



EPEA NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016

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### ***EPEA Trading Arm >>>***

The EPEA has registered a limited company in UK. The purpose of the company will be to handle financial matters in connections with projects and keep the general EPEA budget apart from project activities. This construction is common for many NGOs and charities and the SC decided to take the same approach after discussions on the SC meeting, a membership poll and a webinar for members to ask questions.

### ***Message from Secretary General, Torbjørn Jagland, Counsel of Europe >>>***



At the parliamentary assembly and in the INGO session the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, **Torbjørn Jagland**, said “[...] despite our many reforms to improve our Convention system over recent years, it faces a growing political threat. There have always been those who challenge the authority of international institutions, but these forces have slipped into the mainstream – and they are gaining traction. When we join the dots, the danger to our Convention system begins to feel very real indeed”.

#### **EPEA Statement:**

Prison Education is protected by international conventions like the Prison Rules. The CoE and Center for Prevention of Torture plays an important role in protection of fundamental rights for imprisoned citizens. They secure that prisoners have options to choose a path of rehabilitation by following purposeful activities like education and other rehabilitation programs. The EPEA will stand up for the conventions and the promote the R(89)12 as a fundament for educations role in bringing prisoners back to inclusion in society. For the EPEA the Counsel of Europe is a place of hope for the Planet. The conventions are grounded in values we hold dear and it protects the individual liberty of 820 million people.

Link: <http://www.epea.org/the-convention-under-threat/>

### ***“Goodbye teacher ... Goodbye George Zouganelis...”***



We are very sorry to hear the tragic news that respected EPEA Hellas branch secretary, Mr. **Giorgos Zouganelis**, has suddenly passed away. He was one of the Prison Education pioneers in Hellas, as headmaster of a school in the Korydallos Prison he served a long and respectable career. We would like to wish all of his family, colleagues & students our sincerest condolences in this difficult period.

## ***We don't need new prisons, we need a new prison culture >>>>***



Former prisoner **Erwin James** says on his blog in The Guardian: "After serving 20 years in jail, I know that most detainees hope to live a crime-free life on release, but until the corrupt atmosphere of our prisons is tackled, rehabilitation will remain a distant dream".

Read the full message here: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/09/prisons-prison-culture-detainees-crime-jails>

## ***Survey on conditions for civil society organisations >>>>***



**Anna Rurka**, the President of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, asks us to take part in a survey that will allow Civil Society Europe (CSE), Civicus and the Conference of INGOs to assess how operating conditions for civil society have changed in Europe over the past 12 months, what are the emerging trends and challenges that civil society organisations have to face, as well as the possibility to develop common responses. The survey deals with civic space, civil society collaboration and support, obstacles and challenges facing civil society at national level and broader political trends in Europe. The survey will be used as a basis for visits to CoE member states. Visits to Bulgaria and Moldova has already been completed and next in line are Romania, Poland among other countries.

Link to Survey (30 questions, app 15 min): <http://civilsocietyeurope.eu/2016/01/18/252/>

Link to visit reports: [http://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/home/-/asset\\_publisher/XpQs2eO7vrL1/content/ngo-participation-in-the-decision-making-process?\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_XpQs2eO7vrL1\\_viewMode=view](http://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/home/-/asset_publisher/XpQs2eO7vrL1/content/ngo-participation-in-the-decision-making-process?_101_INSTANCE_XpQs2eO7vrL1_viewMode=view)

Anna Rurka on twitter: @anrurka

### Steering Committee Meetings

The main themes were the conclusion of the conference in Belgium that was very successful due to the hard work of the Belgian Prison Service and Klasbak, Standard Operating Procedures for the EPEA,

## ***Tender for 2017 EPEA Conference >>>>***



Every 2 years the EPEA holds its International Conference, in different European countries. Members and non-members can come together to explore topical issues; experience new approaches and innovations, and highlight good practice in the field of prison education.

EPEA Steering Committee is in the process of soliciting bids to host the 16th International EPEA conference in the autumn 2017. We are inviting agencies, organisations or institutions interested in hosting this conference to submit a formal letter to the Steering Committee of the EPEA stating their interest in hosting the 16th International EPEA Conference 2017, to be received by the 30th April 2016.

More details: <http://www.epea.org/2017-conference-tender-details>

## ***UK Prison Reform effects education of prisoners >>>>***

The UK Prime Minister will give governors more power and create sweeping changes that will also include ranking jails in league tables and improving quality of education for prisoners

**Cameron** said: "In short: we need a prison system that doesn't see prisoners as simply liabilities to be managed, but instead as potential assets to be harnessed."



There will also be a drive to improve the quality of education in prisons, with **David Laws**, the former Lib Dem schools minister, taking an unpaid role chairing a new social enterprise working on recruiting top graduates into prison education.

The plans will be included in a prisons bill introduced in the next session of parliament, and the government is promising to protect the £130m prison education budget in cash terms.

The EPEA has welcomed the new initiative on prison education and have send a positive letter of support to the Prime Minister Cameron ,mentioning R(89)12

More: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/08/cameron-give-more-power-governors-prisons-shakeup>

## ***CPT visits to 10 countries >>>>***

The Committee for the Prevention of Torture intends in 2016 to examine the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in the following ten countries:

Azerbaijan, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain and United Kingdom

If members in any of these countries wish to point the attention to the CPT on conditions for prison education, you are welcome to contact the EPEA.

The CPT does not publish actual dates for their visits.

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