

# Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment; a follow-up

## Summary

The present literature review is a follow-up to 'Effectiveness of correctional treatment; a literature survey' by the author, published in 2000. It is an update of the international literature on the effectiveness of correctional programs in general as well as of programs for sexual and violent offenders. For the Netherlands the review is focused on programs and therapies for sexual and violent offenders, and their outcomes. A special effort was made to find results of research on effectiveness of programs for ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. As the Netherlands are considering piloting a Reasoning and rehabilitation (R&R) programme, research results of evaluations in European countries are reviewed.

As the present update follows scarcely a year after the previous one, there is little news in the general literature on program effectiveness: cognitive behavioural programs seem to be the most successful. This also seems to be the case for programs for sexual offenders, but the results are not as conclusive. Sexual offenders are quite a diverse group, so the programs should also address different needs. There is quite a wealth of literature on cognitive-behavioural programs for sexual offenders. In England and Scotland programs have been implemented in prisons.

In the Netherlands programs have been introduced that are modelled on the North-American ones (including targets as empathy for victims, cognitive distortions, denial or minimisation and relapse prevention strategies). Programs vary: some are short-term, others long-term. Some are for juveniles, others for adult offenders. Some are given in the community, others are given in maximum security hospitals for mentally disordered offenders (offenders 'detained at the government's pleasure'). Up till now only one prison has provided treatment. A working group is looking into more possibilities in prisons. There has been little research on these programs and none on the effect of treatment on recidivism. There has been research on recidivism of offenders detained at the government's pleasure.

The literature on treatment effects for violent offenders is quite inconclusive. In the Netherlands there are no programs specifically designed for violent offenders: some programs have a component directed at strengthening aggression control. Maximum security hospitals have therapies for violent offenders with mental disorders. There has been no research on recidivism outcome.

One forensic institution (where treatment is provided in the community: De Waag) conducts in-house evaluation research; the Van der Hoeven Clinic (a maximum security hospital) is doing research on treatment effectiveness. No specific literature on the effectiveness of correctional programs for sexual and violent offenders of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands was found.

Research results on R&R or on R&R-based programs in England, given by the probation service are positive. Results of recidivism research for the programme in prison are positive, but are very tentative. In the Scandinavian countries research results on treatment effects are positive. There are no recidivism results yet, as the period after implementation of the programme is too short.

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## Effectiviteit van sanctieprogramma's: bouwstenen voor een toetsingskader

*E.M.Th. Beenackers*

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