

June 2023, Regarding unlawful detention in Immigration Center Ellebæk

To the members of the Legal Committee

The initiator of this letter, the association Ellebæk Contact Network, has since 2019 visited detainees in the Ellebæk Immigration Center, through which we have compiled a systematic documentation of the conditions in the center. In March 2020, we sent an open letter to the Danish Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee, presenting our criticism of the highly worrying conditions at the Immigration Center. The letter was signed by 28 professional lawyers, doctors, human rights organizations and researchers, several of whom also contributed with professional criticism of the Immigration Center, Ellebæk. The occasion was the publication of a report published by the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) in January 2020. The report (2020) stated that the Danish state, through the practice in Ellebæk, where administrative detainees are held in prison-like conditions, is practicing practices in violation of international law (cf. CPT report paragraph 117, p. 55). Our letter (2020) supplemented the criticism with 21 specific recommendations to improve conditions in Ellebæk.

We hereby present new documentation, collected in the period May 2020 to January 2023 (Appendix A), and clarify that the points of criticism from the CPT (2020), as well as our letter (2020), remain relevant. In continuation of this new documentation, we, Ellebæk Contact Network and co-signatories, request that the members of the Legal Affairs Committee respond to the material presented.

Below, we supplement the documentation with further description of four points of criticism, all of which demonstrate wrongdoing and are of great concern.

Lack of investigations

In Ellebæk, a large number of torture survivors are detained without investigation, which is strongly criticized by the CPT and may also be in violation of the UN Convention against Torture. In addition, we document that victims of human trafficking are detained without investigation, which is also criticized by the CPT. A majority of the inmates in Ellebæk experience serious challenges with their mental and/or physical health. According to the CPT, mental and physical health assessments should be a procedure prior to detention. It is our demand that automatic assessments are carried out upon arrival at Ellebæk in order to stop unlawful detention of traumatized persons.

Serious deterioration of health

The length of detention in Ellebæk is crucial to the health and well-being of the inmates. Detention can last up to 18 months with the risk of extension on a new basis. In all the cases we have documented, we see that the inmates' physical and mental health deteriorates significantly over time. Physically, with a worrying number developing new diseases and disorders and then not receiving the necessary treatment. Mentally, with high levels of documented anxiety, depression, self-harm and psychosis directly related to the experience of being incarcerated.

Danish research has shown that prolonged uncertainty and restrictions on individual freedom have a massive negative impact on people's well-being in the Danish asylum system (Appendix B). Accordingly, we state that it is the detention itself that causes harm to health and that, on this basis, all undue prolongation of administrative detention and the use of "motivational enhancement measures" should be avoided. Amnesty Denmark is currently conducting a study on the aggravating effects of

We look forward to the outcome of the study and expect it to further disprove the impact of these motivational measures.

Poor physical and mental health

Detainees in Ellebæk experience limited access to proper treatment for mental and physical disorders. Our documentation shows that inmates - who are detained in Ellebæk despite serious health problems due to a lack of assessment - are not offered the right medication. According to our documentation, a majority of inmates are medicated - e.g. with antidepressants, antipsychotics and sleeping pills - but without being offered additional assessment, guidance or treatment from professionals. If the inmate's condition deteriorates to such an extent that the staff assesses that hospitalization is required, adequate treatment can be offered at a psychiatric ward or hospital. As the guards are trained prison guards, their professionalism should not be considered sufficient to make these assessments.

Poor conditions for processing cases

A crucial difference between a regular Danish prison and Ellebæk is that if you serve your sentence in a prison, you count *down the days until* release; in Ellebæk, you count *up the days*. The detention framework is therefore similar to the standard of pre-trial detention, where your case is heard in court every four weeks, resulting in a large - and unnecessary - amount of uncertainty and stress.

For persons deprived of their liberty in Ellebæk, legal practice takes place via video. However, it is usually only the detainee who is on video, where the judge, prosecutor and defense lawyer in most cases are gathered in the physical courtroom. The CPT (2020) criticizes that a significant number of detainees lack sufficient information about their rights during detention. In line with this criticism, we in the network have documented that some detainees have not been informed of the name and contact details of their lawyer. We find this very disturbing. Other detainees find that it can be difficult to get in touch with their lawyers, which risks prolonging their detention.

Final

Despite the fact that the inmates are administratively deprived of their liberty, Ellebæk is run by the Danish Prison and Probation Service as a prison. Here, prison guards, solitary confinement cells, pay phones, work at DKK 11 per hour, prison food, surveillance, miserable facilities and limited visiting opportunities form the framework for the non-criminal inmates. According to the CPT (2020), the conditions in the Immigration Center are *unacceptable* (cf. the report, para. 113, pp. 53-54) and potentially *degrading* (ibid. para. 101, p. 49; 151, p. 66).

As civil society actors, we feel obliged to share our knowledge and concerns with you in the Danish Parliament. We expect a reaction from the committee to the evidence presented (Appendix A). We demand that real action is taken to stop the unlawful conditions in the immigration center.

We distance ourselves from the conditions for detainees in Ellebæk and strongly disagree with the use of so-called "motivational measures". We learn that the conditions in Ellebæk risk having a deteriorating effect on the physical and mental health of the detainees in the long term, and we demand that a critical position be taken on the legitimacy and operation of the Immigration Center.

Signed by

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ANONYMOUS DOCUMENTATION ELLEBÆK per 14. APRIL 2020

Introduction

Since April 2019, Ellebæk Contact Network has visited 18 people in Ellebæk and been in contact with many more. We have visited people individually and provided support, care and practical help. The detainees we have visited come from 10 different countries and include 2 women and 16 men. See detailed description under point 2, "Documentation".

During the visits, we have kept a journal of our conversations with the detainees. This documentation has given us an insight into the conditions in Ellebæk as experienced by the detainees and us who visit them. To a large extent, it has been the detainees who have set the agenda in the conversations.

In the following, we first outline the overall problems we have encountered. The first chapter is a summary of some of the most central problems we have identified in connection with our contact with the detainees in Ellebæk. Chapter 2 provides detailed documentation in the form of selected examples to support the summaries in Chapter 1.

Table of contents

1. Recap of key issues in documentation	2
1.1 Irregularities in the processing of applications for visitor permits (item 2.1)	2
1.2 Deteriorating physical and mental health among detainees (sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.12)	2
1.3 Suspicion of torture victims in Ellebæk and lack of torture investigation (section 2.4)	3
1.4 Abuse of power, physical and psychological violence committed by Prison and Probation Service guards (item 2.5)	3
1.5 Police treatment of detainees and the circumstances surrounding deportations from Ellebæk (sections 2.6 and 2.7)	3
1.6 Distrust of lawyers and the legal system and lack of insight into and understanding of their own case among people deprived of their liberty (sections 2.8 and 2.9)	3
1.7 Criticizable use of solitary confinement (section 2.10)	4
1.8 Lack of communication between detainees (points 2.11 and 2.8)	4
1.9 Networking and connecting with the outside world (points 2.14 and 2.12)	4
2. Documentations	4
2.1 Visit authorization process	Error! Bookmark is not defined.
2.2 Mental health	6
2.3 Physical health	8
2.4 Signs of torture	9
2.5 Guard behavior	9

2.6 Police behavior	11
2.7 Circumstances of arrests	11
2.8 Experiences with lawyers	13
2.9 Deportation processes	14
2.10 Solitary confinement	14
2.11 Experience with government handling of files/documents	15
2.12 Stories about everyday life	15
2.13 Activity hours	17
2.14 Networks in Denmark and relationships with other detainees	17
2.15 Other comments on the situation in Ellebæk during COVID-19	17

1. Recap of key issues in documentation

1.1 Irregularities in the processing of applications for visitor permits (item 2.1)

We have experienced very irregular processing of applications for visitor permits. In some cases, approval is granted within 5 working days, thus following the Danish Prison and Probation Service's own response deadline. Just under half of the permits have either not been approved or have had an extended process that has required both us and the detainee to reiterate the processing of the application several times. Just as the guidelines for the visitor permit process require that it is the detainee who informs the administration about the meeting after the permit has been approved, which is why the detainee must once again contact the contact person and the administration to arrange the meeting. It is also a challenge for relatives outside Ellebæk who wish to visit their friends and family in Ellebæk. This is a problem as it creates a barrier to receiving visits, which contributes to further isolation of the detainees. The demanding and often lengthy application process can result in detainees not receiving a visit during the time they spend in Ellebæk. Furthermore, during the process, the detainee may lose motivation, confidence that the system works and faith that the contact person wants to meet them. In our experience, resourcefulness and insight into Danish bureaucracy is an advantage when it comes to obtaining a visitor's permit, which creates an imbalance in terms of who has the opportunity to receive a visit and who has the opportunity to gain access to Ellebæk.

1.2 Deteriorating physical and mental health among detainees (sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.5 and 2.12)

A majority of the detainees in Ellebæk show signs of depression, paranoia, deep distrust and difficulty concentrating, and express this themselves. Many are treated with psychotropic drugs, such as sleeping pills. There are examples of detainees who believe that conditions in Ellebæk are kept secret from the Danish population. Several report that they have lost a lot of weight after arriving at Ellebæk due to lack of appetite and poor diet. Often, the detainees themselves express concern that their stay in Ellebæk affects their mental health, highlighting in particular the lack of opportunity to move and stay active. Many also say,

how harsh treatment from security guards can contribute to paranoia, depression and a lack of trust in the system and professionals in general.

Suicide and suicidal thoughts are often associated with shame and have been removed from the documentation for the sake of the detainees to further ensure anonymity. However, at least 3 out of the 18 detainees that the network has been in contact with have told us that they have thought about taking their own lives after being incarcerated in Ellebæk. One told the staff at Ellebæk about his suicidal thoughts, to which they responded by placing him in solitary confinement for 19 days.

There is no systematic health check at the beginning of detention. Some detainees report that they have not been able to access treatment for physical and mental health problems.

1.3 Suspicion of torture victims in Ellebæk and lack of torture investigation (section 2.4)

Some of the detainees tell us that they have been mistreated or tortured in their country of origin. No systematic torture investigations are carried out at Ellebæk, and the detainees are not informed about the UN Convention against Torture or the European Convention against Torture, which protects victims of torture in detention, to which Denmark is a signatory¹.

1.4 Abuse of power, physical and psychological violence committed by Prison and Probation Service guards (item 2.5)

As visitors, we primarily encounter friendly and competent guards. However, several detainees have reported physical violence from the guards against themselves or others. In addition, several detainees point out that there is a general atmosphere of psychological violence. There are examples of threats from guards against the detainees, concealment of suicide, denial of meals, shortening of time intervals for staying in the yard and deliberately maintaining an unsafe atmosphere. For example, a guard is quoted by a detainee as saying "What happens in Ellebæk, stays in Ellebæk."

1.5 Police treatment of detainees and the circumstances surrounding deportations from Ellebæk (sections 2.6 and 2.7)

Most detainees report humiliating treatment by the police, which manifests itself in both physical and psychological violence, including when the police regularly try to pressure detainees to cooperate. In this context, there are examples of the police not following medical instructions and attempting to forcibly deport people with health problems. The police have given false information about detainees' asylum cases and made jokes about deportations in front of detainees. Most deportations are unannounced and usually at night, which according to several detainees contributes to a state of uncertainty and anxiety as they never know when it will be 'their turn'.

1.6 Distrust of lawyers and the legal system and lack of insight and understanding of their own case among people deprived of their liberty (sections 2.8 and 2.9)

The detainees' relationship with appointed lawyers is generally variable. There are examples of very slow case processing, and some detainees never hear from or meet their lawyer.

¹ "Deprivation of liberty" (Institute for Human Rights, 2012, page 6):

https://menneskeret.dk/files/media/dokumenter/status/2012/status_2012_imr-frihedsberoevelse.pdf

The extent to which detainees are informed of their rights seems to be random, as there is no systematic way of informing them. There are examples of important information not being disclosed to the lawyer due to lack of knowledge of rights, language barriers and general distrust of lawyers and the legal process for time extensions being conducted over video. The deep mistrust that some detainees have of the legal system leads many to believe that the appointed lawyers do not represent the detainees' case.

1.7 Criticizable use of solitary confinement (section 2.10)

There are examples of solitary confinement of detainees for up to 15 days in cases of violent behavior or possession of a mobile phone. There are also examples of solitary confinement for up to one month without the detainee understanding the reasons. There are also examples of detainees who are suspected of suicide or self-harm being forced undressed into an observation cell without access to clean clothes or a shower. According to the UN, solitary confinement under pressure should be abolished².

1.8 Lack of communication between devices (points 2.11 and 2.8)

There are examples of documents being lost during case processing by police, probation, healthcare professionals and lawyers.

1.9 Networking and connecting with the outside world (points 2.15 and 2.12)

Networking and contact with the outside world is very limited for those in detention. Many of those we visited had no other visitors. Owning your own phone and internet access is not allowed, and payphones are expensive to use. This makes it very difficult to keep in touch with the outside world. Many also experience being denied access to look up numbers on their phone.

2. Documentations

Since we have noted sensitive personal information, we have chosen to anonymize the people by random naming, where each person is named with one letter from the alphabet. Basic information about the people we have visited is that they were born in: Iran, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Morocco, Iraq, Uganda, Somalia, Kuwait, Colombia and Ethiopia. The length of detention of these individuals ranges from 3 weeks to 11 months, with the majority of them being detained for more than 6 months.

2.1 Visitor permit process

Ellebæk Contact Network has applied for a total of 23 visitor permits, of which 18 permits have resulted in visits. The distribution looks like this:

- 12 visit authorizations were approved within 5 business days (A, B, C, H, M, N, P, Q, R, S, V, X).

² "Deprivation of liberty" (Institute for Human Rights, 2016, page 22):
https://menneskeret.dk/sites/menneskeret.dk/files/media/dokumenter/udgivelser/status/2015-16/delrapporter_med_issn/status_2015-16_-_delrapport_om_frihedsberoevelse_-_issn.pdf

- 9 visitor permits were only approved after up to 2 months of waiting time, where follow-up with the Prison and Probation Service administration was necessary (D, E, F, G, J, L, O, T, U).*
- 2 visit authorizations were not approved (I, K).

*Out of the 9 permits, 3 were not used for visits. G and U did not contact us again after the authorization was approved, and O was no longer in Ellebæk.

Re.

D.

It took two months for my visitor's permit to go through. I called Ellebæk and asked about the process. At first I was told that I hadn't applied, but I referred to the email and they checked their system. They saw that they had received the application two months before, but hadn't processed it yet. Only because I called them and asked about it did it go through.

Re.

L.

It took a month and a half to be approved for a visit. When I called Ellebæk a week after sending the visit request, I was told that I had not been approved. I couldn't understand this, so I was forwarded, and forwarded again. With no response. A couple of weeks later, I send another reminder by email. I was told that I had filled out the visit request incorrectly. I hadn't, which I could document, as the visit request had been submitted by email. After that, it took two days to be approved. L also told me that he had had the same problem with a friend who was coming to visit him, who had also not been approved yet.

Re.

F.

After not hearing anything for a week, I called Ellebæk and was told that my application had not yet been processed. When I still hadn't heard anything after a couple of days, I called again and got a new employee who wouldn't look up my application in the system. He refused despite my insistence and informed him that I had previously spoken to a colleague who could easily find my application by looking up F's date of birth. I also mentioned several times that F was due to be sent to Italy on Friday (the interview was on Monday) and that I would love to see her beforehand. After a long chat, he hung up, to no avail. The next day, I called again and got through to an employee who looked up my application and said that it hadn't gone through the system. He made sure to forward it and the same day (Tuesday), I received my visitor's permit.

Re.

G.

I applied for a visitor's permit via email. It took a month for the authorization to go through. I called twice, both times the staff confirmed that they had received the application but that it had still not been processed. They said they would pass it on and ask for it to be processed as soon as possible. Three weeks after the second call, I still hadn't received a response. I then called 4 times over the course of two days, insisting that it be dealt with. I was told to call back three times because none of the people I reached "knew what they were doing". Finally, I got through to someone who would look into it right away. The person answered my email and wrote: "Several people have tried to enlarge your image. You can, but the text cannot be read. Could you please take a new image and attach it to the email instead?" (a picture of the visitor permit application taken with my phone). None of the people who had encountered the problem contacted me by replying to my email. After receiving this email, I sent a new image of my application and the application went through the next day. I have sent the correspondence to our email. I never heard from G.

Re.

I.

My visitor's permit never went through. I applied via e-Boks, and the next day I received an unsolicited call from the Prison and Probation Service saying that I. was not in Ellebæk. I then called Ellebæk and received

same message that I. is not in Ellebæk. I then talk to the others in the Contact Network about the detainee, who called again from Ellebæk and said that he was still in Ellebæk and would like a visit. I called again, but the Prison and Probation Service employee insisted that the person in question was not an inmate. I never managed to visit, and you were subsequently released to Kærshovedgård after about 5 months in Ellebæk.

Re.

J.

I applied on 11/12/19. In early January 2020, I got a call from L (J.'s roomie who helped him a lot) who did not understand where "I was". They hadn't realized that they had to contact me themselves once the permit had gone through. It turned out that it was approved a few days after the application. So, due to confusion/ignorance from the detainees about the process, it took two months before I came in to visit J.

Re.

K.

I applied via email on 11.12.2019. I followed up a little over a week later, where I encountered clumsy guards who sent me on and on and would not comment on whether I was approved or not. When I finally got through to a guard who would look up my application a month and a half later, I was told that K was no longer in Ellebæk.

Re.

E.

I applied by email, but both times my visitor permits were 'lost'. When they were resent after a conversation with the staff at Ellebæk, they were approved the same day.

Re.

T.

I heard nothing from T for 8 days after applying. I called Ellebæk and was told that I had been approved, but that they would not give my phone number to T because it was against the regulations (which I know is not true). I experienced the guard as aggressive and accusatory, which he also called shortly after our first conversation and apologized for, and then I was able to set up an appointment with T through him. It turned out that the appointment was made without T's consent and without informing him, and he was therefore very surprised and confused when he was brought in for our 'appointment'.

Re.

U.

and

O.

I applied for both visitor permits via email. 7 days later I called Ellebæk as I still hadn't heard anything. I got hold of someone who didn't know anything about the visitation permit process, who told me to call back later that day. There, I got a new person who said that they couldn't see the application to visit U. in the system. They could see the application to visit O, but that it was "passively" in the system, i.e. that they had not proceeded with it. The person said they would look into it and get back to us. Fifteen minutes later, the person called back and said that they had found the application for U and that both applications were now approved.

2.2 Mental health

Re.

N.

General about N: Has a poor appetite and talks openly about not wanting to overeat or eat unhealthy food. He only eats a little of the food I bring to share and says he exercises about 3 hours every day. He focuses a lot on staying healthy and talks about how he uses it as a distraction. N has a constant hand tremor. He distrusts the system, especially his lawyer. He is plagued by recurring nightmares.

Re.

B.

B is generally perceived as a very strong and resilient person. B sometimes showed apathy for his situation during the visits over the 6 months I visited him. However, his willingness to visit must be a sign of energy in comparison to many others. B also tells me that he tries to create routines, e.g. watching TV, attending church, classes, etc. Furthermore, he is a great resource and support for the other detainees in Ellebæk.

Regarding A.

I visit A shortly after a suicide on June 4, 2019 in Ellebæk. A was the first to find the deceased when the guards decided to send him into the cell that the deceased had tried to keep closed.

When I meet A about two weeks after the incident, he is very upset. He speaks incoherently, telling me about the sight that met him behind the door where the detainee had hanged himself. He breaks down crying several times and gets up and sits down several times during the conversation. A. also talks about the mistreatment he experienced back in his home country and about his family. I suspect that he has been subjected to torture and send a request for a torture investigation to A's lawyer. However, A is released shortly afterwards and the torture investigation was not carried out. I ask A if he wants to talk to a psychologist and whether he has been offered this. He replies that he does not know what he needs a psychologist for.

In general, A appears to be in great pain and frustration. Even after his release, when I stay in contact with A, he often appears incoherent in his speech. He jumps from topic to topic and seems to have difficulty concentrating and following a conversation and listening to the message I am trying to convey.

More than half a year after his release from Ellebæk, where A lives at Kærshovedgård, he still seems mentally unwell. A is often tearful, and at meetings with his lawyer, when the lawyer asks critical questions, A starts crying, and he also has to be 'regulated' by the interpreter to answer questions specifically and stop his flow of speech. The lawyer asks about A's health, to which A replies that he is mentally unwell. The lawyer tells him that he will obtain his medical records.

Re.

J.

J expresses a need to see a psychologist, even though "in my country, no psychology". After I get to know him, he tells me that he would like to see a psychologist, but that instead he just takes pills. He informs me that many people in Ellebæk are given sleeping pills.

Re.

S.

S's mental health appears to be good. He is not taking any medication. He has trauma from his childhood and youth, but he seems mentally stable and healthy. He is of that opinion himself. He distrusts the system.

Regarding.

C

I visited C once, but after that he declined further visits because it was too hard for him. He said the same to his relative, who also visited him. I chose to send letters to C, after which we set up a correspondence. In the letters, C tells me that he still can't cope with visitors and repeats that he is having a hard time and therefore opts out of all visits. C is certain that he is being sent home to die and writes that nothing matters anymore. I suggest that he asks for psychological help. C writes that after telling a guard that he didn't want to live, he was put in isolation for 19 days. C was not offered psychological counseling or conversations with a professional.

Re. **Q.**
Q reports that he has trouble sleeping in Ellebæk and takes sleeping medication daily.

Re. **V.**
After 5 months in Ellebæk, V said he was tired and discouraged.

Re. **P.**
P complains about the system. He is upset that no one takes the time to talk to him or explain the circumstances of his detention. He doesn't understand why he has to be there. He feels ridiculed by guards and the system and is very concerned about the conditions in Ellebæk. Furthermore, he emphasizes that he has repeatedly made it clear to the court that he will not sign the repatriation agreement as it would mean certain death. He suspects that they are breaking him down mentally so that he signs the agreement.

2.3 Physical health

Re. **N.**
N says that he has lost seven kilos in the first two months in Ellebæk (previously 75 kg, now 68).

Re. **D.**
After the forced hospitalization (where the police tried to trace cocaine in him), D has been ill and in poor health.

Re. **Q.**
Q takes medication morning and evening. Q has a lot of pain around his lost eye and therefore takes strong medication. Since his detention, he has had problems with his blood pressure and heart rate. The first time the police try to deport him and he resists, he goes to the hospital where they notice that his blood pressure is extremely high. The second time the police try to deport him, he resists and the pilot demands that he be taken off the plane, and he is also sent to the hospital. The doctor assesses that his heart is too weak for him to get on a plane. In addition, the doctor discovers that Q has a stomach ulcer. Q has experienced several times that a doctor has given him the impression that he can have an eye operation to get an artificial eye, but this has subsequently been withdrawn with the explanation that he first needs a residence permit. Q is still in doubt about the eligibility for surgery as he has been given various explanations.

Re. **J.**
J has ulcers on his back after political imprisonment in Sri Lanka for 9 months. J also has heart problems. High cholesterol levels. Has blood tests taken at Vestre Prison Hospital, it seems that all detainees have blood tests taken. Distances himself from smoking.

Re. **S.**
S's physical health is good. He does strength training every day in his room and rejects drugs and smoking.

Re. **V.**
V has increasing vision problems in one eye. He has been to the doctor, but they have not been able to help him, nor can they send him to a specialist/ophthalmologist.

Re.

C.

C says he has trouble sleeping, but keeps himself physically active by doing strength training with someone in his department.

Regarding X.

X says that he has lost a lot of weight since he came to Ellebæk due to poor diet and is frustrated that his body doesn't feel healthy/fast.

Re.

P.

P has lost over ten kilos in the three to four months he has been in detention. He misses time and opportunities for exercise and walking.

2.4 Signs of torture

Re.

N.

General: Since the first visit, N has mentioned several times that he has been beaten during his imprisonment in Iran. The imprisonment lasted 81 days, and he tells of being beaten around the crotch and being doused with water for a long time. Subsequent email sent to lawyer with a request to contact Amnesty's medical group for a torture investigation. N would like an examination by Amnesty's doctors.

Re.

A.

A has been tortured by his family members in his home country. I send my concerns about this to A's lawyer, but as A is released shortly afterwards, a torture investigation is never carried out.

Re.

Q.

Q has been tortured in Nigeria, where he had an eye removed. Q is involved with IPOB (Indigeneous People of Biafra), which the Nigerian government has placed on the terrorist list. Q's sister was murdered after Q hid in her home. On 05/03-2020, I sent an email to Q's lawyer asking him to contact Amnesty's medical group for a torture investigation.

Re.

J.

J has wounds on his back after being tortured in prison in Sri Lanka, where he was held as a political prisoner for 9 months. He did not know that this information was important for his legal process and it was only because I became aware of this information that his lawyer has become aware of this and has taken pictures of his back.

2.5 Guards'

behavior Regarding

D.

The first time I visited D, I was asked to leave 12 min. before visiting time was officially over. We weren't done talking, but the guard thought I had to be out of the building by 7.45pm and that there was no way I could get out in 5 minutes.

Re.

J.

I have visited J several times. Usually it goes well, and J has gotten help from his roommate to book appointments. When the roommate was transferred to Sandholm, J had booked my visiting

time "wrong" without help, and when I went up there to visit him on 19/2/20, there was no booking in the system. I tried to explain to the guards that I had arranged a meeting with J for that afternoon, but to no avail. Ellebæk was completely quiet and there was plenty of room in the visiting rooms, but after several attempts and phone calls out in the parking lot with a confused J, I had to leave Ellebæk exhausted - without being allowed to see him. I speak to the supervisor, who can be quoted as saying "Now I've explained to him how to book an appointment, I'm not supposed to be able to say who told him in the first place". It seems that it is random how/if the detainees are properly introduced to the visiting scheme.

Re.

P.

The first time I visited P, I brought my bag into the meeting. It went through a security check and then an item from my bag disappeared. The item was my umbrella key for my bike and both guards knew I was cycling back and forth. It took me a month to get it back. Despite this, P and I are on good terms with the guards.

Regarding C.

C tells a guard that he doesn't want to live, after which three guards arrive half an hour later and take him to the isolation cell. C writes that it was a violent experience: They stripped him naked and forced him down (wearing only underwear) on the floor, where they held him for ten minutes before taking him to the isolation cell. C was in solitary confinement for 19 days.

Re.

S.

S thinks that the guards are generally arrogant and assertive, which is why he doesn't like them. However, he has not had any directly unpleasant experiences with the guards. It took the guards 15 minutes to bring S to the visiting rooms. I was there at 15:15, got through security and was in the visiting room at 15:20, and S came in at 15:30. So 15 minutes was cut from our visit. That was fine for us, but for a family, those minutes are precious. It's a shame if that's the norm. My own experience with the guards is pleasant. They allowed me to sit with my cell phone out and write down a letter in the lobby of the building with visitor rooms.

Re.

X.

X experienced being physically assaulted by a guard when he asked for help translating something over the phone from inside the prison. He was helped by another guard to report the incident, and although there has been no response, it seems that the complaint, along with an organized hunger strike in his department, has helped the guard's behavior.

Re.

Q.

Q repeatedly experiences that the guards speak to him in Danish, even though he does not speak Danish. When Q has answered back in English, he has again been spoken to in Danish, which he has experienced as degrading.

Regarding B.

B says that some guards are friendly, while others are not. B tells about a guard he spoke well with, but also about another detainee being physically assaulted by a guard for having a cigarette on him inside. In a private conversation after B's release, he says that a guard at Ellebæk once said, "What happens in Ellebæk, stays in Ellebæk". In general, B talks about the conditions in Ellebæk, which are very miserable and characterized by poor treatment by the guards. After a suicide

On June 4, 2019, he says that the guards did not talk about it at all, and that he got the impression that he and the other detainees could die inside Ellebæk without anyone knowing about it. During the visits, B also talks about incidents where guards have beaten other detainees for minor rule violations.

Re. **X.** **and** **V.**
X experienced that much of the staff was replaced and that the treatment of the detainees generally improved during the time when there was increased media attention at Ellebæk (Jan-Feb 2020). However, V did not feel that this was the case when I asked him if he recognized this. He simply says that there is a high turnover of staff and that 'some are good, some are bad'.

During a visit in January 2020, I overheard from the guards: A man has been taken to the hospital after being beaten. At first glance, it sounds like one of the guards did it. "If I'm going to be accused of violence. " says one of the guards in the conversation, after which they talk about the incident. The
However, it's not quite clear what specifically happened.

2.6 Police behavior

Re. **D.**
D says that one day the police suddenly showed up at his home. They had received a tip that he had cocaine and searched him without finding anything. Nor did they find anything in his bag or when they searched his home. Many things were destroyed, including, according to D, his passport (hence the subsequent problems for his stay in Denmark). According to D, he was admitted to hospital and injected with a liquid to test his body for cocaine. No signs of cocaine were found, but there were subsequent health consequences. He has shown me official documents showing that the police had revoked the authorization to search his home. According to Mr. According to D, the police are corrupt and paid by, among others, D's former Danish employer. D also believes that the police deliberately did not take him from Ellebæk to his meeting with the Nigerian Embassy, as they were visiting Copenhagen from Stockholm, and therefore did not succeed in attending the meeting.

Re. **B.**
B says that after his release, he has never received his two phones, which the police confiscated from him upon arrest.

Re. **T.**
T says that the police reacted with indifference when he had all his money stolen from his cell in Ellebæk.

Re. **Q.**
On 12.12 2019, the police told Q that his application for a humanitarian residence permit had been rejected. Q had not been informed by his lawyer. According to Q, he had received a letter in 2017 stating that the humanitarian residence permit process could take 7 months. I get in touch with his lawyer, who informs me that his application for a humanitarian residence permit has not been finalized yet, and therefore the police have been untruthful to Q.

Re. **P.**
P told me about a day when the police arrived at Ellebæk and said that he was now ready to come 'home' to Iraq because he had signed the papers. P asked to speak to the person who had given them the information, but after five minutes the police left again. P does not want to sign his own death warrant, so he has no intention of signing the repatriation papers. P has experienced several times that the police are joking about his deportation.

2.7 Circumstances of arrests

Re.

N.

N was driven directly from Avnstrup, where he lived, to Ellebæk after refusing to go to the Iranian embassy to sign repatriation papers.

Re.

D.

D was arrested on 20.07.2019 due to lack of passport and valid identification/residency in the country.

Re.

B.

B was detained in another EU country to which he had traveled after being refused asylum in Denmark. There he was placed in a deportation center, where he was given the impression that if he cooperated in his return to Denmark, his case would be reopened. However, upon arrival in Denmark, he was immediately arrested and his phone was confiscated by the police. He was first held in Nykøbing Falster prison for three days and then transferred to Ellebæk.

Re.

E.

When E was arrested in a supermarket for stealing fruit, the police discovered that E did not have a valid visa. E says that the police were very violent and E showed me many bruises on both arms. E was mentally fragile and very scared at the time of the arrest, where she said she cried a lot and vomited out of discomfort with the situation. Nevertheless, after the violent arrest, she was placed in detention for 4 days and subsequently transferred to Ellebæk.

Re.

H.

H was arrested in Copenhagen on the 5C bus, where the police came in and asked for his ID papers. They questioned him with an interpreter at Amager station, where they charged him with "illegal residence" in the period June 18 - July 18, 2019 in Denmark. H is not in possession of a passport and his 8-day Schengen visa has expired. H explains that he is persecuted in Uganda and wants to seek asylum. They will not answer his questions about asylum possibilities. They handcuff him and take him to a prison in Copenhagen, where he spends two days before being moved to Ellebæk.

Re.

Q.

Q is met by two police officers at a station (he doesn't know if this was planned). He explained his situation to them. They took him to the police station and checked everything, after which he was taken to Sandholm. Later he came to Ranum asylum center.

Re.

L.

After many years of legal residence in Denmark, L receives a letter in his email inbox stating that his asylum case needs to be reassessed. This means that he needs to be interviewed again in order to assess whether he still has a need for protection. L says that he sees this the day/evening before his asylum interview, and that he is drunk that evening, and therefore shows up for the asylum interview still under the influence of alcohol and very tired, which makes it difficult to complete the interview. L says that he is about to fall asleep several times during the interview. He also says that he is under the influence of alcohol and is very tired and asks for the interview to be moved to another day, which he is refused. Based on this interview, it is assessed that he no longer has a need for protection and must return to Somalia. L contacts his lawyer to appeal the decision and apply for a reopening of his asylum case. Shortly after this, the police come to L's home, at his registered address, and arrest him without notice, put him in custody for one night and then in Ellebæk. The lawyer has applied for a reopening of his case and has also told L that he can expect to be in Ellebæk for about three months, after which they will get an answer to the reopening of his case. The lawyer has also told him that if he does not succeed, the case will be submitted to the European Commission of Human Rights. L has not signed any exit papers.

Re.

J.

J first came to Denmark in 2014 as a political refugee from Sri Lanka. He was held in various asylum centers, including Avnstrup and Thisted, but had his case rejected. He went underground in (anonymized EU country), but had his fingerprints checked and was then sent back to Denmark, stayed with friends underground, but ended up at the police station at Copenhagen Central Station.

2.8 Experiences with lawyers

Re.

D.

D has had several lawyers. He is convinced that the appointed lawyers are not working for their cause, as they receive money from the state and will therefore fight for more deportations. Difficult to explain to him that this does not apply in Denmark and that switching to a private lawyer does not necessarily improve the case.

Re.

B.

After about four months in Ellebæk, B gets a new lawyer. B says that this is the first time he feels that he is being listened to, as the previous lawyers have been so absent that he didn't even know who his lawyer was. However, he also feels that the lawyer unfortunately does not have much power in relation to the police and the judge, and B feels that it seems like a mere formality that they have to go to court every four weeks at all.

Re.

A.

A is assigned a lawyer shortly before his release. After release, the lawyer offers to arrange a meeting about the possibility of reopening A's case. However, A does not have his case files, which is why these must be obtained by the lawyer from the Danish Immigration Service. The first meeting is held on 23.09.2019. The case files are not obtained until 18.12.2019. I reminder the lawyer twice, and the lawyer reminds the Immigration Service at least once.

Re.

H.

H describes 2 lawyers as "police lawyers". H says that during a court hearing, the judge tells him that he should be released from prison because he has been in Ellebæk for too long. According to the judge, he should be moved to Sandholm, but the police refused. Two days before his lawyer arrives at Ellebæk, he is told that he will be deported. In addition, the police state that due to a change in H's caseworker, his time in Ellebæk has been extended.

Re.

J.

I am told by J that he has been in political imprisonment for 9 months in Sri Lanka and has been beaten. The lawyer is not aware of this, so I call the lawyer and tell him. The lawyer takes pictures of J's back as an attachment to the case. As with other detainees, after a while a notion develops that it would help to switch to a private lawyer, that it is because of the lawyer that the case changes rather than the individual's case. It is clear that cultural differences play a role in the assessment of what a state-authorized person means (that it is not necessarily a corrupt person/one who fights on the side of the state to deport), and it proves relevant to explain this to the detainees.

Re.

P.

P does not trust state-authorized lawyers and is considering switching to a private one. He has had a bad experience with a lawyer who has not communicated or visited P. I promised him to look into the possibility of switching lawyers at no cost to him.

Re.

S.

S has never spoken to his lawyer. The lawyer has also never attended a video court hearing. He is considering switching to a private lawyer as he does not trust the appointed lawyers.

Re.

N.

N experiences that his lawyer does not set aside proper time to talk to him prior to court hearings. N feels that the lawyer talks down to the police and judges. N describes that he experiences this as betrayal.

Regarding C

C does not trust his lawyer. At the first visit, C says that the lawyer did not say anything during the video court hearing and that the lawyer told C that there will be more extensions than this one and that the lawyer expects C to be in Ellebæk for up to 5 months. C says that this discouraged him, but later C says that he now understands his lawyer. I encouraged C to tell his lawyer about his concerns. After this, C. and the lawyer had a good working relationship, according to C.

2.9 Deportation processes

Re.

H.

H was deported to another EU country in December 2019. The deportation happened at 05:30. Two days before, H did not know the time of the deportation. This was only because a guard chose to tell him when H asked him. H was told that he would be deported to city A and only found out that it was actually to city B when he was at the airport. It is unclear to what extent H's lengthy detention was due to his reluctance to be sent to another EU country, and to what extent it was due to a lengthy bureaucratic process in relation to the Dublin Regulation (5 months). Dublin Regulation (5 months).

Re.

D.

In the middle of the night he was picked up and taken to the airport. This has been communicated to us by another detainee in Ellebæk.

Re.

Q.

The police have attempted to deport Q twice since he was detained in Ellebæk in October 2019. In the first attempt, the police came unannounced to deport him to Nigeria. Q told them he had too high blood pressure to travel. The police took him to the airport. Q resisted and the police took him to the hospital. The second attempt was a few weeks later, when about five policemen came unannounced. Q was strip-searched in a room in Ellebæk. The police told him that they did this "because he was violent last time". They handcuffed him, they put a belt around his legs and they put a leather helmet on him so he couldn't move his head. The police treated him very harshly during the deportation attempt. In the airplane, they bent him violently under the seat so that the other passengers could not see him. He screamed loudly and a policeman hit him hard in the neck with his elbow. He reports that he could not breathe properly. The pilot intervened and Q was taken to the hospital. He still has handcuff marks and was still experiencing pain in his neck when I first visited him about 3 weeks after this incident.

2.10 Solitary confinement

Re.

N.

N tells the story of a man who had returned to the ward after spending a month in isolation. The man had not been given a reason for isolation and was obviously very unwell, says

N.

N talks about a man who sits in a cell alone for three months. N calls it a "special cell" but refers to it as the same place you are forced to go if you do something that breaks the rules. N delivers food to the man through his work in the prison. He says that the cell smells very bad, that he has no immediate access to clean clothes and that his t-shirt is extremely dirty. He has asked a guard why the man is sitting there and has been told that the detainee himself does not want to be in contact with the other detainees. N explains that the man is obviously unwell, eats little and is in dire need of a shower.

Re.

D.

I haven't experienced it myself, but have many neighbors who have.

Re.

B.

B was isolated for 17 days as punishment for having a phone on him.

Re.

H.

H refers to this room as a "special room" where "people with problems" are put in, completely undressed.

Re.

J.

J has not experienced it himself, but after a big fight on 24/2/20, the two involved were detained in solitary confinement.

2.11 Experience with government handling of files/documents

Re.

Q.

Q says that he often receives letters from the authorities in Danish without translation. He says that he also experiences errors in their translations when things are translated into English. He points out how problematic it is to have translation errors in such important documents. He says that in a "refusal doc." (about his reluctance to be expelled from Denmark), he has been misquoted. Although he has pointed this out, they have not corrected it. Q says that he has received papers about his further course in the asylum system, which completely contradict what ends up happening: for example, he received a paper stating that he was to be transferred to Ikast, where the day after receiving this letter, he is detained in Ellebæk instead. Q expresses despair in understanding how the police and the healthcare system communicate in relation to his case. He had given consent to the police to allow them access to his health records. His nurse confirmed this. Later, the police tell him that they have not received the access. His lawyer has not received the copy from the police that Q requested. Q is unsure about the contents of the record, and he doesn't know how to get an overview of his own medical history.

2.12 Stories about everyday life

Re.

N.

N says that if you're not in your room when the food is distributed, you don't get food. If you are late, you can risk being denied the meal.

Regarding D.

In general, D says: No phone, no internet. TV with 30 channels. 45 min. outdoor time per day (from 08.45-09 and from 15-15.30). Breakfast is at 8.30, lunch at 12 and dinner at 17.30. Otherwise, no meals. In D's department there are 10-20 people, now around 15.

Re.

B.

In general, B says: Breakfast at 8:30 am, factory-like work, meal breaks and three 15-minute breaks to get some fresh air or smoke a cigarette. The last outside time of the day is 17:30. B also says that the weekly church service is a great help thanks to the pastor and his volunteers. In addition, he also says that he initially worked as a cleaner, but later starts to participate in English classes. However, when B. talks about the classes, I get the impression that it is a very low level that in no way challenges him, but that the classes are used purely as a pastime.

Re.

H.

H says that he often doesn't eat his food because a lot of it tastes too bad. He often only eats one meal a day.

Re.

E.

E says that there is nothing else to do in Ellebæk but watch TV. The guards deliberately shorten their out time so that they don't even get the 45 minutes.

Re.

L.

L has been to Ellebæk before, when he first came to Denmark in 2012. He says that it was much better back then. That you could play ping pong, smoke inside etc. and that it has gotten much worse now. I ask if he has asked if he can look at his phone, to which he replies that he has not been allowed to. L also says that the police regularly come into Ellebæk to pressure people to cooperate. L says that he has no clothes, and I ask him if he has had access to collected clothes and underwear, to which he replies that he has not. I ask about underwear, to which he replies that he has not been given clean underwear after arrival. Therefore, it is also important that his friend can bring them. I offer L to bring clothes for the next visit if his friend still hasn't managed to get in.

Re.

Q.

Q describes how everything within Ellebæk is limited. There is the possibility of English language school Monday - Friday for 2 hours, but it's a very low level, so it's only for pastime, not for language learning.

Re.

J.

In general, the physical conditions in prison affect J a lot. J expresses longing for library, fitness and recreation rooms. Complains about the behavior of certain nationalities and talks about cultural misunderstandings between detainees of different nationalities.

Re.

S.

S has a routine that includes exercising in his cell. He listens to music from the TV in his room. He hates the food. He buys food from the kiosk instead.

Re.

N.

General: N mentions that it is very dirty and that the guards often behave harshly towards the detainees, which often creates conflict.

Re. **J.**
J reports that on Monday 2/24/20 there was a big fight in the hallway between two detainees of different nationalities. J explains that there are often cultural clashes and when there is a fight, it takes a long time for the guards to arrive.

2.13 Activity hours

Re. **N.**
General: N says that he exercises about 3 hours a day. N says that since his arrival, he has not been allowed to participate in the training offered to some of the detainees. His impression of the female teacher assigned to the prison is that she decides who is allowed to receive training based on who she likes.

Re. **D.**
D complains that detainees only have 45 minutes a day to spend outdoors.

Re. **J.**
J says that sometimes a Swedish or Danish man comes and organizes football and cricket with them. After the corona situation, J calls on 12/3/20 and says that all activities have been canceled.

Re. **S.**
S complains that they only have 45 minutes to breathe fresh air and that sometimes this time is shortened even further.

2.14 Network in Denmark and relationship with other detainees

Re. **J.**
J has various African friends, including from Eritrea and some friends from Sri Lanka. He says that many of his friends who have recently been granted residence in Denmark are afraid to visit him in Ellebæk. They fear "that Ellebæk can take them", even though they are in Denmark legally. I imagine that there may be more detainees in Ellebæk with the same challenge regarding their network. In addition, his cell phone was taken when he was imprisoned. It has subsequently expired, he does not have a charger/code, but all phone numbers are stored in the phone. In other words, he lacks phone numbers for his entire network in Denmark.

Re. **N.**
In general: N says that he has few friends in Ellebæk, but that many of the detainees don't talk much and keep to themselves.

Re. **J.**
Without his roommate, J would have had a hard time coping. It was his roommate who helped him contact us, and as soon as he was moved out of Ellebæk, J had a hard time booking visiting times for me, etc. On the other hand, J has a hard time with most of the others in the hallway, expressing his frustration with cultural differences.

Re. **P.**
The guards have asked P to look after a younger gay man as other detainees are harassing him.

2.15 Other comments on the situation in Ellebæk during COVID-19

13.03.2020

re.

COVID19 situation

After phone conversation with the supervisor in Ellebæk: For the next two weeks, the plans have changed to one visit per week by a close family member (unless you don't have family, you can choose someone else to visit). He assured that it hasn't changed with health care; there are nurses every day and the doctors are also there on the days they usually come.

J explained to me on the phone yesterday (12/3) that everyone has received a note that briefly explains the situation and there are more details on a board. But that all activities have been canceled. He was very confused and didn't understand what was happening in Denmark until I explained the situation to him.

18.03.2020

update

re.

COVID19 situation I

call the supervisor, who tells me the latest updates: As of Wednesday 18/3, no detainees can receive visits, not even from family. In the network, we had agreed not to visit during this infectious time, but to write letters and hand them in at the weekend along with a bag from a friend of one of the detainees - but I am told that *no* items can be handed in, neither letters, bags nor books, even if they are sanitized and follow the authorities' health instructions.

06.04.2020 COVID19 situation update

In a telephone conversation, the supervisor tells us that Ellebæk is still completely closed to visitors. He mentions that it is now allowed to drop off items during normal hours (16-18 on weekdays), but that the items are quarantined for 72 hours before they are given to the person. In addition, he says that new people are still being detained in Ellebæk. According to him, the police choose to put new people in isolation for two weeks in Vestre prison before they are detained in Ellebæk to avoid COVID-19 infection. I asked him why the Danish Prison and Probation Service does not summon people who are to serve a sentence, but continues to hold non-convicted foreigners in Ellebæk. He replied that it was because Ellebæk works in the same way as remand prison. However, he said that there are fewer incarcerations now, as there are fewer people being arrested under the Aliens Act due to closed borders.

Ellebæk Contact Network. Appendix A: Documentation

May 2020 - January 2023

This documentation material describes a number of key issues concerning the Immigration Center Ellebæk. The material has been prepared based on a number of categories such as mental and physical health, medication consumption, guard behavior, legal process, etc. which document that detention in Ellebæk risks causing serious health deterioration for the inmates. In addition, the material supports our criticism regarding inadequate health facilities and inadequate treatment, as well as the unjust legal practice. The material has been fully anonymized, which is why all persons are assigned letter initials in the descriptions. All descriptions are written by members of the Contact Network based on their visits to Ellebæk.

Table of contents:

Ellebæk Contact Network: Documentation	1
Summary of documentation	3
1. Mental Health	6
2. Physical Health.....	10
3. Signs of torture	13
4. Solitary confinement	14
5. Physical conditions in Ellebæk	14
6. Guard behavior.....	15
7. Stories about everyday life.....	18
8. Activity hours	20
9. Working conditions	21
10. Experiences with lawyers.....	22
11. Experience with government handling of files/documents	25
12. Networking in Denmark.....	26
13. Stories of other detainees	28
14. Relationship with other detainees	29
15. Reports on the process of signing a repatriation agreement	31
16. Visitor authorization process	31
17. Arrest	32
18. Contact the police	33
19. Home Travel Agency	34
20. Refugee Board	35
21. Covid-19	35
22. Other Remarks	37

Summary of documentation

The summary is an overview of the salient observations in the data collected by the Ellebæk Contact Network for the period May 2020 - January 2023.

1. Observations regarding mental health

- Suicidal individuals who do not get access to psychological counseling.
- Use of solitary confinement for suicidal and mentally unstable individuals.
- Deprivation of liberty causing anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbances, memory impairment, psychosis and symptoms of PTSD.
- Lack of connection and limited communication creates mental challenges.
- Reported self-harm and signs of self-harm.
- Reduced trust in authorities leads to self-isolation and mental breakdown.
- Detention creates the experience of criminalization and dehumanization, which seriously affects the overall well-being of the inmate.

2. Observations regarding physical health

- Incorrect or inadequate medication exacerbates and prolongs disease progression.
- More people have diseases that require treatment.
- Long waiting times to see a doctor exacerbate and prolong illnesses.
- More people have persistent/chronic pain.
- Healthcare professionals do not listen sufficiently to detainees' statements and needs.
- No access to non-emergency surgeries.

3. Signs of torture

- Lack of mandatory screening for torture.
- By direct request after screening for torture; difficult or no access.
- The presentation of official documents that document torture and recognize the detention of a torture survivor does not result in immediate release.
- Several detainees have clear physical signs of torture and report torture.

4. Solitary confinement

- Non-criminals are held in solitary confinement, usually for up to several days, and in some cases for more than 7 days.
- Frequent use of solitary confinement, even for the most vulnerable individuals.
- Solitary confinement risks significantly worsening the condition of the detainee.

5. Physical conditions

- Calls are made via payphones, often with poor connection and sound quality.
- It is normal for detainees to move rooms and/or wards frequently.
- Renovation/painting does not improve conditions.
- Camera surveillance.

6. Guard behavior

- Guards have reacted with violence against detainees without legitimate grounds.
- Verbal abuse against detainees.
- Complaints about guards' behavior can have negative consequences for the detainee.

- Lack of guidance and help with health issues (see points 1-2).
- The guards show a high degree of control and authority.

7. Stories about everyday life

- Too few outdoor hours, further limited by staff shortages.
- Poor quality of food. Several have experienced food being served with an expired expiration date (up to several months). Reported plastic residue in the food.
- Poor access to clothing.
- Poor access to books, classes and activities.

8. Activity hours

- The detainees appreciate activity classes.
- There is no guarantee of activity or learning opportunities, and there is no set framework for who and how often activities are offered.

9. Working conditions

- Criticizable pay conditions for those in detention. People work for an hourly wage far below the minimum wage.
- Financial challenges for people who are unable to hold down a job due to health issues.

10. Experiences with lawyers

- Expression of general dissatisfaction with lawyers.
- Inadequate case management, including: Long response times, infrequent physical attendance, lack of professional commitment to the case and insufficient professionalism.
- Several detainees are not provided with the name or contact details of their lawyer.
- Challenges with language barriers and translators who don't speak the relevant language.

11. Experience with government handling of files/documents

- Documents will not be forwarded despite a power of attorney.

12. Network in Denmark

- Networks and ties to Denmark vary.

13. Stories of other people deprived of their liberty

- Reports of detainees with whom the network, Ellebæk Contact Network, has not been in direct contact, further report challenges, especially for people with serious mental and physical health problems. In addition, there are reports of lengths of detention of more than 18 months, which is in violation of the Danish Administration of Justice Act (section 37, subsections 1 and 3).

14. Relationship with other detainees

- In general, the detainees have a good relationship with other detainees in Ellebæk. There are a few examples of conflict and tension.

15. Reports on the process of signing a repatriation agreement

- Moroccans are offered a very small amount in a repatriation agreement.

16. Visitor permit process

- Overall impeccable processing of visitor permits
- A few cases where the processing time has been long or the request has not been processed.

17. Arrest

- Some have been remanded in custody without a valid criminal case, after which they have been transferred to Ellebæk
- Some have experienced violence, coercion and searches without justification or legitimate grounds from the police.

18. Experiences with police

- Misleading message about deportation despite the closed borders of the receiving country.

19. Home Travel Agency

- The conversations take place in a violent tone and with threatening language.
- Translation and interpreter issues.
- Manipulative tactics are used to pressure people into consenting to repatriation.

20. The Refugee Board

- Long case management times (2020)

21. Covid-19

- Despite orders, several guards did not wear masks during lockdown.
- During lockdown, people have continued to be detained despite the increased risk of infection.
- Detainees who wish to be repatriated where travel due to Covid-19 is not possible are kept in Ellebæk despite the lack of progress in their cases.
- Several detainees who have refused to be tested for Covid-19 have been punished with 7-10 days in solitary confinement.

22. Other remarks

- The amount of control, discipline and rules is not equivalent to administrative detention.
- The guards do not show behavior in special circumstances, which makes the framework for everyday life (visits, meal times, activity hours, etc.) difficult and worsens the conditions for the inmates.
- Uncertainty about the timeframe for detention.
- Uncertainty about the justification for detention.

1. Mental Health

21.06.2020

S has obvious scars and wounds on his upper arm and shoulder from cutting himself with a razor blade. Some of them are from his teenage years, some of them are recent. I asked him if the guards have asked about the wounds or if he has been advised to talk to the nurse or a psychologist. He says it's not possible to talk to a psychologist, none of the guards have asked about it, and he won't take the initiative to talk to the nurse.

24.06.2020

AA describes how life in Ellebæk is like being "an animal in a cage". She is very affected by the confinement she has lived in for 7 months. AA is deeply frustrated that she cannot see her 4 children who are still in Chile. She has asked for the possibility to make a video call so that she can see their faces, but she has not been allowed to do so. Using the phone to call her children is very expensive, so the amount of time she has to talk to them is very limited.

05.07.2020

Before Å came to Ellebæk, she was in Denmark on a tourist visa. During her stay in Denmark, she had an anxiety attack and went to the hospital. The doctor gave her some pills that she says made her crazy. She couldn't control her own actions after taking them.

Å attempted to take her own life shortly before she was detained in Ellebæk. Å has scars on her wrists from the suicide attempt. It happened while she was in a Danish prison, where she had been remanded in custody after trying to steal some makeup from a shop. She was admitted to a 'prison hospital' where they put her naked in a cold cell for 24 hours with nothing but a blanket. She is very upset and cries when she talks about this experience.

In Ellebæk, she has spoken to the nurse who has prescribed her medication. She can't remember the name, but she is given a pill to calm her down during the day and two sleeping pills at night.

At one point, she told the guards that she was suicidal because she couldn't talk to her family. The guards told her that she would be placed in an isolation cell if she maintained that she was suicidal. This made her very scared, so she didn't say anything afterwards. She is still suicidal.

She misses her children. The youngest is 4 years old and it is difficult for her to communicate over the phone. She has asked the guards if she can have a video call with her daughter, but they refuse her. The lack of contact is making her situation worse.

She had an abortion while in custody, which also took a toll on her mental health. The abortion was recommended by the healthcare professionals in prison as Å was facing a longer process of applying for asylum etc.

She has many traumas from her life in her home country. Her brother was killed in front of her and after she testified against his killer, her life has been in danger. The perpetrator was released after 15 years in prison and then had people approach her several times. Among other things, she has been shot in the stomach. It's hard for her to talk about.

At the same time, Å seems remarkably strong. She is very clear in her speech and is willing to participate in interviews with journalists about the conditions in Ellebæk. She was a political activist in her home country and did volunteer work to help the LGBT+ community.

Å is also sad that her Danish boyfriend cannot visit her in Ellebæk. He has a criminal record and therefore his application for a visitor's permit was not approved.

She sometimes gets very angry. The tranquilizers make her less angry and aggressive.

25.07.2020

Z is very humble. Z says that he can't stand noise, that he struggles with an anger that comes up inside him, and then he goes off by himself. Z says that he can't be in his room, which he shares with three others, as two of them are too noisy for him, so he stays in the corridors in the corners. Z says that he has been woken up several times in previous asylum centers by roommates when he had shouted and screamed in his sleep, but he does not remember anything even after the incidents. He says that his mind is racing and he can't find peace.

Z says his memory has deteriorated, but manages to recount episodes from his escape, including through Turkey, Greece and Macedonia, and illegal pushbacks from Macedonia to Greece.

It is my assessment that Z does not want to be a nuisance, but accepts the help that is given to him, such as conversations with the pastor.

Z was seen by the nurse this month due to mental health issues and has been given a doctor's appointment.

29.07.2020

Ø feels stressed and powerless. He has asked the nurse if he can talk to a psychologist.

25.8.2020

J sometimes involves me in his problems, including fear and frustration. But he also believes that he can't pass his problems on to others.

28.11.2020

AY has severe symptoms of PTSD and depression, exhibiting difficulty concentrating and anxiety. He has been a victim of torture in Moroccan police custody. He expresses that this gives him a general insecurity and traumatic relationship with officers and prison cells. He has the same nightmare every night where scenes from his torture return and mix with his surroundings in Ellebæk. In the nightmare, he is locked up with a Moroccan and a Danish police officer. They talk about him and repeat his name. He doesn't want to talk about everything that happens in the dream as it is very difficult for him to talk about. He has trouble sleeping because of this and takes sleeping medication (50 mg Quetiapine) every night. He takes an antidepressant every morning (100 mg Setralin).

30.11.2020

B says that he feels good and that he knows Ellebæk now (this is the second time he has been deprived of his liberty) and knows that he can handle it.

03.12.2020

Visiting J, he's frustrated. "It is my problem. How can it help I make it yours?" J is a bit delirious today.

03.12.2020

AC was in court today and got another extension. He is very composed and optimistic. AC says that he doesn't trust any authorities anymore. He will continue to seek out different lawyers and organizations that offer legal assistance.

01.02.2021

AY's dream has changed. Both the Moroccan and Danish police officer are now visible, the Danish one has taken on the face of the harasser who violently put AY in an arm lock and took him to solitary confinement. But before anything happened, the priest stepped in. He asked the guards to leave the room. AY feels safe in the presence of the priest, feels protected. The Moroccan guard says before stepping out of the doorway "When you are sent to Morocco, there is no priest to look after you".

05.02.2021

AJ is clearly very depressed and difficult to engage in conversation, partly due to the language barrier. He responds little or not at all, visibly shakes his hands, looks primarily at the floor and tabletop, and the flow of speech, when it is there, spirals mostly incoherently (the word "problem" is repeated nearly 50 times). When asked about his condition, he mentions tremors, palpitations and suicidal thoughts. When asked about his case, his lawyer and the court hearings 20 minutes into our conversation, he has a violent nervous breakdown (shaking all over his body, starting to convulse and constantly repeating "this is problem, problem, problem"). He stands up and leans on the surrounding furniture and walls in an attempt to get to the toilet, a four-meter walk that takes five minutes. He pours water on his head and comes back slightly less shaky, slowly and with difficulty sits down on the nearest chair. He is obviously embarrassed by his condition and tries to recover, but violent shaking and crying returns. Repeats that he is being treated like a mule. Reassures him repeatedly that he is human and that we are both human. This is followed by a longer conversation about the conditions in Ellebæk, in other Danish asylum centers, his upbringing in Afghanistan, the murder of his childhood friend, that he doesn't like too many rules, that his family is Taliban, and that he has therefore written them off. He is simultaneously difficult to talk openly about these things, but he keeps coming back to them in his speech. He says that the shaking and

the crying only started long after his departure from Afghanistan, and only in the Danish asylum centers he has stayed in.

29.05.2021

AM says that he is not feeling well, but that he has no intention of taking his own life. He says that his biggest concern is his children, who are in Uganda and who have been ostracized from the family when his ex-wife and her family found out that he is gay. When asked if he can sleep, he says he doesn't sleep much, 2-3 hours a night and a little more during the day. He gets tears in his eyes when he talks about his children.

05.07.2021

JS expresses great difficulty sleeping. He has been imprisoned in Ellebæk for 17 months in a row. He says it is stressful. Sometimes he says the guards are good, other times they are bad. He finds strength in his faith.

16.07.2021

JS expresses that the uncertainty of having been in Ellebæk for 18 months now, without knowing when he will be released, puts him under a lot of stress. Sometimes he gets angry when he doesn't get answers. In those cases, he remembers his God and that he must be patient. He was visited by a journalist and a psychologist from Amnesty International on 14/07, and they will use the interview in a report they are writing about Ellebæk. See also under 'physical health'.

24.07.2021

JS appears insecure and distrustful. He has mentioned several times that he feels I don't believe what he tells me. I assure him that I do. When we talk about how he is doing in Ellebæk, there is a shadow over his face and he takes a long time to answer and pauses for long periods. He has been told by his lawyer that he may have to stay in Ellebæk for another 5 months (he has been there for 18 months). The lawyer can't tell him why. His physical pain bothers him and of course affects him mentally as well, as nothing is being done about it in Ellebæk, other than palliative care. I asked him what he thought of the nurses and he said he thought they were nice. He is afraid of being moved to Kærshovedgaard, as he has heard that it is bad there from former prisoners in Ellebæk, whom he calls from time to time.

He had previously grown a long beard, as it is supposedly Sunnah in Islam, but the priest told him that they (the repatriation board? the guards?) might see him as an extremist, so he shaved it short. When I asked if they were visited by a Sheikh or Imam, he said it was forbidden. He respects all religions and is happy to talk to the priest and attend services because 'it passes the time'.

When we talk about what he used to do when he lived in Germany, he smiles. Except when we talk about his mother, because she always cries when they talk. So he talks to her through his brother.

24.06.2021

AN is happy to see me and is in good spirits. He generally has a lot of questions, is curious and interested in how he can best contribute to the process.

09.07.2021, 18.07, 24.07

AO is depressed and partially paranoid about the lawyer, the Home Travel Agency and the Danish Refugee Council and whether they are "the same", the first time I visit him. He regrets that none of their representatives visit him in Ellebæk, but only call or are on video during the court hearings. He says that the Danish system is trying to break him down. This is all exacerbated the second time, where he says he only trusts me and plans to isolate himself in his room if his detention is extended again at the next hearing. This deterioration is not as pronounced on the third visit, where he reiterates that he is under a lot of stress and sleeping poorly. On the other hand, there is also an improvement; he does not repeat his plans to isolate himself in his room, he calls me his "brother" and talks about the political and economic situation in Guinea-Bissau, as well as his Danish network, some of whom have also visited him in Ellebæk.

03.08.2021

JS continues to struggle with the fact that no one can tell him how long he will be imprisoned. He expresses that he is very tired and can't think about anything other than his physical pain and that he can't get the help he needs. He finds

strength in his faith and says that he accepts his fate as it is determined by Allah. Ultimately, the most important thing for him is the good deeds he has done in life, as these are the ones he can take with him in the afterlife. We laughed together over small talk about food habits. He misses cooking his own food.

09.08.2021

JS is stressed about having to call different people about his health. An employee from Amnesty has said she will try to find a doctor to see him. Right now she is on vacation. He also tried to call Amnesty, but they did not answer the phone. The pastor is also on vacation. He expressed that he didn't want to be stressed and just wanted to wait until he was free again. I assured him that it was no trouble for me to visit him and that he was always welcome to call. At the same time, I told him that I respected if he didn't want to visit. He was worried that it was too much for me to come all the way to Ellebæk. He had made a salad for me and offered me chocolate and soda. He does that every time I visit him.

17.08.2021

JS is still in physical pain, which is affecting his mental health. He has yet to hear from Amnesty's medical group, although their vacation reportedly ended 9/08.

08.28.2021

JS has been told by the judge that he may have to be detained for 2 ½ years. He perceives this as a way of breaking him down mentally. He doesn't understand how the rules work. I also thought it sounded strange. By January 15, he will have been in detention for 18 months plus the six months his asylum case was being processed.

18.01.2022

After visiting AR for the second time, it quickly became clear that AR is dealing with serious psychological issues. In Germany AR lived in a youth center for traumatized refugees, where AR got daily medication. It seems like AR is attested with psychosis and PTSD. The situation in Ellebæk worsened AR's psychological state and led to stress and anxieties caused by the imprisonment and immobility. Moreover, a lack of the wrong medication had consequences for his mental stability.

27.01.2022

AR reports that there is a lack of psychological treatment. Instead of getting the medication that they gave AR back in Germany, AR gets insufficient medication, which leads to an aggravation of his psychological state. AR was not screened before entering Ellebæk, which is a clear sign of mistreatment (no medical admission screening). Detainees like AR that have a serious mental illness might be treated wrongfully or not at all, which can lead to an intensification/aggravation of the psychological disorder.

29.04.2022

AT has insomnia. During the day AT sleeps a lot and at night AT is restless, which is seemingly related to a state of uncertainty and stress that AT faces while being imprisoned. AT had those feelings of stress and uncertainty in another context, namely while AT stayed in a German camp without knowing when to be released.

14.02.22

I speak with C, the spouse of AU, for the first time on the phone. C describes how AU has been detained in Ellebæk since October 21, 2021, and that his situation is very critical and difficult. AU is very mentally vulnerable and has a psychiatric diagnosis. He has completely isolated himself from the outside world and has been in an isolation cell for months. C is desperate to find out how AU can get back to Spain where he has permanent residency. C describes that the last time she spoke to AU, he didn't know who his lawyer was. C explains that AU is so unwell that he also refuses to speak to her at times. She has received information about his condition through another detainee who has contacted her due to the seriousness of AU's situation.

10.09.22

AS is very emotional during our conversation today. She repeats herself many times in frustration and anger at being detained without having done anything criminal. "I haven't smuggled cocaine, I haven't stolen from a supermarket, I haven't had a fake passport, I haven't taken anything" she says several times. She points out into the room: "it is outside (from Ellebæk) that the criminal people move". She washes her hands clean in the air many times in frustration. She says that the only reason she hasn't gone insane from being 6 months in Ellebæk (and previously 4 months in another prison) is that she has her children and

grandmother in Nigeria. She can't bear the thought of what would happen to her children. She is very sad. We repeat together that it is completely wrong and unfair that she is in prison.

25.09.2022

DH does not understand why he has been arrested and detained. He expresses that he is tired and just wants a normal life, with work and enough money for the necessities of life.

05.10.2022

DH says that his life's opportunities are ruined. However, he has made a plan for how he can move forward after he is - most likely - deported. The fact that he has planned how he is going to cope, I consider a positive sign. Even if his plan is to migrate out of his home country again.

25.10.2022

DH just wanted to talk about ordinary things that didn't address the issues he was facing.

29.10.2022

DH told me he is feeling very bad, because he didn't sleep due to the person in the same room as him has a mental illness and finds it very difficult to stop talking at night. In the morning the prison guards came to put DH in isolation, apparently because he is going to be deported on monday. They pushed him twice near the heart even though he said 'stop I have problems with the heart' (I am not sure these were the exact words). Afterwards the guards said 'we can push you however we want' (again not sure if this is verbatim, but this was the meaning).

He spent 7 years in different camps in Europe because he was very poor in his home country, and had very little option just to earn for food and rent. He told me that immigrating was his best chance compared to the degrading life he would face in his home country. It makes him sad to think that he spent his youth trying to survive in his home country and the refugee camps around Europe.

31.10.2022

AS is in a bad state. She is crying and expressing frustration from the fact that she is serving time - she has served 8 months almost in Ellebæk even though she has not committed a crime. She shows me the scars that she got from the assault in Denmark.

2. Physical Health

15.07.2020

AE complains of body aches and being forced to take sleeping pills every day.

24.06.2020

AA recounts a serious situation where she was very ill with severe pain. She waited 3 hours before an ambulance and doctor arrived at her room. She was then taken to the hospital. She was very upset about the long wait as it was an emergency situation.

She also says that she has experienced waiting more than 2 weeks to see a doctor in Ellebæk.

05.07.2020

Å has stomach pains, which she has been hospitalized for during her time in Ellebæk. She has previously been shot in the stomach and recently had an abortion.

25.07.2020

Z says he has joint pain, has been seen by a nurse - has a doctor's appointment in Ellebæk on 27.07. Pain in the back. Z says that he has no appetite, but that he eats because he knows it is good to eat.

25.08.2020

J complains of a headache. He needs to see the doctor today and have his urine checked, he fell out of bed today.

August 2020

Q describes the situation regarding medication in Ellebæk. When they shout "medication time" in the hallway, people get their designated pills. But the anonymous pills come without packaging, so many people experience fear when they can't read what they are supposed to take. Q says they always have to demonstrate that they are taking their medication.

Q says that many of the people he knows take the sleeping medication "lerica". (After some research, I have come to the conclusion that the medication he is referring to is "Lyrica". Lyrica has a sedative effect when taken with lorazepam). Q describes how "lyrica" works as a drug that makes some people happy. Q says that in most cases, the police must give permission before the nurse can act and send a sick person to a hospital.

24.09.2020

J does not feel completely healthy in his body. He is on cholesterol medication, but is skeptical that the situation will improve.

08.11.2020

Q takes medication every morning and evening - for blood pressure, for ulcers and for nerve pain (due to the lost eye). The doctor says the medication for the nerve pain will be necessary for the rest of his life.

Q mentions the drug "lyrica" again. He says that many people take it and that "it makes people high". He says that "drugs are necessary" in the reality of detention.

Q refers to a person who was recently released from Ellebæk to be placed in Sjælsmark. The legal argument was that he is in a lot of pain, which is why he needs to take constant medication that will "prevent him from going underground". Q says that the person has the right to have surgery if he has to wait more than 3 months in Sjælsmark. Q has spoken to his lawyer about the possibility of surgery - to get an artificial eye. The presumed price for the surgery would be DKK 10,000.

13.11.2020

AC has cataracts and chronic heart disease. He has been hospitalized several times over the past few years and receives blood pressure stabilizing medication daily.

When AC arrived at Ellebæk in August, he had to wait a week before he received his medication because the nurse didn't come back to work until the following week.

AC has not yet been to the hospital since he arrived at Ellebæk, even though he had a scheduled appointment in August. AC has asked the staff several times when he can get a new appointment, and they tell him every time that he has to wait.

19.01.2021

AY has contracted a stomach bug resulting in diarrhea. He is given 5 pills in the morning and 7 in the evening and has been seen by a doctor.

05.02.2021

AJ is afraid of the doctor in Ellebæk, as on his first and last visit he "laughed at his problems" and gave him some sedative medication that he didn't like the effects of.

12.02.2021

Q gives me an overview of the healthcare system, the process he has been in since he arrived at Sandholm. At the time, his lawyer was interested in seeing his health records to get an overview of the medication he was taking. When Q was at Ranum asylum center, he approached the doctor to get access to his health records. But the doctor said it would cost him DKK 2000 to get access. Q complained to his lawyer, who was very shocked by this message from the doctor. The lawyer wrote to Ranum Asylum Center, and subsequently Q came to the clinic again, where he was given access to his medical records. In the file, there was an overview of his medication, but there was no mention of torture.

In Ranum asylum center, they told Q that he needed to go to the hospital to have his eye looked at. He waited and nothing happened. Then he came to Avnstrup, where the doctor sent a request to the authorities to get

financed Q's eye surgery. Q was still waiting for a response to this request when he was told he was being transferred to Ikast. The doctor then said that Q would receive the funds there. But Q did not come to Ikast as promised, but was moved to Ellebæk. From Ellebæk, he was later taken to an eye specialist who said he needed an artificial eye. Q made a new appointment with the eye specialist, but was subsequently attempted to be forcibly deported from Ellebæk. When Q ended up in hospital after the deportation attempt, the hospital doctor repeated the same message about the importance of an artificial eye, but that unfortunately it could not be financed.

The nurse in Ellebæk has asked Hørsholm Municipality for money for his eye surgery, but no response has yet been received.

05.07.2021

JS has pain from his foot to his back and abdomen. He has had an examination, which he describes as an infusion of fluid into his body followed by a scan. I understand this to be a PET-CT scan. He says that it showed nothing. The doctors at Ellebæk cannot do anything for him, says JS because, in the words of the doctor, he 'can use his arms and legs and speak'. Therefore, JS has lived with pain all the time he has been imprisoned in Ellebæk. He would very much like to talk to Amnesty's medical group, which he has been referred to by his lawyer.

In addition, he suffers from hemorrhoids. He had one removed in 2015, in Germany, but doctors in Denmark will not remove it as it is not an emergency condition. It hurts JS and he hopes his brother can send him money so he can pay for the surgery himself.

16.07.2021

JS has been promised by a journalist and a psychologist from Amnesty International that he will be seen by an Amnesty doctor. They did not tell him when.

24.07.2021

JS continues to have pain in his leg, back and stomach, as well as the hemorrhoid he has. He has asked the priest to write to an employee of Amnesty to find out when the doctor from Amnesty is coming. He is told in Ellebæk that he should drink plenty of water. He told me that and laughed. I think that's something many people are told when they complain about pain.

18.07.2021

AO has pain in his neck, the nurses have given him candy instead of painkillers and say it's not serious enough to go to the doctor.

03.08.2021

JS continues to have back, stomach, foot and arm pain. There is no news from Amnesty.

09.08.2021

JS takes sleeping medication a couple of times a month to help him fall asleep.

28.08.2021

JS has received a final rejection from Amnesty's medical group, as he is not suspected of having been subjected to torture. An Amnesty employee advises JS to contact P., who is supposed to be a doctor at Ellebæk. JS has only met a female doctor and does not know about P. The doctor at Ellebæk must, according to Amnesty, find another doctor to give a 'second opinion' about JS's pain.

17.09.2021

ang. JS. The employee from Amnesty had written incorrectly in her text message. She had thought that the priest might be able to help him. He is still in pain.

14.01.2022

Pain in the left side of the body and in the spine. AR has a permanent pain in his feet. AR cannot sleep and sit properly because of (chronic) pain. Though, the lying position seems to be best, which is why AR is most of the times in his cell. AR is unable to do any work because of his back problems. AR says it's from a construction accident, which intensified after walking large parts of the route that AR took from Germany to Denmark. The doctor would not believe him and he didn't receive any financial support.

29.04.2022

AT had continual pain in his feet, caused by damaged shoes. Ellebaek couldn't provide fitting shoes, since they were all sent to other camps. We decided to buy AT new shoes, and immediately after his condition got better. AT used them in Ellebaek to do sports and to walk around.

25.09.2022

DH has a disease of the heart/possibly surrounding vessels. It was hard for me to understand exactly what he meant. The disease causes him pain in his arm sometimes. He had a small operation in Germany, but they (the refugee camp he was staying in) wouldn't pay for the main operation as it was too expensive. The staff at Ellebæk have taken a blood sample, from which he has never heard back. In addition, he has been offered paracetamol for his pain.

DH wants to have surgery, but this is neither an option in his home country (it costs 20,000 Euros which he does not have) nor in Denmark due to the NUS principle (treatment must be necessary, urgent or pain relieving). I am worried that his disease will worsen and he will have a cardiac arrest.

05.10.2022

DH is still in pain and is very sad that he is not able to help himself to earn money for the necessary surgery. He is afraid of dying if he doesn't get the necessary treatment.

25.10.2022

It's status quo with DH's health.

3. Signs of torture

05.07.2020

Å has been shot in the stomach. Can this be used as an argument that she should not be in Ellebæk?

27.07.2020

Z has large bruises on his arms, ut. did not ask if it was torture. Z is to see a doctor on 27.07. Ut. informed Z that if he has been subjected to torture, he must tell the doctor and his lawyer. Z. then asks himself "also if it happened in Afghanistan?" ut. answered yes and made it clear that it was about his entire life.

08.11.2020

Q has spoken to his old and new lawyer about getting a torture investigation. His new lawyer recently told Q that the Amnesty group never responded to Q's request for an investigation. Q is still waiting for an investigation for torture, even though Q has been in Ellebæk for 13 months.

28.11.2020

AY is a victim of torture and has had this recognized by a torture investigation in Denmark. He showed me an official document from the '*Sahrawi Association of Victims of Grave Violations of Human Rights Committed by the Moroccan State*' that recognizes him as an activist, political refugee and torture victim. Yet he has had his case rejected. His lawyer is taking his case to the European Court of Human Rights. He has a hard time talking about his experiences with torture, preferring to avoid it. He starts crying when he thinks about it, even though he usually tries to appear strong to me.

08.12.2020

AB talks about their roommate who was tortured in Morocco (AB comes from Western Sahara). AB had his fingernails pulled out during the torturing. Even though AB's case was, apparently, strong and the torture confirmed, AB's asylum was rejected. He faces deportation to Morocco. AB mentioned, however, that AB's case might be (or is already) reopened.

12.02.2021

Q talks about the time perspective on torture. torture. When he was at Sandholm several years ago, he described that he had been subjected to torture, which was written down. But no investigation for torture was initiated (see also p. 15).

03.10.2022

LN shows me a big scar and tells me he's been shot in the stomach (probably in the year 2020)

4. Solitary confinement

24.06.2020

AA says that other women are sometimes put in solitary confinement because of their "fragility". Often those longer than 1 week. AA has not been in isolation.

20.11.2020

(Copied from guards' behavior). When AC first arrived at Ellebæk, he couldn't receive his medication because there was no healthcare staff at work. He insisted that he had to get it because it would destabilize his blood pressure and several days without the medication would mean he would have to reduce the dose and then phase it back in. The guards were not accommodating and AC became frustrated. They got into an argument, pushed each other and one of the guards kicked AC. He was put in isolation for a month. Every time he needed something, if he needed to shower or go to the toilet, he had to press a button and one of the guards would come and open his door. AC often wakes up during the night and has to go to the toilet several times. He found that the guards became annoyed and angry at the number of times he pressed the button. He started peeing in a milk carton so he wouldn't have to press the button at night. After a few days, when he still hadn't received his medication, he confronted one of the guards. It ended in a conflict where AC called the guards a bad word and they pushed him to the ground and kicked him. He was then put in another isolation room where he had to sleep on a thin mattress with a coarse blanket. Unable to sleep, he pressed the button to get a panodil, which the guard threw on the floor for him. He spent one night in this cell before being returned to 'regular' solitary confinement.

About the first solitary confinement cell, AC says that he still had a television, that he had a break outside for half an hour a day. The biggest difference was that you were in a section with four separate rooms with no contact with others and that you are constantly dependent on the guards.

20.12.2020

AG has been in isolation for 3 days because he got angry.

When he was arrested in the first place, he was in another prison (he doesn't know which one) where he was in 14 days of isolation. The reason was also because he got angry and retaliated.

01.02.2021

AY has just been in isolation for 24 hours. He has been having stomach problems for the past month. He has diarrhea and needs to go to the bathroom frequently, which forces him to call a guard. The guards seem impatient and push him to hurry, which makes it worse and he often interrupts his toilet visit prematurely because of this.

25.10.2022

The guards told DH that he will be deported early morning next Monday.

- 29.10.2022

DH was put in an isolation cell this morning. The guards told him it was because he would be deported this Monday.

5. Physical conditions in Ellebæk

10.06.2020

S says that only a small part of his department has been painted. There are still signs of 'fuck Denmark' and 'human rights abusers' on the walls. There is also still a lot of dirt everywhere.

24.06.2020

AA says the women's ward is "better maintained". But the bathrooms are lacking and the bedding is very bad.

27.07.2020

Z says that his roommate has been told by a security guard that they will be moving to a newly renovated wing within the next 2 weeks.

29.07.2020

Ø says that the phone broke a couple of weeks ago. They changed it for one that seemed old. Ten days went by without the phone.

November

B, who is imprisoned in Ellebæk for the second time, says that it has been renovated and painted and that he was completely surprised when he saw it.

24.09.2020

According to J, the out time is divided into 45 min in the morning (8.30-9.15) and in the afternoon (15-15.45)

20.12.2020

AG says that many have just been deported and therefore he has his own room now.

25.08.2020

J says that they are renovating one department at a time. In 18 East, the renovation is over now.

26.10.2020

I visit J and am surprised by the new building project outside. I talk to the guard, he tells me that the new building will be ready in May and will make room for 56 more people. We have a nice conversation, he tells me that there is capacity for 150 people and currently there are 120. There is one ward with room for 24, where there are currently 21 people who are detained due to criminality. The rest are in Ellebæk because of the Aliens Act, not the Criminal Code.

Spring/summer/autumn/winter 20

I talk to J on the phone a couple of times a week. More than half of the time, the phone connection sucks, the line buzzes, and there's often noise in the background.

12.02.2021

Q says that cameras have been installed in his department (department 16 East). Cameras have also been installed in the laundry room where he works. Q says that no information has been given about the operation. Before, there were only cameras outside. The cameras are still not fully installed. There are no cameras in their rooms, says Q.

Q also mentions that neither his ward nor wards 17 and 18 have a living room area. It is only the criminals' and women's wards, he mentions.

20.02.2022

While I visited AR during the three months in Ellebaek the entire courtyard was rebuilt. Some of the barracks were also renovated, so people were constantly moved around. Moreover, the access to the outside spaces were not always fully given.

6. Guard behavior

04.06.2020

On May 18th, X was assaulted by a guard who broke his wrist. The background to the assault was that X asked a guard to speak English to him instead of Danish. When the guard continued to speak Danish, X started speaking Persian to him, after which the guard put him down. There were about 4 guards nearby who saw this, one of them helped to hold him down. After the incident, he was put in isolation for 40 minutes - as he says himself, they have to isolate him to maintain that he has done something wrong, but the fact that he came out so quickly shows that they know that the guards are to blame. On the 19th, he woke up early with pain in his wrist and was taken to hospital. Before that, the police called him and asked - as they do - if he was 'ready' to travel to Iran. When he refused, the officer told him on the phone that they had heard he had broken his wrist and that it might be better if he went to Iran - which X took as a clear threat.

He has obtained documentation from the hospital of his injury and has his lawyer prepare a formal complaint. However, he doesn't want to file the complaint, he just wants documentation that it happened.

X has spoken to the 'second boss of Ellebæk'. He said that he knows that there are guards who behave badly, but they can't do anything about it because the government keeps an eye on Ellebæk and wants the conditions to be like that.

According to X, his lawyer says that he will be transferred to another prison when the complaint is filed. If X appeals, he may spend more time in prison while the appeal is being processed.

X ended up filing the complaint a few days later and was transferred to Nykøbing-Falster. According to the lawyer, this is a normal procedure, as you want to keep the person who has been subjected to the abuse away from the alleged perpetrator, but also keep him from talking to potential witnesses.

Fearing the impact this could have on his case, X asked that this incident not be made public until his case was finalized. It has now been, so even though I am no longer in contact with X, I believe he will want to get the story out there.

10.06.2020

S told me that one of the detainees had been given more than 2 loaves of bread for his dinner (the number of loaves they are given). When one of the guards saw this, he took the extra bread from the detainee. The detainee protested, but the guard did not give the bread back.

14.06.2020

S told me that he had been in the shower while dinner was being distributed. Another detainee had told the guard that S was in the shower and that he could therefore take the dinner for him. The guard said that he should come and get the dinner himself when he had finished his shower. When S subsequently approached the guard, he refused to hand over the dinner to S. The guard said that he knew that S had been in the shower during the distribution, but that it was his own fault.

05.07.2020

(Copied from Mental Health) At one point, Å told the guards that she was suicidal because she couldn't talk to her family. The guards told her that she would be placed in an isolation cell if she continued to be suicidal. This made her very scared, so she didn't say anything afterwards. She is still suicidal (end of copied text).

Å says that the guards are generally nice to her.

At one point, she was taken to the hospital for abdominal pain where she tried to escape. The guards tackled her, which resulted in her hitting her face and some parts of her body.

25.07.2020

Z has nothing to say about the guards, he says that he does not small-talk with the guards, but sometimes asks them about things. Z says that he has received help from other detainees on which guards to ask for help.

Z has told the guards that he needs more rest, they told him that something will happen within the next 2 weeks - they didn't say what that something is. Z says that another detainee had been told by another guard that they will be moving to a newly renovated wing within 2 weeks.

25.07.2020

Ut. called Ellebæk this morning to make sure that the visiting hours had gone through today. The guard was polite, he told me that it said "canceled" outside my visit and asked me to call back after 5 minutes while he checked it out. I called back and he told me that everything should be fine and that I could come at 14:15.

The guards were tidy on arrival and gave us plenty of time to wrap up after the time was up.

29.07.2020

One day while Ø was cleaning, two of the guards said, "there you are, we were looking for you because you are to be deported today or tomorrow". Ø asked if they were serious, then they started laughing and told him, "it was just a joke".

The guards often speak English to him, even though he can't understand it and can understand some Danish.

20.11.2020

When AC first arrived at Ellebæk, he couldn't receive his medication because there were no healthcare professionals at work. He insisted that he had to get it because it would destabilize his blood pressure and several days without the medication would mean he would have to reduce the dose and then phase it back in. The guards were not accommodating and AC became frustrated. They got into an argument, they

pushed each other and one of the guards kicked AC. He was put in isolation. Every time he needed something, if he needed to shower or go to the toilet, he had to press a button and one of the guards would come and open his door. AC often wakes up during the night and has to go to the toilet several times. He found that the guards became annoyed and angry at the number of times he pressed the button. He started peeing in a milk carton so he wouldn't have to press the button at night. After a few days, when he still hadn't received his medication, he confronted one of the guards. It ended in a conflict where AC called the guards a bad word and they pushed him to the ground and kicked him. He was seen by the doctor afterwards because his arm hurt a lot, it felt like it was broken, but the doctor said there was nothing wrong. He was then put in another isolation room where he had to sleep on a thin mattress with a rough, coarse blanket. He couldn't sleep and pressed the button for a panodil, which the guard threw on the floor for him. He spent a night here before returning to the "regular" solitary confinement. He was in "regular" solitary confinement for a month.

26.10.2020

When I visit J, I have a nice chat with the guard about the new building. We talk about the political aspect, and he tells me that he has worked in Ellebæk for 10 years and has only seen the judicial committee 3 times. He talks about how they are understaffed and says: "Decisions are made by politicians who never come here, they don't listen to us who work on the floor"

03.12.2020

AC says that he has developed a good relationship with the staff. In the beginning they treated him badly, but now that he works in the kitchen and has been recognized by the head chef, who now knows that he is a trained chef, he is treated with respect.

03.12.2020

I visit J and ring the doorbell outside the gate. "It's the prison," the guard says.

07.12.2020

J calls and tells him that today the Danish Prison and Probation Service has been by and checked all detainees. They were behaving ok, but he didn't understand the reason for this sudden investigation.

20.12.2020

AG talks about Ellebæk and the system - whether it's the repatriation agency, the guards or the police is unclear, but
He says "They try their best to fuck you up".

01.02.2021

AY says that he has just come out of 24 hours of isolation. The reason for isolating him was that he had taken an extra piece of bread from the canteen. The guards reacted very violently, and although AY did not resist, the situation escalated and the guards forced him into a police grip and twisted his arm. AY says that one of the guards seems to have something against him. The guard is tall and younger than the others, with blonde hair. He says he is racist and always looks at AY with a mean look. He says that this guard often provokes a situation and that detainees are often put in short-term isolation for talking back or saying something provocative.

30.05.2021

N had two cell phones when he was imprisoned in Ellebæk. When he was to be deported to another EU country, he pointed out to the guards that one of the cell phones was in Valby prison. The guards said he would get it when he was deported a week later, but he did not.

09.07.2021

AO says that one day two guards insulted him, as one of them, who didn't think he knew Danish, said to the other
Second: "he has a big problem" and AO turns around and asks "what problem?".

18.07.2021

AO says that he previously had a good relationship with a younger guard who, among other things, helped him access phone numbers from the confiscated cell phone. However, this was discovered by another guard, and the younger guard is now no longer assigned to AO's area.

03.08.2021

JS expresses that he has no problems with the guards.

28.08.2021

JS says that some of the guards have beaten detainees in Ellebæk, including breaking one person's hand and giving another a nosebleed.

17.09.2021

I was allowed to visit for an extra half hour. The guard told me that JS 'is so cute'. They seem to have a good relationship.

18.01.2022

During my second visit, I experienced a hostile environment when I entered the visiting center. The guard, a Danish man in his 40s, asks why I don't speak Danish despite living here. He checks my things more thoroughly than usual and disallows me to bring my notebook because he suspects that I would bring money to the person I was visiting.

27.01.2022

AR told me that the guards could not understand them and due to that there were some miscommunications concerning AR'S health state. Moreover, it also led to issues concerning the application for a visitant. In the first place, the guards were not able/willing to resolve the language barrier. After some time, I managed to convince one guard via phone to approve my application and to explain AR the procedures.

19.05.2022

During the last visit, I was allowed to stay almost an hour longer. After leaving the visitors room the guard and AT had a friendly conversation. It seems like AT has some good reputation among the guards, which is later confirmed by the guard.

09.08.2022

AS tells about a violent incident that she does not want to be made public. It is therefore written elsewhere (non-public documentation). AS describes that there are about 4-5 good shifts and the rest are unpleasant.

25.09.2022

DH describes that one night he called the guards (I remember it as if it was because of pain), but the guard didn't show up for an hour. When DH commented on this, he was told 'I don't give a shit about you, I don't give a shit about lawyers, and I don't give a shit about police'.

Another guard told him that he was glad DH and the others were in custody because he had a job and could provide for his family.

DH has also spent a day in isolation. It's my impression that it was because he stood up to the guard, but I'm not sure.

19.10.2022

DH told me that one of the guards had called me beautiful while following him to the visitors room. He disliked that because he found it disrespectful.

25.10.2022

I told one of the guards that the watches never work. He fixed the watch in visiting room nr. 4. He also said that 'it is because time stands still in there' quickly followed by 'it is a joke'. He mentioned that he usually is not so careful with the time and sometimes he gives extra time.

29.10.2022

See same date, under mental health, regarding DH. DH.

7. Stories about everyday life

21.06.2020

S has not met any of the social workers who should have started working in Ellebæk. He told me that he had moldy cheese as part of his dinner.

24.06.2020

AA has a hard time with the fact that she can only smoke 2 times a day. She says that the women only have 2 x 20 minutes outside per day (20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the afternoon).

She hates the food, which is almost inedible. She says that at one point she was served food that was 1 month too old.

She misses reading books in Spanish. There is a very poor selection in the library. There is nothing to do.

05.07.2020

She is very bored and very depressive. She lacks activities and was happy when I said I could buy her some Spanish books and puzzles. She has a friend from Chile who she talks to a lot. The friend can't understand Danish or English, so she can't be entertained by the TV, which only has movies and programs in those languages. However, her friend is also very depressive.

Hate the food. It's poor quality and lacking in nutrition. She said she was served milk that was 2 days too old. Ellebæk gave her DKK 400 for a prepaid phone card and snacks.

25.07.2020

Z says that the food is fine and that it's good that it's not pasta every day, sometimes rice - rarely potatoes. Z is humble and doesn't complain.

Z says he spends a lot of time playing ludo and he is very happy that this is possible - he plays with other detainees.

Z says that in his department everyone has kettles in their rooms (i.e. 1 kettle for the 4 in his room). He is happy about this.

Z tells us that they are renovating in Ellebæk and he will be moving within the next 2 weeks.

28.11.2020

AY can't stand the food. He says he has found pieces of plastic in it several times. He never gets full and is always hungry in the evening, as they eat dinner at 17:00. He gets angry when he sees the kitchen throwing away surplus food.

15.01.2021

AY shows me a plastic tray (which the food comes in, produced by the Prison and Probation Service) that he was given on 09.01.21 but which had an expiration date of 28.08.2020. AY feels that it is very disrespectful that they are served food that is several months old.

05.02.2021

AJ complains about the quality of the food, which he says is very poor and could only be used to feed animals.

29.05.2021

AM says that being in prison is hard. Everyone has a hard time and their own problems, so they can't share problems and feelings with each other. He says that he lives with other Africans because they are divided up like that.

AM says that he does what he can to keep going and participates in what he's offered, but that it's hard and much of the day is the same bad TV.

30.05.2021

N says it is very boring. Time stands still and there is nothing to do. N was detained during covid19 and a little when it reopened. He describes that people go crazy being there. N is religious and that helps him.

03.08.2021

JS is looking forward to the start of soccer leagues, as things are currently moving a little faster. Otherwise, everything else is the same, he says.

17.08.2021

JS has said several times that the food tastes like plastic. It's always the same thing they are offered, and he misses being able to make his own food.

18.01.2022

AR said that some books are available in the library, but very limited selection and there is no linguistic diversity, hence AR cannot find books in the language they speak. I brought some books in German, so AR would be able to read them.

29.04.2022

AT said that there is a serious lack of clothing (it has been redistributed to Ukrainian refugees, which leads to a shortage), which is problematic since you are then forced to wear the same clothes all over again.

04.05.2022

AT plays basketball every day and organizes matches with the inmates. The guards cheer for him when AT plays, since he played all his life and acquired good skills. Despite this activity AT says that the time for such activities is too short and there is a lack of leisure equipment, or the equipment is in a very bad state. Once a week, they receive a visit from one/several social worker(s) that arranges social activities. It's a good initiative, AT says, but too limited in terms of what they can do during those hours and it's generally too short in time.

25.09.2022

DH says that the food is very consistent. They always get the same thing. They never get eggs, which he misses. He has been detained for a month.

25.10. 2022

DH told me that a new person arrived in his room, and that he talks constantly. Like he was mentally not able to stop. DH had to tell him he needed sleep and then he stopped.

29.10.2022

DH told me that he lost his appetite. Furthermore the food is always the same.

12.12.2022

Ace calls me as she is very frustrated that she is not allowed to attend classes as she usually does. Last week her teacher had told her that she couldn't come to school but had to wait until this week due to an ongoing conflict she has with one of the women. But now a new week has started and AS still has no access to school. She is very upset about this as it is pretty much the only time during the day when she is out of her room and can be active with something that takes her mind off things. The teacher has said she will talk to the manager about when AS can return. At this point, the woman with whom AS has a conflict is still in school.

8. Activity hours

10.06.2020

S plays soccer at least half an hour a day. (Not sure if it's every day, but regularly). However, there are people working on painting the walls.

24.06.2020

AA says that there is a social worker who is an "amor de vida" (love of life). The social worker cooks with them and is good to talk to.

25.07.2020

Z says there is soccer almost every day, he goes along, sometimes he plays along, if he has too much anxiety in his head, he watches from a distance.

28.07.2020

J has a good relationship with the social workers who work in Ellebæk. They have clothes, organize football and also provide books.

29.07.2020

Ø says they have the opportunity to go outside twice a day for 30 minutes, from 9-9:30 and 15-15:30. Ø says that an employee teaches Danish twice a week, but only 6-10 people are allowed to participate, so there is no room for Ø in the class. Ø would like to attend church services, but doesn't want to when it's only possible to attend services with a Christian pastor.

25.08.2020

J says that there is school between 10-11.30 and again between 13-14.

24.09.2020

J says that there is soccer for an hour almost every day either at 13, 16 or after dinner at 19

13.12.2020

J calls and tells us that all activities (soccer, lessons, etc.) are canceled from December 10th until January 7th due to corona/holiday.

06.12.2020

J calls to say that the outside time has been shortened without justification.

05.07.2021

JS says that activities have not been restored since the COVID19 lockdown due to the construction work to expand Ellebæk. He loves football and plays it whenever he can, but only inside the small enclosure where smoking is also allowed.

24.07.2021

JS says that they are slowly starting to open up for activities again.

09.08.2021

I spoke to a pedagogical assistant who told me that he had been told not to help people detained in the immigration center Ellebæk to learn something they could use outside Ellebæk.

02.11.2021

AP lives in the "criminal" section of Ellebæk. "They call us criminal" he says. He says that their department is not allowed to interact in any way with people from other departments. He says that the pedagogical assistants are there every weekday, but that they only focus on one specific activity such as bingo/football/library and not the bigger picture.

In AP's department, they have 2 out times a day - 8:30 am for 50 minutes and 2:30 pm for 45 minutes. When AP attends church with Per, it's only with people from his department.

11.05.2022

AT has good relations with the social workers, who seem to be more open as some of the guards. It seems that the social workers put some effort in creating activities during the time that they are there. However, AT criticizes that they don't provide access to educational means, so the activities offered are centred around games and social activities.

29.10.2022

DH told me that once a week there is a guy who does activities for the people detained in Ellebæk.

9. Working conditions

24.06.2020

AA says that she can earn DKK 400 a week. Among other things, she cleans the department.

29.07.2020

Ø cleans every day. He earns 400 kr. per week.

24.11.2020

AC works in the kitchen every other week for 5-6 hours a day. He earns between 650-750kr. in those weeks. Often he is responsible for heating food, 2-3 times a week he cooks.

24.09.2020

J helps the staff to "give ice" every day at 18:30. He values this job very highly, as it is a way to connect with others.

07.01.2021

AC has just been fired from his job in the kitchen. AC was the shift manager and had told the others that it was fine for them to eat a muffin each because they had worked long hours and lacked energy. The chef fired AC and accused him of stealing the 4 muffins for himself and the three others he was working with. AC offered to pay, but the chef said he wouldn't take money or an apology. The chef said that he had given AC a warning before when he had cooked for himself and his shift, but AC didn't think it was forbidden to eat while at work, only to cook. The kitchen manager stood by the firing (after two weeks, AC got his job back in the kitchen)

15.01.2021

AY cleans for about 2 hours a day and is paid DKK 300 per week. AY says that you can work your way up the hierarchy and can get up to 600 a week. He says that those who are more charismatic, have experience and energy get better jobs - for example in the kitchen.

29.05.2021

AM doesn't work, but says he would like to work.

03.08.2021

JS is working on cleaning.

02.11.2021

AP works with cleaning and food distribution. He earns around 455 kr. per week.

18.01.2022

AR doesn't work due to his health condition. The doctor does not recognize AR's health conditions, so AR does not receive any compensation, which in turn leads to problems concerning buying things in the kiosk, such as credit for the phone cards.

04.05.2022

AT works almost every day for around 2 hours. The detainees can choose whether they want to work or not. There is an assembly line for a water producer that AT works for. AT said that the work is monotonous and repetitive, the wage is too low (roughly 400kr. per week depending on your experience and status) and you pay taxes inside, even though you are not legally in the country, which is a contradiction.

29.10.2022

DH did not get a job, but he applied.

10. Experiences with lawyers

24.06.2020

AA is not happy with her lawyer. She has difficulty communicating with him as she only speaks Spanish. She would like to switch to a Spanish-speaking lawyer (I started to look into this, but she was released before I could).

25.06.2020

S has had three different lawyers, but none of them have really done much.

05.07.2020

Å wants a new lawyer. Her current one has not visited her or listened to her story. She first said the lawyer works for Ellebæk, but immediately believed me when I said that was not the case. I gave her information on 2 good lawyers. She wanted to change immediately.

25.07.2020

Z wants to continue with his lawyer from when he was in the Tribunal. The lawyer has said that his case should have gone through and would like to apply for a reinstatement. Z. is waiting for the appointment to go through.

17.11.2020

AC has appointed a lawyer. He is considering changing lawyers because he feels that she does not take the time to familiarize herself with his case. AC has asked me to call her and talk to her about his case. Today, after two weeks of leaving messages with the secretary and sending emails, I got a call from her. She took 40 minutes to talk his case through with me. She has no experience in immigration law. We have agreed to talk again a couple of days before he goes back to court.

01.12.2020

AC's lawyer called me by appointment and was very responsive to the things that AC would like her to highlight to the court in a few days. She mentioned again that she had no experience with this kind of case.

03.12.2020

AC felt that this lawyer had a better understanding of his case and presented his arguments from the angles they had agreed upon (with me as an intermediary). It didn't make any difference to the court proceedings, but he may want to keep his lawyer.

20.12.2020

AG is very unhappy with his lawyer. He has tried to call her and get her to talk to him, but has only spoken to her briefly. AG has a complicated case that I don't have a full understanding of either. However, AG has had some form of residence permit in Germany, where he has also worked and lived for the last five years. AG asks his Danish lawyer to contact his German lawyer. She does not do so.

After the AG has signed papers from the repatriation agency for deportation to Belgium, he is told that he no longer has a lawyer. If this is understood correctly, it is very strange as no ticket has been purchased for him yet.

15.07.2020

I call J's lawyer, who confusedly asks me if J is still in Ellebæk?
He does.

28.07.2020

J calls and tells me that he has received another 4-week extension. There are some ID papers missing that the lawyer does not have, I assist in contacting J's previous lawyer and get them forwarded to the current lawyer. I wonder why they don't transfer automatically.

03.12.2020

I visit J and his rejection from the Refugee Appeals Board has been given to him on 11.11.20 by his lawyer - but without being translated. It is only when I visit him that he gets the four pages translated and explained what the decision says. J is surprised that the decision states that the lawyer only sent the documents on 28/10/20, which are documents J gave his lawyer back in February.

Furthermore, J notes that the Immigration Service used a Tamil translator rather than a Sinhalese translator during their interview with him, which makes him disbelieve their assessment. He curiously wonders if explanations can be lost in translation?

Autumn/winter '20

As time goes on, J becomes more and more frustrated with his lawyer. When the Refugee Appeals Board's final decision comes (refusal to reopen the case), J now wants to change lawyers. I explain to him the

negative outlook, but contacts the four different lawyers J and his friends give me names of. None of them of them are interested/can/have time to take over J's case.

05.02.2021

AJ doesn't know who his lawyer is and says that in the last three court hearings there have been three different lawyers.

13.03.2021

Receives a phone call from AJ, who says he has asked the guard who his lawyer is.

29.05.2021

I ask if AM is satisfied with his lawyer, to which he answers yes. AM tells me that his lawyer does not specialize in immigration law, but that it is the same lawyer who represented him in his criminal case.

24.06.2021

There are some discrepancies in AN's case. The court book states a later entry date than the actual one, and AN informs me that he was approached by the police on several occasions before this date, that he was hospitalized in 2020 on a substitute CPR, and that there must therefore be data to support this fact.

However, his lawyer denies this claim.

He informs me that his lawyer "is on the side of the police". During the actual hearing (extension of the deadline) on June 22, AN stated that he wanted to be released from Ellebæk, to which his own lawyer allegedly exclaimed "but you ran away!"

After obtaining power of attorney from AN and forwarding it to the lawyer, I don't hear from her. One Sunday, she calls from an unlisted number and is both very suspicious of me and defensive about AN's case. AN's case.

AN changes lawyers. The process goes quickly. He is released from Ellebæk immediately after the change of lawyer, before the next court hearing.

05.07.2021

JS. is happy with his lawyer.

16.07.2021

JS hasn't heard back from his lawyer for 3 days.

24.07.2021

JS finds it frustrating that his lawyer cannot tell him exactly how long he will be in Ellebæk 'I can sit here for more time, as long as I know when I will get out'. See also under 'Mental Health' from the same date about JS.

03.08.2021

JS has been told by the guards that if his lawyer does not ask the judge how long he should stay in Ellebæk, he must ask himself. He plans to do so at the next court hearing in September.

28.08.2021

JS's lawyer always answers 'I don't know' when he asks how long he will be there. JS thinks this is very frustrating.

02.11.2021

AP seems relatively satisfied with his lawyer, but it is clear that the lawyer is very busy with his handling of AP's case. The lawyer has submitted an application for family reunification 3-4 months ago. He keeps saying that the answer will come "soon", but it seems unclear to AP when the answer will be available. The lawyer is aware of his family's situation - he has written to the Danish Immigration Service regarding AP's newborn child, who is still waiting for his residence permit in Denmark.

18.01.2022

AR raised several times concerns about his lawyer, since he showed no real interest in the case and he is not specialized in this kind of law. There was clearly a language barrier, and the lawyer didn't show up in Ellebaek while AR was detained there. It was AR's wish to get a visit by his lawyer, but in the end they only

had phone calls in broken German. This in turn led to AR's absence at one of the hearings, since AR was informed too late about this hearing taking place. However, the lawyer has tried to challenge the court's decision, but to no avail. After AR called his lawyer, he said that he would withdraw from the case or have no more opportunity to take action against the decision. Deportation will take place in the next few weeks after the decision (in the end it took much longer than announced).

15.02.2022

Based on the wife (C) of AU, with whom I have a lot of contact, the performance of his lawyer is very disappointing. AU has expressed on the phone to C that he does not know who his lawyer is. C has contacted the lawyer several times by email without getting any response. C is very interested in changing AU's lawyer. The day after our first conversation, I send a letter in Spanish to the priest so that he can give it to AU. The letter states that he can choose to change his lawyer. AU does not respond to this, most likely due to his serious condition. His lawyer remains the same.

10.09.22

AS is happy with his lawyer. It seems that sometimes something gets lost in their communication. When I visited her on August 9th, she explained that she had mentioned the pictures of the violence to him, which she wants him to have access to. However, when I called the lawyer shortly after, he did not have this knowledge. He said he would look into the possibility of getting access to her phone, which is currently locked up in Ellebæk. When I visited her today, we talked about the same issue regarding the pictures. She has not heard anything new regarding this. I will therefore call him again on Monday to clarify the status of this. She is going to the video court again on 22.09, and she strongly wants the pictures to be included there.

25.09.2022

DH is happy with his lawyer, but would like her to visit him. The lawyer has told him that she lives very far away and therefore cannot visit him.

03.10.2022

LN has been in Ellebæk for 29 days, but has still had no contact with his lawyer.

Update: Nov 2022 - LN does not know the name of his lawyer and has only spoken to her once. Upon subsequent contact, it has been the lawyer's assistant who has taken care of LN's case. LN is very unhappy with the way he has been spoken to by both the lawyer and the assistant.

05.10.2022

The lawyer says she can't visit because she lives so far away. It turns out she has an office in Hillerød. I have not told DH this. Due to the Dublin procedure, he will most likely have to be sent to the Netherlands.

29.10.2022

The lawyer did not complain about the episodes of guards degrading and violent treatment that DH experienced. I will formulate the complaints instead.

11. Experience with government handling of files/documents

28.11.2020

AY is told that he is not allowed to receive documentation of his investigation for torture. He finds this strange and unfair.

20.11.2020

I called the administration to tell them that I had obtained AC's verbal consent to obtain his medical records and overview of his prescriptions. I asked if I needed to submit a document for the AC to sign to demonstrate his consent in writing. This was not necessary. Instead, I was asked to write a secure email to Ellebæk, provide AC's social security number, and was told that the email would be sent to the doctor who could get a verbal confirmation from AC. I wrote an email afterwards (documentation available).

03.12.2020

I called the administration yesterday and pushed back on my request to obtain AC's medical records and told them it was urgent because the medical records were needed the next day when AC was due in court. The officer on duty was very willing to help, but told me that the doctor was not available, so I would have to try calling again early the next morning. I called as agreed in the morning and was connected to someone from the administration who very succinctly told me that the doctor had received my request and that there was nothing more he could do. I never heard back and haven't moved on it since, as the AC's lawyer gave up on pursuing the angle that necessitated the medical record and prescriptions as documentation.

30.05.2021

I had signed a power of attorney with N so that I could call his caseworker at the Repatriation Agency, as she never answered the phone when he called. A few weeks after setting this up (and several conversations with the caseworker), the secretary told me that there was no power of attorney on N's case and therefore I couldn't get any information. It turned out that the case manager hadn't scanned the power of attorney into the file for all the weeks it had been active.

14.01.2022

AR carried documentation with him about his mental state. AR expressed this with the help of a translator that was in Ellebæk when he first arrived. The documentation about the conditions was either ignored or falsely interpreted. There seemed to be confusion about the health documentation and why they didn't screen him to discover his fragile mental state. AR claims that there were no translations, no sufficient health support, wrong medication, and generally uncertainty due to almost no information given to the inmates. Additionally, the documentation AR received from the Danish authorities are mostly in Danish and English, which makes it difficult for people detained who don't speak one of the languages.

25.09.2022

DH has a passport and ID card in Amsterdam. He also has one type of document in Paris. In addition, he has documents stored at Ellebæk.

12. Network in Denmark

25.06.2020

S has no network in Denmark.

05.07.2020

Å has a girlfriend in Denmark, but he cannot visit her due to a criminal record. He was not approved.

25.07.2020

Z has 2 friends in Denmark that he knows from Dianalund 1 Iranian man and 1 Afghan woman - both have been granted asylum. Z. has contact with the woman.

Z. is also visited by a former visiting friend from the asylum center.

06.11.2020

AC's wife and three children live in Avnstrup. They have lived in Denmark for 17 years. All their friends live in Denmark, they have family in Sweden.

28.11.2020

AY was very active at his former asylum center and had a good relationship with the staff and other asylum seekers. But he has no contact with anyone anymore, only his family outside Denmark.

Fall 2020

After visiting J for a year, I start to be put in contact with some of his friends. So far, I have only been in contact with one of his friends (with the same nationality as J), but the more time passes, the more people I have to call and the more people want to help me find a new lawyer, etc. J's friends don't dare to visit J in Ellebæk, so I act as a "physical" intermediary.

29.05.2021

AM has a boyfriend in Denmark, but he has expired Italian papers so he can't visit him. But they talk on the phone. I am in contact with AM through a former detainee in Ellebæk, who is also from

same country. AM has also been a member of LGBT Denmark and generally seems to have had a network in Denmark. AM tells me that I am the first person to visit him.

05.07.2021

JS has no contacts in Denmark and has had no visitors during the 17 months he has been imprisoned in Ellebæk.

25.09.2022

DH has no network in Denmark, but friends in Sweden.

13. Stories of other people deprived of their liberty

05.07.2020

Å's friend has a problem with the fact that she can't smoke more than twice a day. Smoking is not allowed in the new indoor cages. She also has a skin condition that plagues her.

08.2020

Q describes the situation of a man who has been detained for about one week. The man refuses to eat and drink. He is wearing a face mask. Possibly he is Russian. He is young, in his 20's. He is very skinny. The security knows about it.

26.10.2020

J tells us that there has been a fight in Ellebæk. Subsequently, someone from China was admitted to the hospital and has been there for 2 days now.

21.11.2020

AB calls me in the morning, clearly disturbed, talking about an incident in which a man (Russian I think he said) who was "covered in blood" stood in the middle of the corridor yelling. When a few guards appeared, he was yelling "I'm not mad at you, I'm mad at the system". He cut himself in multiple spots across his chest and belly. The guards managed to pacify him. Soon after, an ambulance came and took him. A week after AB says that no one saw him after the incident. AB said "Blood scares me. I can't get this picture out of my mind."

28.11.2020

AY is a bit paranoid about Moroccans in Ellebæk. He is afraid that they are working with the Moroccan government. At Sandholm, he experienced a Moroccan man sitting down and talking to him for a long time. He met him again at another asylum center, after which AY found out that he was a former gendarmerie, but that he was also seeking asylum here.

04.12.2020

AC says that there was a Russian man last week or the week before who had cut himself on his chest and stomach. AC doesn't know where he is now.

25.08.2020

J tells about a fight between two detainees. One of the parties has subsequently been moved to another ward.

15.01.2021

AY talks about those he knows who suffer from serious illnesses in Ellebæk. Y from Syria who seems schizophrenic. AY says that he has documents in Sweden. Y allegedly shouts from his room that there are several men hitting him. AY tells about S, a Palestinian who has been in Ellebæk for 4 months. According to AY, he has 12 serious illnesses and should be hospitalized. AY also tells about an elderly Palestinian man AI, 55-60 years old, who has spent 15 days in solitary confinement, or "special room" as the guards call it. He is also in poor health.

16.07.2021

JS says that some have been there for 22 months, but are now in an open camp. JS also says that there are many Afghans detained in Ellebæk and the police deport them in large groups on special flights.

09.08.2021

JS says that new people come to Ellebæk every day. A man has just returned from Kærshovedgaard, who previously spent around 17 months in Ellebæk.

17.08.2021

JS says that there are about six Afghan nationals in his hallway.

04.05.2022

AT said that there are certain social dynamics that lead to fragmentation. Those dynamics are based on language and origin. This in turn leads to the disunity between different inmates. There also seems to be hierarchies with regard to who works in which section. People in the kitchen are prioritizing 'their people' over others and distributing more food to people they know.

11.05.2022

AT had an inmate in his cell that would never leave the cell, even not for food. So AT had to remind him every day and in some cases bring food and water into the cell. The person was in a very bad psychological state, which led to self-isolation. The guards knew about it but didn't act upon it.

25.09.2022

DH says that there are some detainees at Ellebæk who have developed violent mental reactions to their detention. For example, some just sit and stare into space or rock back and forth.

29.10.2022

DH told me that there are many new people who have been detained, and that the rooms seem to be filled up.

31.10.2022

AS tells that there currently are 13 women in Ellebæk.

14. Relationship with other detainees

24.06.2020

AA has a close friend who also speaks Spanish in Ellebæk. They are very close allies.

05.07.2020

Å has a good friend in Ellebæk. They can speak Spanish together and get along well.

20.12.2020

AG says he has a great relationship with two in his hallway.

28.7.2020

J talks about conflicts in his section, a group has been after him and knocked over his coffee on purpose, making noise at night so he can't sleep. He is allowed by the guards to be moved to a new section. In addition to the above conflict, I find that J is very well liked by the other detainees, makes friends with his changing roomies (he's been there for over 13 months, so he's been through a lot). He also helps us spread the word about EKN to the others, putting us in contact with a handful of people.

16.07.2021

JS connects well with the others in his hallway.

24.07.2021

JS. says he prays with his 'roommate'.

28.08.2021

JS says that he has no friends in Ellebæk, but that there are two people with whom he eats and prays.

05.02.2022

AR had almost no contact with other people, since AR rarely left their cell. But AR had good relationships with their cellmate. There was however a language barrier which led to communication problems.

11.05.2022

According to AT there are people that don't want to talk, or they only talk to specific people. AT got along with most of the people in Ellebæk and AT actively tried to chat with everyone. During activities, like

football or basketball, there were also social interactions during which the inmates got to know each other better.

10.09.22

Currently, there are 7 people in the women's department. AS has a good contact with two.

25.09.2022

DH has contact with a person from Kosovo.

05.10.2022

DH's friend from Kosovo has been deported to Kosovo, even though he has a work permit in Hungary. He has four children. He wants to take legal action against Denmark.

22.10.2022

I received a call from a family member who told me that a young woman was potentially dead. After another activist contacted the consul of her country, it turned out that she was at a psychiatric department. The other women had been really scared.

7.11.2022

LN says that he does not have close contact with other detainees.

15. Reports on the process of signing a repatriation agreement

25.06.2020

S says that Moroccans are only paid DKK 500 upon repatriation. He says that three people are going to Morocco when the airport opens next month.

16. Visitor authorization process

05.07.2020

Was approved for a visit within 2 days.

13.07.2020

Got approved to visit the island in 2 days.

25.07.2020

Got approved for a visit by Z in 3 days, he was notified immediately.

30.10.2020

Was denied a visitor's permit the same day I sent the request due to Corona restrictions - AC is already being visited by his wife.

28.11.2020

Was approved to visit AY within two weeks, but had to call and get my bearings. I applied about a month before my first visit.

20.12.2020

I was approved to visit AG over the course of 5 days.

23.10.2020

My visitation permit for J was revoked without me being informed (I found out because I called to ask about something else.) The reason given was corona. I called and explained that I am J's primary visitor friend. The guards were helpful and within 24 hours my visitor's permit was valid again.

26.02.2021

After 5 business days, I called in to find out what happens to my visitor's permit, and was told by someone from the administration that they are usually processed within 2-3 days, so if I had not received a call from the detainee, it was their choice not to call. I call again the next day and ask for the status of my application and am told that they have not received it. I ask for the correct email, which is the same one I sent it to in the first place. I ask him to wait on the phone until he receives it again to make sure it has come through.

29.05.2021

Approved to visit AM within less than 5 days.

12.07.2021

Got approved to visit JS within 5 days.

14.01.2022

The visit request was approved after a week, even though they initially couldn't find the person in the system.

28.04.2022

I applied to visit AS on March 25th and did not hear from the person after that. I called the administration about 3 weeks later to follow up on it. I spoke to someone in the administration who was happy to leave a message with my phone number. The next day she called me back and

Unfortunately, the phone worked extremely poorly - the call was repeatedly disconnected and then suddenly silent.

29.04.2022

The visit request was approved within three business days.

25.09.2022

Visit request was rejected the first time as it was a photo and not a PDF. Approved the second time on the same day, after a phone call and sent as a PDF.

26.09.2022

Same-day visitor permit

28.10.2022

Visitor's permit granted after 24 hours.

31.10.2022

Visitor's permit granted after 24 hours. We only had a one-hour visit. Since I was 15 minutes late, we only got 45 minutes. E was allowed to take food back to the cell.

17. Arrest

28.11.2020

AY was arrested in May 2020 in Copenhagen after he failed to show up for a court hearing on his case because he had misunderstood the date. An employee at his center had tried to communicate this, but to no avail. He was in Copenhagen, while he was legally required to be in a center. He was taken to Ellebæk, and here the situation unfolded violently. He had resisted, was restrained by 5 police officers and put in a straitjacket. There were no medical personnel present to witness the detention.

03.12.2020

AC had his asylum case rejected in 2020. He lived in Avnstrup with his family, but traveled back and forth to his private address. He was registered as absent from Avnstrup 11 times, which is why he was reported as wanted from October to March, even though during this period he was regularly registered at Avnstrup, picked up his medicine from the clinic, went to interviews at the job center and had video conversations with the municipality. These incidents are used as justification for non-cooperation and reason to suspect that AC will try to go underground.

20.12.2020

AG was arrested when he tried to cross the border between Germany and Denmark on foot without a passport or negative COVID test. AG is on his way to Sweden to visit family, but without a passport or COVID test, he cannot cross the border into Denmark. AG also says that the residence permit he has in Germany cannot be used to leave the country. The police tell him that he can either turn around and stay in Germany or apply for asylum. AG feels pressured and asks for 10 minutes to decide. He is told no. AG then says he wants to apply for asylum. The police found several of AG's fingerprints in Europe, including both Belgium and Germany.

AG says he is accused of 'asylum shopping', which is why he is sent to Ellebæk. Germany says they will not accept AG, but Belgium says they will accept him.

24.06.2020

AE is caught by the police in East Jutland, has no legal basis for residence in Denmark, but has a residence permit in Spain (and a Colombian passport). AE is to be deported to Spain, but due to corona, the person is put in Ellebæk for many weeks before the deportation can take place.

05.02.2021

AJ has been in many different Danish camps from 2015-2020 while his asylum application was being processed. When his application was rejected by the Refugee Appeals Board in 2020, he went to Germany, where he stayed for 5 months until the German police sent him to Denmark. He first spent a few weeks in Vestre Fængsel and then he was sent to Ellebæk.

29.05.2021

AM is arrested while hanging out with friends, where he is accused of moonlighting. This is the second time AM is in Ellebæk. AM came to Denmark in October 2015, seeking asylum. After only one week in Denmark, he is arrested for criminality. AM receives a 30-day sentence, which he serves in Vestre Fængsel. Due to the sentence, AM is told that he must be deprived of his liberty throughout the asylum process. AM is moved to Ellebæk. After a few months, he is transferred to Vestre Fængsel as something has happened in Ellebæk, not against him personally, but he explains it as other inmates rioting and smashing things. He ends up being detained for one year. This also means that both asylum interviews take place while he is in detention.

16.07.2021

JS had been stopped in Germany, and since he had fingerprints in Denmark, he was deported and transferred to Ellebæk immediately.

24.06.2021

AN was caught in Christianshavn with 0.7 grams of cannabis on him, which triggered an administrative deportation of 2 years.

02.11.2021

AP had stayed in Denmark for about 2 years without being in contact with the authorities. In February 2021, he was stopped by the police at his local supermarket in Nørrebro. He showed another person's invalid health card as he did not have a legal basis for residence. The police arrested him. The police searched his home, particularly looking for traces of drugs. He was first in Vestre Fængsel for 4 days and then he was transferred to Ellebæk. He was told that the penalty for showing a false ID was 10 days in prison. He was sent to the "criminal" section of Ellebæk, section 17, where he had been for about 9 months at the time of the visit.

14.01.2022

AR was arrested at the Danish-German border in December 2021. AR was first detained in a prison in Padborg before being transferred to Ellebæk in early January. This was the second time within a year that AR was stopped at the border and transferred to Ellebæk.

29.04.2022

AT was stopped on a train from Germany to Denmark in early April. AT was arrested, placed in a punishment cell for almost 10 days and was immediately transferred to Ellebæk. AT arrived at Ellebæk in mid-April, which is the second time after he was deported to Germany last year.

25.09.2022

DH was arrested on his way to Sweden by the border police. DH describes the police as professional.

3.10.2022

LN was caught by the Danish police at a train station. He was on his way to Sweden and an inspector, who LN had asked for help, had called the police. He was taken directly to a police station where everything on him was searched. He shows me his thin down coat with stitches along the sleeves and pockets. The police cut it open during the search. They found nothing. He was held in custody for three days.

18. Experiences with police

01.02.2020

AY says that he has received an intimidating call from the Danish police telling him that they are going to deport him. This scares him and makes him distrust the system. He finds it strange that he has a lawyer and a case if the police can just walk in and deport him. However, he also knows that Morocco's borders are closed and he can't be sent home now. He doesn't understand the meaning of the call. His Iraqi cellmate was picked up for deportation at 5 am without notice on 26.01.21 and this has caused him even more discomfort.

31.10.2022

I called the police in connection with DH being pushed by the security guards. The first person I spoke to from the North Zealand Police was a trainee and was unsure of the procedure. Subsequently, I spoke to an officer and explained that DH is very mild-mannered and has a heart condition. I explained that he had been pushed into his room, where there is no camera (whether there are cameras in the rooms, I'm actually a little unsure). Subsequently, he was taken to the isolation cell as he was to be deported on Monday (guards' words).

The officer said that I obviously had a lot of empathy for him. He used the word 'pushed' in part and 'puffed'. I emphasized that it was pushed, which he said was the same thing. Subsequently, he said that it was 'a certain clientele' at Ellebæk. He also said that a report (possibly a complaint?) had been filed against DH. DH should have lifted something (this is a very fragile and heart-sick man, but of course I have not seen this video). The officer said that it had not been filmed, and that there was therefore nothing to go on in this case. Afterwards, he said I could call the guards to get their version. I pointed out to him that pushing is illegal, cf. the Criminal Code, section 244 on ordinary violence. He said that as a law student, I probably also knew that it doesn't always work that way in practice. He wished me a good day. I said that I was very sorry to hear that this was how the practice worked and wished him a good day as well.

19. Home Travel Agency

24.09.2020

J has received a letter from the Home Travel Agency: "Assignment to interview" for a meeting at 9am regarding his case. He is very nervous about this meeting and when I visit him that afternoon, he tells me in frustration that they never showed up. Nor did they leave a message. Four days later he calls, now the Home Travel Agency came to a meeting with him (without notice or explanation). They brought an interpreter who speaks Tamil - K does not speak Tamil, but Sinhalese.

The repatriation board's visit caused great confusion for J, he called upset and mentioned embassy, deportation, refugee board, but with no immediate meaning.

Sept-Oct 2020

AB had one visit from Hjemrejsestyrelsen during the first month of being in Ellebæk. He was offered money to go back to Iraq. When he refused, he was told that he would be forced to leave.

08.11.2020

Q has had a visit from Hjemrejsestyrelsen every month approx. It is a new person each time. They use the same language of violence, where they try to force Q to sign the deportation paper. They put emphasis on the force they will use, if he doesn't comply with their demand. Q has been told several times that they will use a non-passenger flight to deport him, that is specially "designed" for forced deportations. Q quotes them to have said that they "will deport him no matter what it takes". Q mentions that it's probable to be a frontier airline, that authorities from several European countries use to coordinate their planned deportations.

12.02.2021

Q is visited by the repatriation agency again. He is not informed about the visit in advance. He mentions that some receive a message in advance, while others do not. He comments that due to his many months in prison, they are particularly interested in showing up unannounced.

11.11.2020

AB had another visit from Hjemrejsestyrelsen during which he was, again, asked to leave Denmark and agree to go back to Iraq. He refused. For the second time in a row they told him that if he doesn't leave, he will be deported by force. The use of force was emphasized a few times during this meeting. He was also offered to meet someone from the Iraqi embassy, but he also refused that. They said that he will meet them, anyways, in December. He was informed that Hjemrejsestyrelsen will do anything in their power to deport him by the end of the year.

04.12.2020

AC says that someone from the Home Travel Agency visits him every month either just before or after he goes to court. AC says that she tries to pressure him to leave voluntarily by threatening him that he will not receive any money and by describing how the police will come and surround him and his family, and will force them physically and violently if necessary.

AC finds that everything he says in the meetings is turned against him, that she distorts his stories and accuses him of lying, even though he insists that certain events happened in a certain order.

03.12.2020

The Home Travel Agency's new manager is a woman, according to J. The woman is wearing a uniform, the woman means power and "no bluff" according to J. The police bring phones into the visiting rooms. According to J, the Home Office has visited all three times, and only him once.

04.12.2020

Talk to a lawyer from the Danish Refugee Council about J's case. She tells me that since the Danish Home Travel Agency was established, the Danish Refugee Council has been severely cut in funding for their impartial counseling. This has meant that they have had to cut their visits to the departure centers in Denmark because the Danish Home Travel Agency has taken over the funds. The lawyer expresses that this is problematic, as they are not considered impartial advice, i.e. separate from the authorities.

04.05.2021

At H's request, I speak with his caseworker from the Home Travel Agency. H has asked me to tell him that he is having a very difficult time in Ellebæk and ask what can be done to get him to Portugal faster. To this, the caseworker replies "That's what happens when you come to Denmark illegally!"

I reply that we don't need to discuss this and move on to the next question. The caseworker is helpful in explaining what has been done in the case and why it is taking so long (H has been in Ellebæk for 5 months).

16.07.2021

JS says that everyone tries to avoid conversations with the Repatriation Agency. According to him, they make people detained in Ellebæk believe that they have no other option than to return to their home country if they want to leave Ellebæk. He describes how, after a visit from the Repatriation Agency, his whole day is ruined and his head becomes heavy.

17.08.2021

JS says that the repatriation agency visited him. They have offered him DKK 20,000 to travel, but he refuses. According to him, he came here voluntarily and will also travel voluntarily.

17.09.2021

It seems that the Danish Repatriation Agency wants JS to stay in Ellebæk, because as they have told him 'you might change your mind'. However, it is a little unclear whether it is the guards or the repatriation agency that has said this.

20. The Refugee Board

29.10.2020

I call the Refugee Appeals Board and am told that their processing time is currently 12-16 months. Back in January, the average was 6-8 months, so it has increased. She explains that it's not because they have cut staff, but because the volume of cases has increased.

21. Covid-19

24.06.2020

AA says that they have made a big price increase on cigarettes after the corona started. A pack used to cost DKK 40, but now it has gone up to DKK 55.

02.11.2020

I have noticed that none of the guards wear face masks/visors even though they, unlike the prisoners, have every-day contact with the outside. They do not always manage to keep distance, for example in the narrow corridors of the visitation building.

01.10.2020

I called the administration today, but reached the guard instead. I asked what the rules for visitation were currently (because I had heard from someone in a different network that they had recently changed due to corona). He was a bit unsure, but read the new rule aloud (implemented September 30th), where it states that one returning visitor who is not a relative is permitted.

05.10.2020

I called to ask about the visitation rules again, because I wanted to hear whether a translator was allowed to join me. This time I reached the administration. I repeated what I had been told by the guard the 1st of October, but was told that I was wrong. I told him that I was certain that was what I had heard, and the guard even told me he was reading aloud from a document, so I was a bit confused what the rule actually was. He seemed to get upset and told me very sternly that there was absolutely nothing to be confused about, and was very insisting that the procedure is very clear. The procedure is that only one visitor is allowed, and in case detainees do not have any relatives, Ellebæk can sometimes make an exception for a visitor who is not a relative. He told me they consider it an exception to the rule, so I can't just expect it. He told me the rule also implies that translators are not allowed to join. This means Ø is not receiving any visits currently, since Ø would rather wait until the rules change, since we can't communicate very well without a translator.

08.11.2020

J is trying to help get an overview of who is "stuck" due to corona. In other words, who really wants to leave, but can't due to lockdown/no flights/possibility of leaving due to corona. He tells me that there are currently 6 from Afghanistan, 1 from China, 1 from Nigeria, 3 from Morocco. He has made this overview based on knowledge of his own section, where there are 16 people.

27.11.2020

AB tells me that people don't want to do the coronavirus test because apparently another detainee was taken to another prison to do that, where he was kept for 2-3 days, given 1 meal a day. When he came back, he spread the news saying that he will not agree to do the test again.

01.12.2020

J says that the entire section 16 has been tested. One person (Q) who refused to be tested was put in a special room (isolation cell) for 1 week-10 days. J says: "The staff told us that they would test everybody. But not everyone was tested. Q refused to be tested, the staff attempted to persuade him for a long time, but he kept refusing. They locked him in the isolation cell for 4 days. He was supposed to be there for 2 weeks, but since everyone in his section was negative, he was released after 4 days." Note: if the corona test is negative it can work as their proof to Nigeria, that he is "corona-safe" to be deported.

07.12.2020

A social worker in Ellebæk has explained to J about the new lockdown in the country. Otherwise, J tells me about the confusion about corona inside Ellebæk, there is a feeling of not understanding/knowing what is going on in society.

13.12.2020

J calls and tells us that all activities (soccer, lessons, etc.) are canceled from December 10th until January 7th due to corona/holiday.

He also says that many new detainees have arrived/are arriving during the new lockdown.

19.12.2020

I speak to J on the phone and ask him if the staff in Ellebæk wear masks. He tells me that all staff (kitchen, security, etc.) have been wearing masks for the last two weeks.

20.12.2020

I ask AG if the guards ever wear masks. (I haven't seen anyone wearing a mask) and he says no. They don't care.

22.04.2021

I called the administration and received confirmation that the corona restrictions on the number of visitors have just been relaxed. Each detainee is still limited to one visit per week, but there are no restrictions on the number of visitors. This means that it is once again possible to have

visits by different people in turn. However, it is still not possible to have more than one visitor at a time (multiple visitors are only allowed as an adult with children). This means that it is still not possible to bring an interpreter.

20.02.2022

After AR's deportation to Germany, the Danish police didn't give AR all the documentation needed. AR received the first vaccine while being in Ellebæk, but the statement about the received vaccination was missing, which led to problems when arriving back at one of the German deportation arrival points. Until today, it is still missing, and the police couldn't give me further information on that matter.

22. Other Remarks

21.06.2020

Security staff told me that a person has been moved to Vestre Fængsel due to illness.

30.06.2020

I tried to visit A today (Tuesday) but was unsuccessful due to a misunderstanding about which day I wanted to visit her. When I was at the 'reception' I was told that you can't book an appointment on the same day and that I'm not on the list. I asked them to check if I was on one of the other days - they checked and said that I was booked in on Thursday. I said that was obviously a mistake and they said they had to follow the rules. One of them then told me that he had booked the time and that she had first booked it for Tuesday and then moved it to Thursday. I asked if I could just use the time that was originally booked as there was obviously space in the room and I didn't think she was busy with something else important. They reiterated that they had to follow the rules. I didn't have the energy to make a scene, but wrote her a letter explaining the situation and then went home. She called me afterwards and we arranged another visit day.

16.07.2020

AA had not originally thought she would seek asylum in Denmark. She wanted to go to Spain and get family reunification so they could live in safety in a country where they speak the same language. After AA arrived in Europe, she was in transit through Denmark, where she was arrested by the police as she did not have the official documents with her.

She was detained in Ellebæk, from where she chose to seek asylum after consulting with the Danish Refugee Council. AA is particularly happy with her counselor. First, AA is informed that her asylum case has been accepted, which of course makes her very happy. But then they withdraw it, explaining that her dual citizenship deprives her of the right to asylum in Denmark. According to the authorities, AA can seek protection in her second country, where she is also a citizen. She believes that it is just as unsafe to stay there as in her home country and is therefore very frustrated by this decision.

On July 16, AA is moved to Center Sandholm after 7 months in Ellebæk. The reason for the move is that COVID-19 has frozen the cooperation with her embassy and that her detention cannot be extended according to the judge.

30.11.2020

B is back in Ellebæk after he is stopped on the street by the police and they investigate him and find out that he has not stayed at Kærshovedgård as he was supposed to. B is first sent to Vestre Fængsel and then to Ellebæk. B calls a lot and especially asks me how long I think he will be in prison. I ask about the reason why he has been sent to Ellebæk. B is unaware of the reason. B and I wonder why he is in Ellebæk, as failure to comply with the reporting obligation is usually served in ordinary prisons. B is released after about 3 weeks.

04.12.2020

Telephone counseling with a lawyer from the Danish Refugee Council. Very helpful, they pick up and visit J the following week.

09.04.2021

AC's has been reinstated, he was released yesterday. AC is now back in Avnstrup before he and his family move to an asylum center in Jutland.

29.05.2021

AM has no passport, despite this, has never been presented to his embassy. This happened neither during the first detention of one year nor the second time, which has now lasted two months.

AM wishes to have his case reopened and has contacted the Danish Refugee Council himself. I have received written consent to apply for access to his entire case.

02.07.2021

I called the nurses at Ellebæk because several people had called in and told me that they were experiencing pain and were not getting any treatment other than panodil. The nurse replied that he could not comment on the specific cases, but that everyone got the help they needed and that they actually got better help than if they had not been at Ellebæk (?). I told him that there might have been a miscommunication between them, since one of the callers peed blood and had not been examined. To which he replied that he could reassure me that everyone was examined.

03.05.2022

I get a call from Q who tells me that he has been detained in Ellebæk again after about 14 months in Kærshovedgård. Q has an appointment at a hospital to have an important eye operation, which he is now worried that he will not be able to attend. In collaboration with BLM and the priest, we put pressure on the lawyer to get him to the hospital.

04.05.2022

After the first visits, AT said that some of the phones are not working properly - AT couldn't hear everything I was saying - which leads to difficulties concerning understanding the person at the other end of the line.

I experienced something similar when I had phone calls with other people that tried to call us. This has implications for understanding what the other person wants to say, such as telling their name, birth date etc.

10.09.2022

I visited AS today. She expresses that it is very cold in the buildings already. The guard mentions that there are about 50 people in Ellebæk right now.