

Spring has arrived - at last!

Tulips that were given as gifts for International Day of Education in Prison (IDEP) last year are now blossoming in Antwerp prison thanks to EPEA member Lise Donckers from Belgium.

Prison university partnerships

After long dark winter evenings spent writing, the report on my travels funded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust was finally launched this month. It is called 'Turning 180 Degrees: The potential of prison university partnerships to turn learners into leaders'. It features projects in Poland, Denmark, Belgium and California (USA). You can read it here. If you are interested in being involved in an EPEA Special Interest Group of prison university partnerships email: chair@epea.org

Nina Champion

Western Region Representative



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NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION FOR EPEA STEERING COMMITTEE POSITIONS



Spring represents new starts. If you want a new start as part of the EPEA steering committee now is your chance! Please see here about how you can stand for election to be an officer or a regional representative. Nomination forms must be completed and sent to the EPEA by 31st May. As Western Region representative I will sadly be stepping down as I am moving on from my job at Prisoners' Education Trust to become the Director of a small criminal justice charity. I will continue to be an active member of the EPEA but this is a great opportunity for another western region member to play a part in the steering committee.

Prisoner Active Citizenship

Please take ten minutes to complete a survey about prisoner active citizenship in your prison to inform an Erasmus + project between Belgium, England, Croatia, Italy and the Netherlands. Deadline is: ???

Western Region updates

Belgium:



Klasbak is the Flemish (Belgian) branch of the EPEA. Klasbak aims to initiate research, create visions and concepts, influence policy and inform society about the importance of education and learning in prison.

In December 2017, Klasbak organized a kick-off event with its' network. During this event, we invited policy makers from the educational department and the ministry of Justice to present their vision and future policy plans on prison education and learning in a broad sense. A new funding system for courses in prison will be introduced and aims to support schools with an educational offer in prison sufficiently. The ministry of Justice aims to improve prison conditions to create a learning environment. A particular idea was that prison officers would perform additional tasks to support prisoners. With these positive plans in mind, we asked our network to brainstorm how Klasbak could support their work best. This helped to develop Klasbak's key tasks for 2018. Based on this input we have chosen to focus on two tasks: improve the communication with our network and write a memorandum for politicians. In our memorandum we will highlight how the learning offer in Flemish and Brussels prisons can be improved. Key priorities are the digitalization of prison education, facilitate collaborations between providers of formal and informal learning activities and develop a prison environment that encourages learning for all prisoners who want to get involved in these activities.



England

The Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) in England has now made the decision to open up membership to beyond the 23 current members and new members will automatically become EPEA members. We hope this will be the start of a growth in EPEA membership from

England. You can read about and watch face book streaming of a recent academic symposium on prison education which took place at University of Westminster.



This month the Irish Prison Education Association held its annual conference. On Friday afternoon there was a course for new prison teachers, run in collaboration with the IPEA and the Irish Prison Service. The conference was opened by Director General Michael Donnellan, who spoke of trauma and the criminal justice system. Governor David Clarke and IPEA chairperson Catherine Byrne welcomed participants on behalf of the Irish Prison system and the IPEA. We were happy to welcome participants from the Irish prison education service, the Irish prison service, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, third level institutions

in Ireland and the UK, and Annet Bakker from the Netherlands representing the EPEA.

The first speaker was Denise Shannon from Leargas, the national agency for Erasmus + projects. She outlined the range of Erasmus + projects, including Courses, Job shadowing, teaching assignments and encouraged us to consider getting involved. Under Erasmus +, staff and students from higher and further education, vocational educational training and schools can participate in partnerships and mobilities. Themes included ICT in teaching & learning, citizenship, critical thinking, health and wellbeing, class management, curriculum development, community education approaches, motivation, facilitation, tutor support, literacy, numeracy, digital skills. Two participants from 2017, Monica Giblin and Catherine Byrne, from City of Dublin ETB project spoke of their job shadowing trip to Sweden's prisons in 2017. The theme of connecting to European prisons was continued by Lorraine Higgins and Ciara Ryan who gave a review of the EPEA conference in Vienna in 2017.

Networking continued throughout the evening conference dinner in Portlaoise. Saturday morning our keynote speaker Annet Bakker Chairperson EPEA gave an inspirational presentation on connections within prison education locally and internationally.



We always aim to have a speaker on new initiatives in Prison education as so teachers can learn from their peers. This year Brendan O'Hara City of Dublin ETB gave an inspiring talk on horticulture and its positive impact. There were two speakers on new research in prison education:

1. **Abi Stark, PhD student University of Sheffield, “Lived citizenship and community during incarceration: A comparative study of prisoners’ experiences in England and the Republic of Ireland”. Abi spoke on “Meaningful Citizenship? Prisoner Participation in Education and Civic Engagement Activities”**
2. **Rita Treacy, Dyslexia Specialist - Consulting Speech & Language Therapist. Rita spoke on “Reading between the lines in a sentence” - the Magilligan Prison Literacy Project.**

Kieran Moylan Principal Officer, Care and Rehabilitation Directorate presented Council of Europe Recommendations on Prison Education and requested feedback for the review as representatives of Europris and the EPEA agreed that a “refresh” is needed after 3 decades.

The final speaker was Annie Buckley, California State University, San Bernardino “University-Prison Partnership: A Case Study in Collaborative Teaching and Learning” who shared experiences of peer



learning.

We had an exhibition ‘Incarceration Altars’, a collaboration between artist Bernie Masterson (<http://www.berniemasterson.com/news.html>) and residents of Mountjoy Prison Campus. The exhibition investigates the relationship between person, place and object through a series of images and prisoners’ narratives. This project was by the Public Art Working Group of Grangegorman Development Agency in DIT College and partnered by the Irish Prison Service and the City of Dublin ETB.

Job Shadowing in Norway

Catherine Bryne EPEA member from Ireland visited Norway on a job shadowing and writes here about her experiences. Read more [here](#).



Enterprise Initiatives in Irish Prisons

Late 2017 there were pilot enterprise education courses run in Midlands & Portlaoise Prisons, Portlaoise, Ireland. These courses were run in partnership with Local Enterprise Office in Laois & the Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board and with the permission of the Irish prison Service. The courses were delivered to prisoners in the last phase of their sentence.

Seamus Doran, Business Advisor with Local Enterprise Office Laois said “We were very happy to partner with the Laois & Offaly Education & Training Board and the Irish Prison Service to deliver these courses. The willingness of all bodies to work together for a common purpose really added to the successful outcome of the Start Your Own Business courses. It was a very positive experience to take some of our regular enterprise services and deliver them in these unique environments. These courses have opened up realistic opportunities for self-employment for the participants and we have now developed a model of enterprise training which could be adopted in any prison in other European countries.” Read more [here](#).

Netherlands

Job shadowing opportunities can open our eyes to new experiences and good practice. Read here about one job shadowing experience of a Dutch prison teacher visiting prisons in Scotland looking at arts and creative learning. Read more [here](#).



Upcoming Events

Hungary: On 15th May there is a conference on ‘Reintergrational work in prisons’ in Budapest. EPEA Chair Annet Baker will be presenting, alongside a range of European prison educators and academics. For more information see [here](#).

England: 4th June in London there is an evening lecture event organised by Prisoners’ Education Trust with three speakers: Rosemary Ndoh, governor at Avena; prison California (a former prison teacher), the former Director - general of the Danish prison service and Will styles the governor of a high security prison in England who has just completed a masters.



NEMZETI
KÖZZSOLGÁLATI
EGYETEM

Real Life training - 18-22 June 2018 in Amsterdam

We would like to bring your attention to the Real Life training that will take place from 18-22 June 2018 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The training will be about how to implement a blended learning environment in a prison in your country. Blended learning is about combining offline and online material to educate people. In the last three years a team of eight European organizations have developed project Real Life. Real Life is a open source digital learning platform/website with educational material, including serious games, with a focus on reintegration. During the week of training you will learn how to use Real Life in your country.

From Turkey, Lithuania and Italy there are already people participating, we are still looking for participants from other countries. Perhaps you are interested if you know people from your organization who might be interested to participate and learn more about digitalization of education in prisons? All costs for travel, hotel and stay are covered for five days and four nights. The language used during this training is English.

Please find more information about the project here: www.reallifeproject.eu or contact Real Life coordinator Veronique Aicha Achoui, veronique@chainsinternational.com

Kind regards,

Veronique Aicha Achoui

Founder & Project-coordinator
CHAINS

www.chainsinternational.com



European Prison Education Association

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