Universität Basel

Publication

Perceptions of collective and other unjust punishment in Swiss prisons: a qualitative exploration.

This paper aims to describe and analyse Swiss prisoners' and experts' views on collective punishment, the practice where a group is punished for one person's transgression.; A series of qualitative interviews with prisoners and stakeholders are reported following thematic analysis.; Despite being forbidden by the Geneva Convention and other international instruments, participants from this study expressed the view that collective punishment continues to be practiced in some form in prisons in Switzerland, violating the rights of prisoners via unjust and arbitrary decision-making, unjust rules, inequalities in prison structures and continuation of incarceration based on the behaviour of others. Families can also be both victims and vectors of collective punishment, and prolonging the detention of prisoners who would otherwise have been released because of rare high-profile cases of reoffending can also be considered a form of collective punishment.; These significant findings suggest that collective punishment in various forms continues to be used in Swiss prisons.