce.

Confinement in preventive detention aims to meet the concerns expressed by the judicial reasons for arrest. Trials must be ensured in case of, e.g., risk of flight or suppression of evidence. Preventive detention is a freedom-depriving measure that protects the public from particularly dangerous criminals who have already served their sentences. Since 1 June 2013, its enforcement has been governed by the Lower Saxon Preventive Detention Act (Sicherungsverwahrungsvollzugsgesetz, SVVollzG).



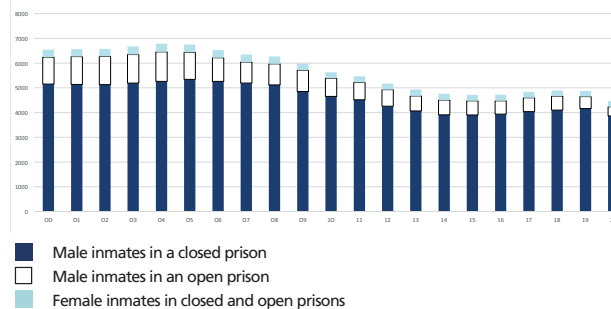
Juvenile detention is not punishment, but a disciplinary measure within the meaning of the German Youth Courts Act (Jugendgerichtsgesetz, JGG). Its enforcement has been governed by the Lower Saxon Juvenile Detention Act (Jugendarrestvollzugsgesetz, NJAVollzG) which came into effect on 1 April 2016. Enforcement of juvenile detention must be educational and focus on support and assistance, particularly after being released.

Data, Numbers, Facts

Lower Saxony has 14 correctional facilities (including a juvenile correctional facility and a juvenile detention facility) with 26 connected departments. They are spread out across the state. The largest correctional facility in Lower Saxony is the Lingen Correctional Facility which can hold up to 762 inmates. The central correctional facility for women is in Vechta and has a department in Hildesheim. With a capacity for 613 inmates, the Hameln Juvenile Correctional Facility is one of the largest of its kind in Germany. The partly-privatized Bremervörde Correctional Facility which can hold up to 300 inmates was opened in 2013.

In 2020, 4.465 persons were confined on average; in 2020, it was approx. 6.550 persons.

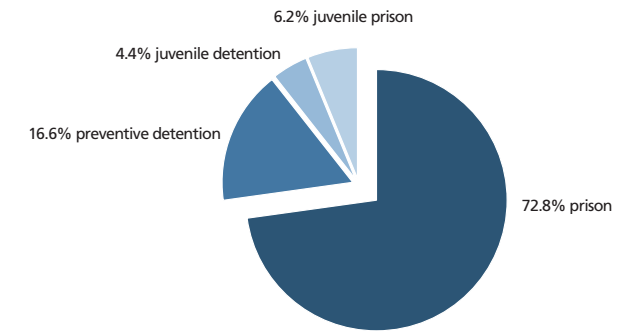
Inmates in Lower Saxony since 2000



Approx. 15% of correctional facilities' capacities are for open conditions. In 2020, approx. 9% of inmates were held under open conditions. These and other differentiations made by correctional facilities, e.g., by type of confinement, sex and age, are necessary for the performance of correctional facility tasks to meet all assistance and security needs.

In 2020, 72.8% of those confined were serving prison sentences. 16.9% of those confined were held in preventive detention and 6.2% of those confined were serving juvenile prison sentences. The share of foreigners was 33%. The share of confined females was 4.9%.

Inmates in Confinement in Lower Saxony Since 2000



Punishment

To determine appropriate measures for each case, the personality and circumstances of those sentenced and the cause and, if applicable, effects of the crime are examined. The findings are used to determine the punishment and derive assistance and therapeutic measures, educational or professional training or further training and measures necessary for release. Those imprisoned, held in detention or arrested must be made willing to cooperate.

Work and Education of Those Confined

By providing work, training and education to those confined, Lower Saxon correctional facilities make important contributions to rehabilitation. Inmates are required to work and approx. 3/4ths of them perform jobs. Work at production facilities or work-therapeutic workshops and participation in scholastic and professional qualification measures aims to develop, maintain or improve professional skills and prepare inmates for a crime-free life.

Security

In Lower Saxony, confinement protects the general public from further crimes by housing prisoners, detainees and those under arrest in a safe environment, consistently works on the causes of criminal behavior and prepares them for integration into society.

Closed and open prison facilities are provided to meet all assistance and security needs. The most modern security technology in closed prisons and the qualified staff help prevent prisonbreaks. In open prisons, suitable inmates are held under lower-security conditions and may leave the correctional facility temporarily, e.g., for work. In addition to technical-structural and administrative measures, respectful treatment of inmates contributes to the security of the correctional facilities.

Training and Further Training of Officers

The wide-ranging and challenging tasks at correctional facilities can only be managed by a specially-qualified staff. In 2020, 3971 officers from various professions were available for this. Prison officers, administrators, lawyers, social workers, teachers, psychologists, doctors, nurses and production facility workers worked at Lower Saxon correctional facilities.

For further information about each profession, please see the website of the Educational Institute for Lower Saxon Prison Officers [Bildungsinstitut des niedersächsischen Justizvollzuges].

Volunteer Work

Volunteers have worked at Lower Saxon correctional facilities for years. They assist inmates by offering leisure activities, discussion groups and individual support. Volunteers also provide assistance to prepare for release and serve as liaisons for inmates. To perform this demanding work, volunteers receive instructions, training and assistance from the correctional facilities and Educational Institute for Lower Saxon Prison Officers. Volunteers at correctional facilities can help with rehabilitation and prevention of future crimes. These tasks are interesting and wide-ranging, but also require a lot of responsibility.



Social Responsibility and Security

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