

Haparanda prison - Sweden

Introduction



Haparanda prison is a medium security prison, also known as security level two, in Sweden.¹ The facility is based in Haparanda, which is Sweden's most easterly village. Haparanda prison was founded in 1888 but it has been refurbished many times since then. It falls under the jurisdiction of the Swedish prison and probation service, also known as Kriminalvården. Their vision is to bring change and not simply provide secure custody. They want to encourage the residents to live a better life after serving their sentence.

Scale

Until mid 2022, Haparanda prison had room for 18 people in single rooms. Since then, the facility has expanded to 48 rooms of which eight rooms are occupied by two people. So currently there is an overpopulation of 120% in Haparanda prison. So originally Haparanda prison was a small-scale prison but nowadays this is no longer the case.

RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

Differentiation

Target group:

Haparanda Prison houses male adults between the ages of 18 and 24. However, the target group changes with the arrival of adults. In order to stay in this facility, people have to be convicted. If convicted, they can remain in Haparanda Prison from the beginning of their sentence. People convicted of sex offenses are not welcome in this facility.

Forms of security:

In Sweden, the guards are generally trained in relationship security. Since Haparanda prison is a medium security prison, it is combining relational security with static and procedural security. Relation security is

¹In Sweden they use three security levels, one of which is the highest and three the lowest. Haparanda prison is a detention facility in security level two.

mainly referring to the fact that staff is building relationships with the residents and having formal, as well as informal conversations with them. The facility is staffed by around 40 employees. While the majority are correctional officers, the team also comprises program directors, production managers, nurses, teachers, leisure leaders, and correctional inspectors.

Static security measures are strong in Haparanda Prison. First of all, the facility is surrounded by fences and there are many cameras scattered around the facility. In addition, they have locks on all doors and residents do not have their own key to their room. If visitors wish to enter the facility, there is an ID check and a metal detector. All this is supplemented by alarms, strip searches, drug tests, room searches etc.

A general rule in prisons in Sweden is that residents are in their room for twelve hours and the other twelve hours they have to do activities, such as work, education or other programs. Haparanda prison has a lot of strict rules and protocols. For example, the facility has a zero tolerance policy for drugs and residents can use a computer but it is controlled.

Activities:

As mentioned earlier, residents spend twelve hours in their rooms and the other twelve hours are for activities. All activities take place in the facility and residents have no control over their own schedule. As for work opportunities at Haparanda Prison, the facility has a wood industry where pallets, furniture and bookshelves are made, among other things. Work is not mandatory. Occasionally, the facility will write a letter of recommendation for the resident based on work done at the prison.

In terms of education, Haparanda Prison offers adult education at the basic and upper secondary level. Residents can also take driver's license training or job training with a focus on industrial wood technology. In addition, Haparanda Prison has a rehabilitation program.

In their free time, residents can play sports, go to the sauna or visit the library. The residents do not cook for themselves. They have the opportunity to receive visits from family or friends. Although the number of people allowed to visit is limited, and because of the prison's remote location, residents do not get frequent visits. Residents can, however, go on leave to visit family.

A therapy dog was recently introduced in Haparanda Prison. This is a pioneering initiative in the Swedish prison system in which specially trained dogs provide emotional support and companionship to people in detention during 30-minute sessions. Both staff and residents find support and comfort in the presence of the dogs.



Community-integration

Location and architecture:

Haparanda Prison is located in a small village called Haparanda. Since Haparanda is close to the border with Finland, Swedish is spoken just like Finnish, although Swedish is the only official language.

First impression of a visitor: "This is a high security prison. It does not look like a regular prison. A lot of fences - quite industrial".

Haparanda has only about 9 340 inhabitants (2022) which makes it a small community.² Near the Haparanda Prison you will find a church, school, cemetery and many houses. The facility is accessible by public transport, but since most residents are from Stockholm, it takes a very long time to get here.

Each resident used to have their own bedroom, but since the expansion and overcrowding of the facility, this is no longer the case. So some residents have their own bedroom and others have a shared bedroom. The facility also has a shared kitchen, library, sauna and space for organizing education, woodworking and sports. There is no shared garden or living room. Haparanda Prison has an industrial look and a lack of decoration makes it not feel homely.

Interaction with the community:

Since residents are not allowed to leave Haparanda Prison, there is no interaction between the residents and the community. The only exception is the carpentry shop that the prison has. In this store, people can buy many things, such as furniture, or place orders.

Haparanda prison

Founded: 1888

Capacity: 56

Security level: Medium

Nearest city/town: Haparanda (Sweden)

Nature of interaction: Visited by RESCALED (18/01/2023)

Publicity/ read more

- About Haparanda prison at the official website of Kriminalvården (Swedish Prison and Probation Service):

Anstalten Haparanda #kriminalvarden. (n.d.). *Kriminalvården*. Retrieved August 15th, 2023, from <https://www.kriminalvarden.se/kontakt/hitta-till-oss/verksamhet/anstalt/haparanda/#kontakt>

²Haparanda (Municipality, Norrbotten, Sweden) - Population statistics, charts, map and location. (2022). City population. Retrieved August 15th, 2023, from https://citypopulation.de/en/sweden/admin/norrbotten/2583__haparanda/