



FINDING EDUCATION FOR FEMALE INMATES

What I learned about myself:

- ▶ **“I learned that I subconsciously hurt people with the way I communicate. That I don’t always have to fight but that I can give compliments. To listen more carefully to others.”**
 - ▶ **“That I want to study more”**
- ▶ **“How I handle conflict, about my own bodylanguage, that I usually resort to negotiating”**

Fast forward

- ▶ FEFI Family
- ▶ Female vs male
- ▶ FAQ
- ▶ Findings from FEFI
- ▶ Figuring out the FEFI experiment
- ▶ Fabulous FEFI
- ▶ Faults
- ▶ Future
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FEFI Family

- ▶ **Gruntvig project 2013-2015**
- ▶ **Working packages**
 - Q1 & Q2, building, analysis
 - Experimentation
- ▶ **Partners: Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, France, Italy, Malta and Turkey.**



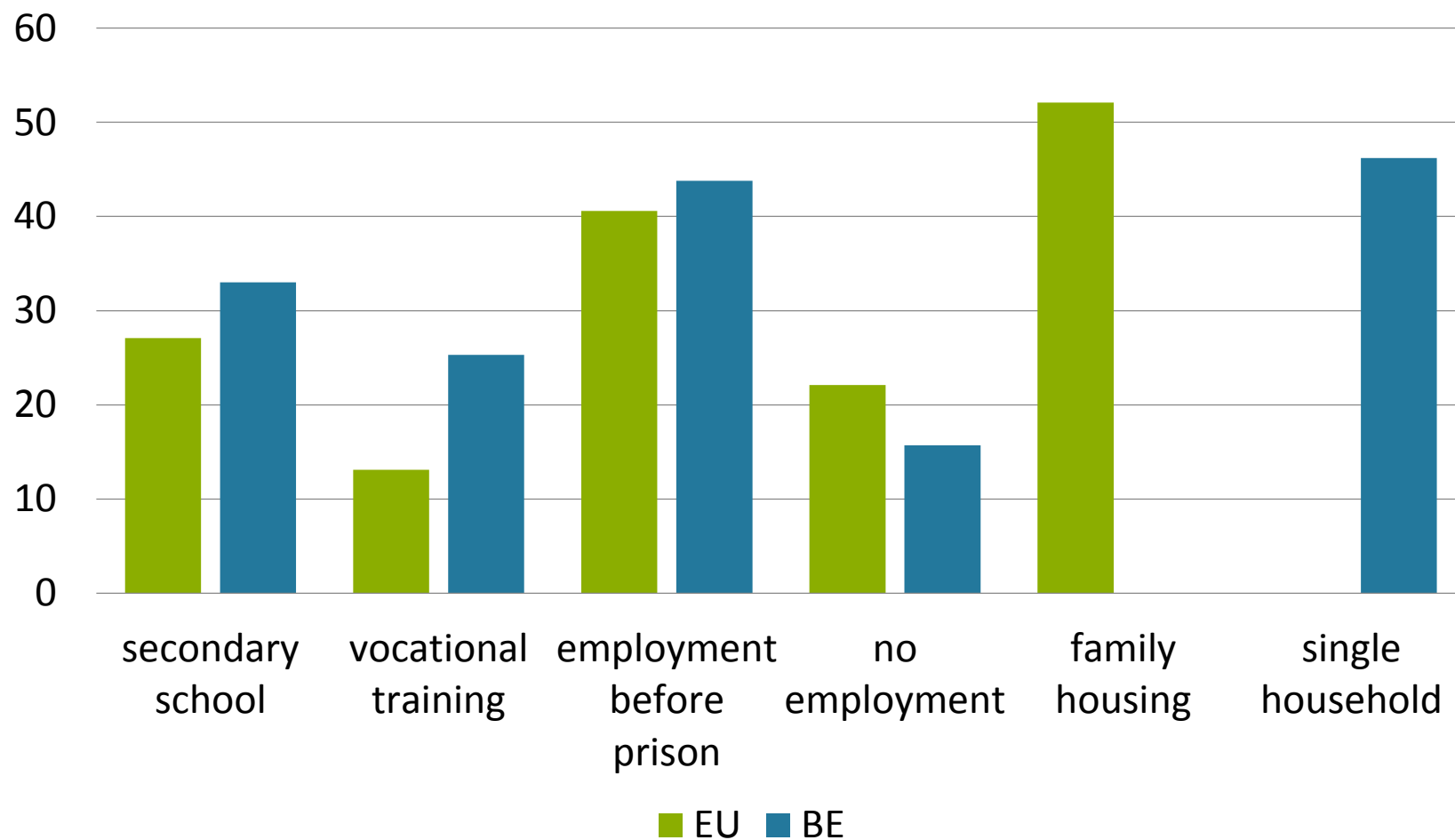
Female vs male

- ▶ **Women in prison are a underrepresented group due to their small number (3 to 7%) of the total prison population in all of the partners countries.**
- ▶ **The project aims to improve and increase participation in lifelong learning by female prisoners who are an integral component of a vulnerable and disadvantaged group - a socially stigmatized group, as well as prisoners and as women.**
- ▶ **Belgium: women constitute about 4% of prison population**

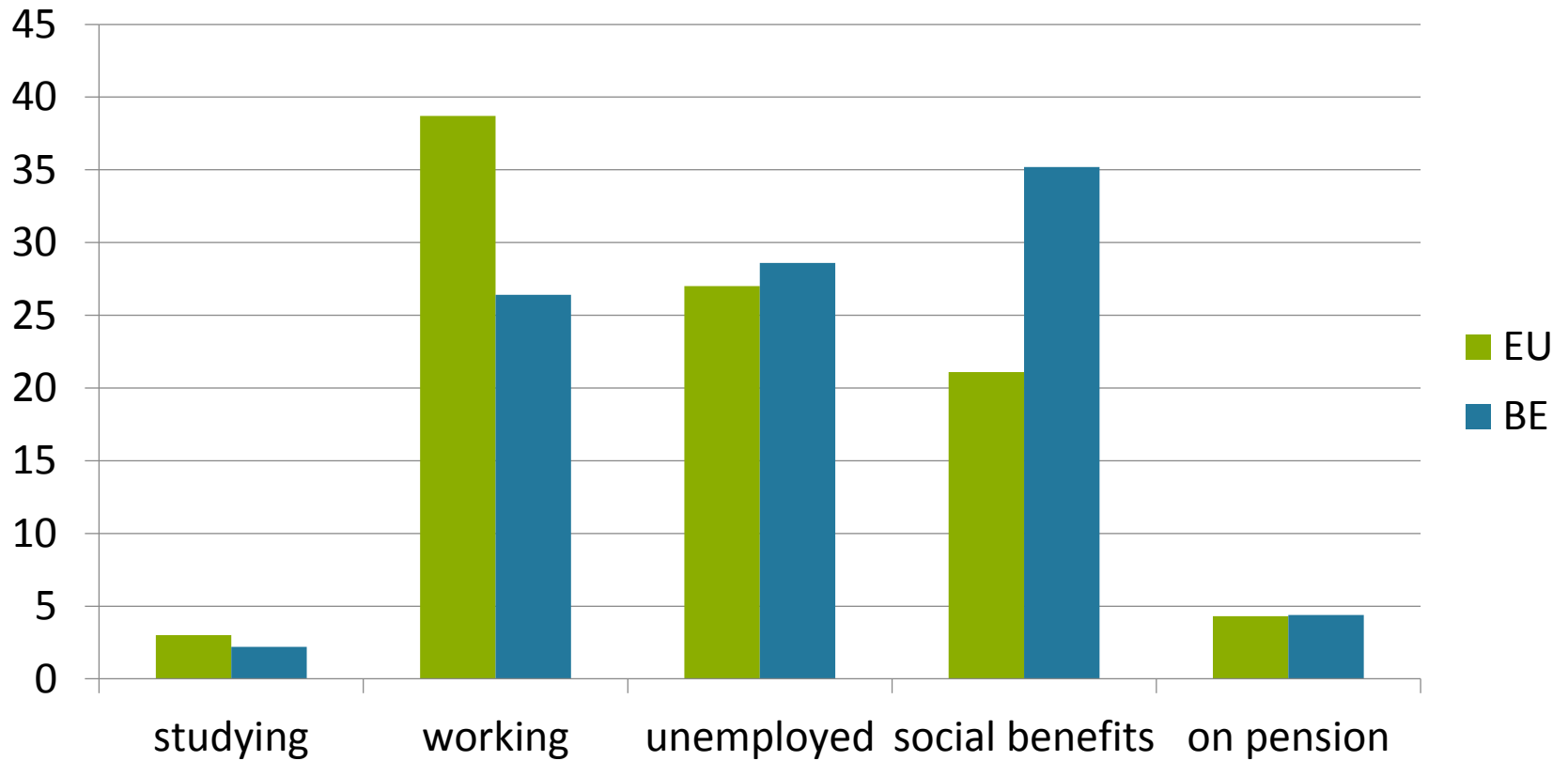
FAQ – Q1 and Q2

- ▶ **440 female inmates and 134 staff were interviewed**
- ▶ **Q1: female inmates in Belgian prisons: 89 responses**
- ▶ **Q2: staff in Belgian prisons: 25 responses**

Q1 results compared (in %)



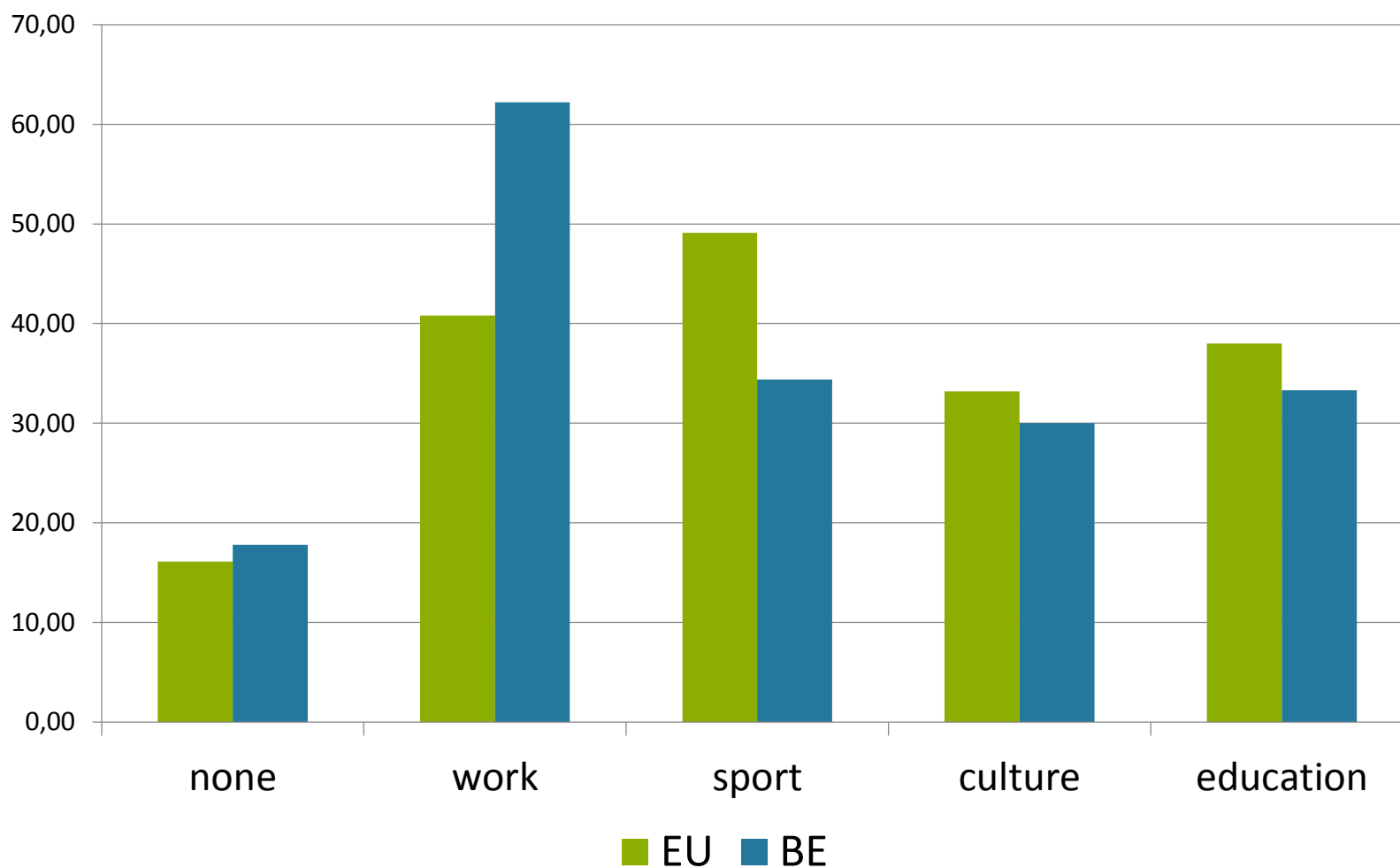
Source of income before detention %



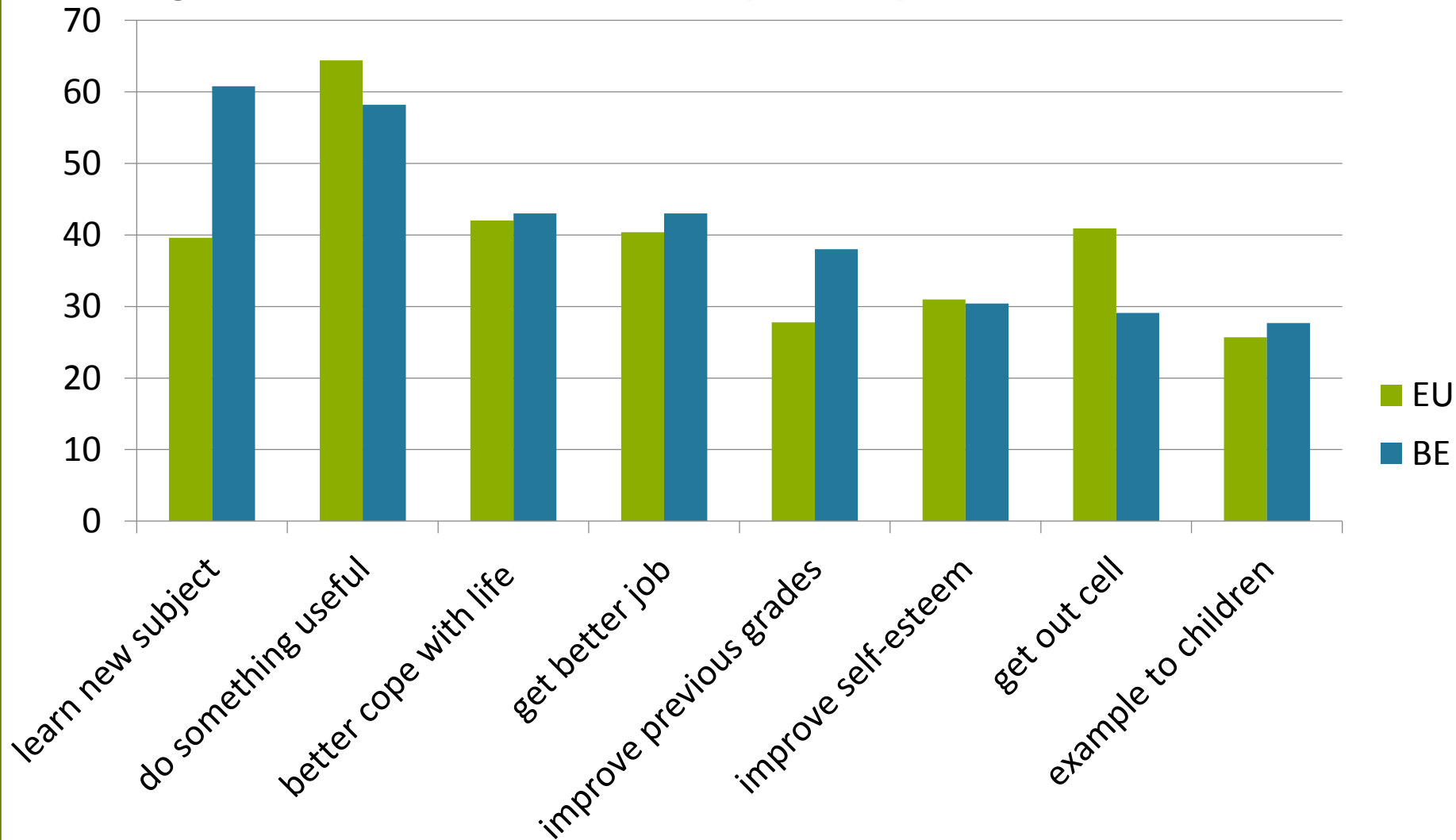
Violence, sentences, needs at arrival

- ▶ Violent background, numbers in Belgium are overall higher than EU average.
- ▶ “I have not experienced any violence”: BE 27% - EU 35%
- ▶ Number of previous prison sentences = same: first 65,5%
- ▶ Most needed help at arrival in prison:
 - Health/mental care
 - Substance intervention
 - Employment

Participation in prison activities or programs (in %)



Reasons for deciding to participate in prison education (in %)



“What motivates me to study?”

- ▶ **Thought of a better life (number one reason)**

 - 53% BE

 - 52,1% EU

- ▶ **Other motivators: family, change of environment, supportive person (mentor), other, nothing.**

- ▶ **Reasons not to participate:**

 - I prefer to work 40% BE - 29,6% EU

 - I am not interested in getting an education in prison 25,7% BE – 28,1% EU

Q2 results

- ▶ **What reasons do you think motivate female inmates to participate in activities?**
 - Length of time in prison
 - Content of the activity
 - Potential of the positive results/possibilities
 - Easy access
 - Small group
 - Increase low self-esteem

Q2 results

- ▶ **What reasons do you think demotivate female inmates to participate in activities?**
 - In conflict with walking
 - Fear of gossip
 - Low self-esteem

Findings from FEFI

- ▶ **Statistics alone have no meaning**
- ▶ **When we first got the results from Q1 en Q2, we mostly saw a need for:**
 - Formal education
 - Sports
 - (small) group activity
 - Individual activity
 - Low self-esteem
 - After working hours
- ▶ **How did we combine these elements?**

Figuring out the FEFI experiment

- ▶ Enhance self-esteem: choose a formal lesson plan
- ▶ Create security by combining individual and group sessions
- ▶ Not just theory, make it practical: link with sports lessons
- ▶ Keep it small: few sessions, small group
- ▶ Bring lessons closer to the cells: individual sessions

“The promotion of self-knowledge and self-esteem in women is particularly important”

SPS strategy for the management of women in custody

Enhance self-esteem: choose a formal curriculum

Find a partner:



Find a curriculum: communications training

- Introduction: Cooperation without communication
- Communication, body language
- Feedback, giving and receiving compliments
- Conflict: differing opinions, discussion and fighting
- Behavioral styles
- Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination
- Evaluation of the project

Create more security

- ▶ **Peer pressure**
- ▶ **Symbiotic relationships**
- ▶ **Best friends one day, enemies the next**
- ▶ **Telling secrets – fear of gossip**

- ▶ **Creating a space where teacher and student can talk ‘in private’**
 - How are you
 - Feedback on last lesson
 - Did you make your home work
 - Do you have questions
 - This is what we will work on this week.

Not just theory, make it practical

- ▶ **Sports teacher participated during the last 20 minutes of the theoretical lesson and explained the link with the sports lesson of the day**
- ▶ **CBE teacher observes during sports lessons the behavior of students**
 - Did they learn from theory and exercises in class?
 - Can they put what they learned to practice

Keep it small: few sessions, small group

- ▶ **Places in the experiment vs total participants**
- ▶ **Brugge: 10 places, hand picked and motivated by prison director and education coordinator.**
 - Target: 6
 - Started with: 9 - ended with: 5
 - Only 1 person attended all 5 sessions
- ▶ **Hasselt: participants where hand picked and motivated by social services, prison director and prison staf in order to form a good group**
 - Started with 5 – 4 attended

			Session 1 21/05	Session 2 28/05	Session 3 03/03	Session 4 10/06	Session 5 17/06		
	S C	1989		Transfer to other prison					
1	I F	1987	?		Sanction				
2	K N	1986		only sports lesson					
3	V P	1975	Visitor				Sick*	*when visisted in cell she is in bed and seems genuinely sick	
4	C S	1986				Refused to go *		*because of problems with her partner	
	S S	1986	?	Day outside	?	allready missed to much to continue			
5	D S	1983							
	V T	1981		Sick		Released from prison			
	D S	1975	?	Sick	?	allready missed to much to continue			



Fabulous FEFI

▶ Experimentation

→ Combination education and sports

× Stop the sports lesson to demonstrate a theory again in a realistic situation (Hasselt)

× Make time to practice what was learned in an other setting than the classroom

→ Combination individual sessions and group sessions

× Create a safe place where students can feel secure to talk about their feelings and questions without fear of judgement from peers

Faults

- ▶ **Not enough time to prepare**
- ▶ **Experiment was too short in time, not enough sessions to really see a difference**
- ▶ **In Brugge the combination with sports and the combination with individual sessions was 50 – 50 positively rated in the evaluation by the participants**
- ▶ **Costly**
 - Brugge: we used existing sports lessons to cut costs, meaning the teacher had to deal with participants of existing group and FEFI participants.

Future

- ▶ **Make a detention plan that targets low self-esteem**
 - Establish baseline (test)
 - Make a plan
 - Check with baseline for improvement

- ▶ **In order to increase self-esteem combine theoretical training with ...**
 - Sports
 - Arts and crafts
 - Therapy
 - Work
 - ...

So participants can feel what they learn in practice

Finish

► **More information?**

→ www.euro-cides.eu/FEFI



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