



European Prison Education Association

Welcome to our April Newsletter



Update from Western Region

UK: What a whirlwind month it has been in the UK, with the announcement of a snap general election. Unfortunately this means a Bill going through parliament that put the

purpose of prison as rehabilitation, has now [been stalled](#). I have been active in trying to influence the prison reform agenda, which is planning to give Governors more control over prison education. I was able to give evidence in front of a committee of MPs ([see here](#)) however we will have to see what happens after the election! A scathing [Council of Europe CPT report](#) this month highlighted the problems with lack of prisoner safety and access to education in English prisons due to lack of staffing. More positively, this month Prisoners' Education Trust launched two new networks: PLAN ([Prisoner Learning Academic Network](#)) and PUPiL ([Prison University Partnerships in Learning](#)).

Holland: This month I had the pleasure of a wonderful visit to London from the Chair of the Dutch branch of the EPEA, Veronique Achoui. I tired her out with visits to three prisons and an academic symposium on prison education! She visited HMP Brixton in London with EPEA member Sara Lee of Music in Prisons to eat at the award winning [The Clink](#) restaurant. She visited HMP Lowdham Grange to watch the graduation ceremony of a [Learning Together partnership](#) between the prison and Nottingham Trent University organised by EPEA member Anne O'Grady. She also visited HMP Thameside a modern private prison with in-cell technology. There she sat in on a [prison reading group](#) in the library led by a community volunteer. Veronique writes about her experiences below. I thought Veronique was a passionate and dedicated person with lots of energy and ideas. I think the Dutch branch are very lucky to have her!

Belgium: I have had good contact with Belgium this month for two reasons. Firstly, I have partnered on an Erasmus + project application that my Belgium colleagues are leading on, focusing on prisoner participation and learner voice. Fingers crossed! Secondly, I will be visiting Belgium next month as part of my [Winston Churchill Travel Fellowship](#) including visits to Beveren and Nivelles prisons, and to take part on a prison education research day organised by EPEA member Dorien Brosens. Find out more as I travel by following my [LinkedIn blog here](#) (I will also be visiting Denmark, Poland and the USA). VOCVO have also announced the date of their FORINER conference in Brussels on 28th November if you are interested in education for foreign national prisoners.

Ireland: The Irish branch of the EPEA have announced details of a lecture on 11th May on mental health, well being and wellness ([tickets here](#)). In February Prof. Aisleen O'Donnell visited London and I invited her to speak at our Prisoner Learning Alliance meeting about her work using philosophy in prisons. Aislinn reflected that education was often seen by prisoners as a way they were forced by society to do things which didn't interest them, noting that "*anyone with genuine independence of character will resist if you try to change them*" - even if they can see that the changer has the right motivation. Aislinn highlighted that prison education can be very output-focused and it is difficult to establish 'softer' outcomes and causal relationships from interventions. However, Aislinn has now been asked by the Irish Prison Service to develop tools to evaluate key competencies relating to prison education: *Learning to Learn, Social and Civic Competencies, Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship, and Cultural Awareness and Expression*.

France: I am very happy that France have a new branch steering committee (more details below).

I was very happy to see lots of applications to do workshops and speeches at the EPEA annual conference from the Western Region, so I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Vienna in November.

Best wishes,

Nina Champion



Nina Champion

EPEA WesternRegional Representative
west@epea.org

Conference Registration is now Open!



2017 Conference Logo

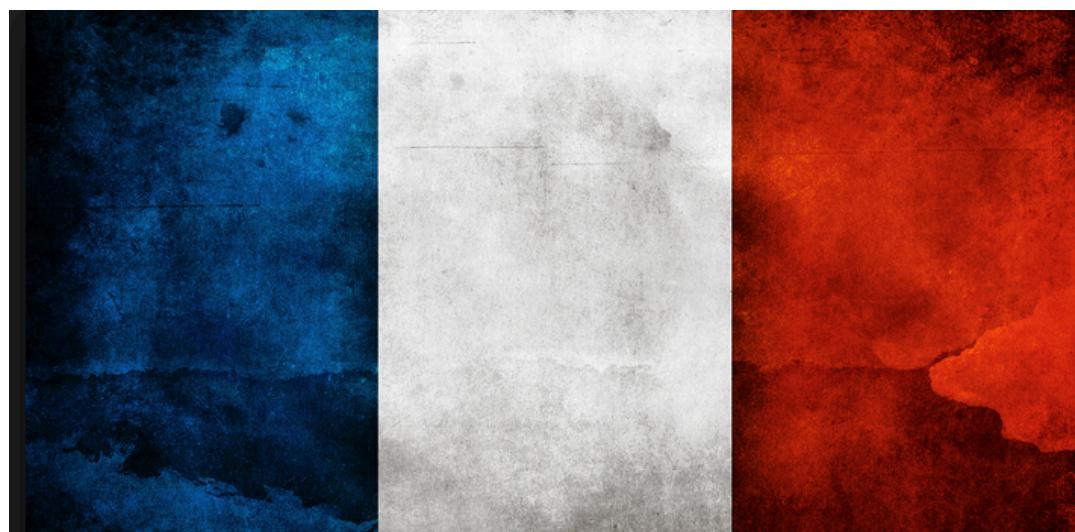
The Steering Committee are delighted to share the 16th EPEA conference logo with our members and announce that the registration is now live. Please register today by clicking [here](#) & keep an eye on our conference website (below) for more updates.

[Vienna Conference →](#)

Western Regional News



A New French Steering Committee





Congratulations to our French branch on your new committee!

Treasurer: Magali HAMM - magali.hamm@yahoo.fr

Secretary: Michel FEBRER - michel.febrer@wanadoo.fr

Vice-Chair Person: Olivier NAVARRO - olivier.navarro1@gmail.com

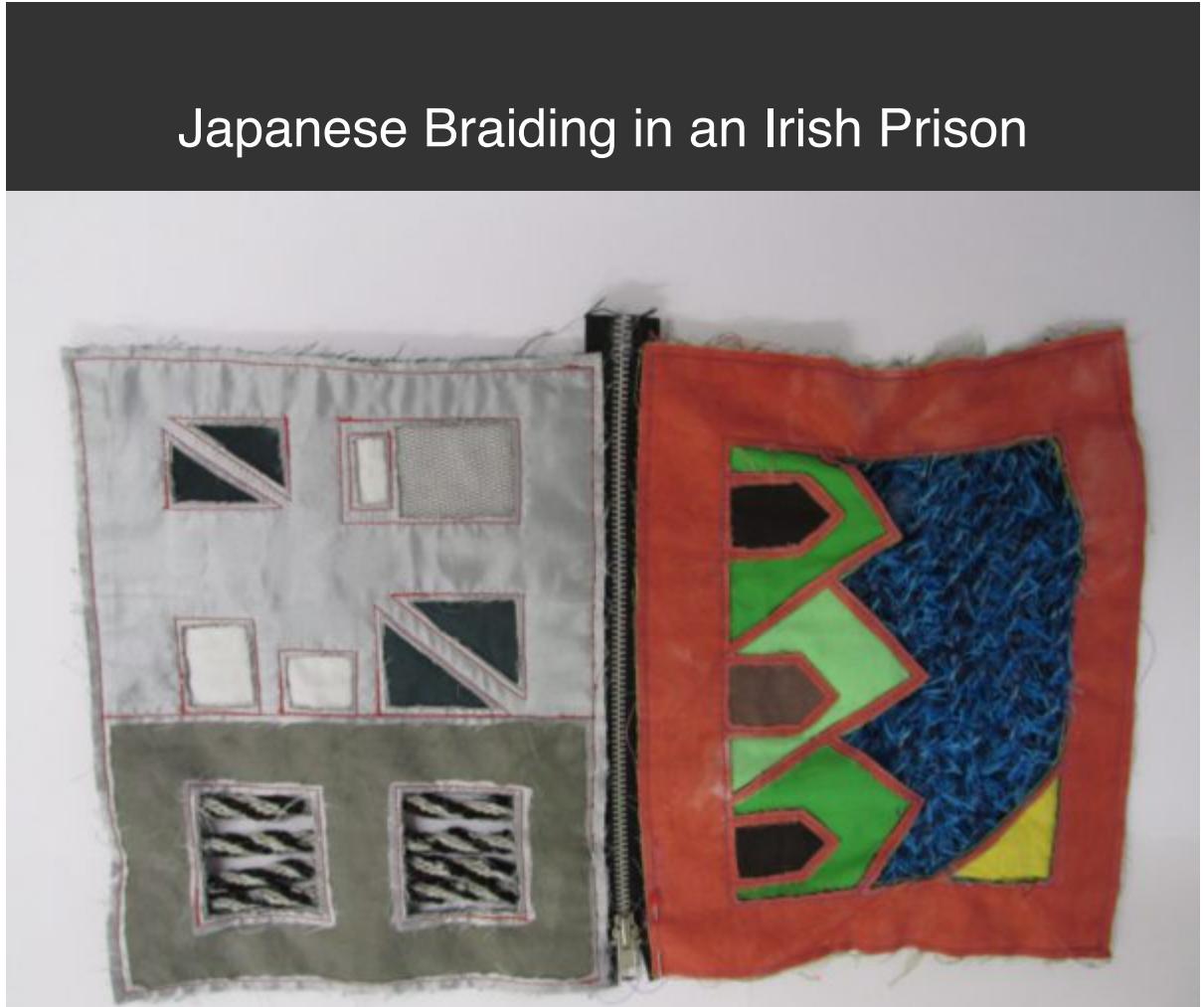
Chair Person: Marc DESJACQUES - mdesjacques@gmail.com

Liaison Person: Catherine LEFAOU - catherine.lefaou@gmail.com

Liaison Person: Joël QUEDEC - joel.quedec@gmail.com

French Branch →

Japanese Braiding in an Irish Prison





January and February of 2017 saw visiting artist Mary Timmons begin an art project in Cork Prison, Ireland. Mary worked alongside the craft teacher, Lorraine Higgins, to introduce the new skills of reverse applique and Japanese Braiding to the students.

"The project began with the idea of making a piece for the Irish National Exhibition '**Humans Sharing Spaces**' exhibition in March 2017. The idea was met with great enthusiasm from the students as they worked hard to brainstorm ideas, design their pieces and create beautiful works of art using these newly learned techniques", said teacher Lorraine Higgins. "The standard of work was extremely high and learners decided to showcase their piece in a handmade wardrobe which would become a part of the art itself. The final piece was called '**Explore; A Prisoner's Perspective**'.

Due to the high standard of work produced each learner was also able to achieve a Level 4 accredited QQI Certification in Textiles. Students were also given the opportunity to develop art portfolios for college during the scheme making use of visiting artist Mary Timmons's expertise.

"It was a wonderful opportunity for the students to explore the medium of textile art and proved to be a very worthwhile and enjoyable experience as well as a great sense of accomplishment."

*Article & Photos by
Lorraine Higgins
Cork Prison, Ireland*

For more images of the process of this project click below.



[Read More →](#)

Cell Block Science



Cell Block Science

The Scottish Prison Service has been working closely with the University of St. Andrew's (one of our oldest and most distinguished academic institutions) to deliver science projects to prisoners. These projects have proved immensely successful and the university are considering a bid to explore expansion of the project into Europe.

Please contact James King [here](#) if any of our European members or partners have any interest in getting involved with this project.

For more information go to:

[Cell Block Science →](#)

Family Links Pilot Project



In 2013, following extensive consultation on models of best practice by the Irish Prison Service (IPS), a partnership was formed between CDI, the IPS and the Parents Plus Charity to design and deliver an initiative project offering supports to parents in prison and their families, as well as training and support to prison staff. The pilot phase in Limerick Prison was evaluated by the University of Limerick, Ireland.

Delivery of the parenting course to prisoners is co-facilitated by teachers from the prison school and CDI and/or FLO. Delivery of the parenting course to the partners/carers is co-facilitated by an identified community organisation (E.g. Tusla – Child and Family Agency) and CDI.

Drawing on an existing evidence-based programme (Parents Plus), and the independently evaluated implementation of CDI's work with parents, a multi-disciplinary interagency service is being rolled out to other prisons, with the following specific objectives.

For more information on aims, objectivies & findings on the pilot phase by University of Limerick click [below](#).

[Learn More →](#)



Transformative Nature of Education in Prison

Job-shadow United Kingdom, Prisoners Education Trust

As adults, we often see education as belonging to our past, something that we have completed. However, in prisons it is an important part of the rehabilitation program. However, the way education is organised in prisons varies a great deal. Fortunately, there are organisations worldwide that try to keep the level, quality and offer of education high in prisons. Like the Prisoners' Education Trust - PET- who provide high level education to prisoners. I visited them in March 2017 through the Erasmus Plus program from the European Union that supports people involved in education to go abroad to learn from colleagues...

To read more from Veronique Aicha Achoui's Report, click below.

[Learn More →](#)



Please do not reply to this newsletter. For any queries click [here](#)

[Copyright EPEA © 2017 All Rights Reserved](#)

[Unsubscribe](#) | [View this email in your browser](#)



European Prison Education Association