



Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



**the PriMedia Network *Promoting ICT and  
multimedia in prison education across Europe***

Progress/Final Report

Public Part

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526218-LLP-1-2012-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-GNW

## Project information

Project acronym: **PriMedia**

Project title: ***Promoting ICT and multimedia in prison education across Europe***

Project number: **526218-LLP-1-2012-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-GNW**

Sub-programme or KA: **n/a**

Project website: **[www.pri-media.org](http://www.pri-media.org)**

Reporting period: From **01/12/12**  
To **31/11/15**

Report version: **Public**

Date of preparation: **31/01/16**

Beneficiary organisation: **The College of Teachers**

Project coordinator: **Dr Alan Clarke**

Project coordinator organisation: **The College of Teachers**

Project coordinator telephone number: **+44-(0)207-9115536**

Project coordinator email address: **mkajubi@collegeofteachers.ac.uk**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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## Executive Summary

*'The majority of the prison population of Europe is not digitally literate and there remains work to be done in many European countries to improve training in ICT skills and the use of ICT as a learning tool in prisons'*

*Background Paper on 'PRISON EDUCATION – CONTEXT, TRENDS AND POLICY ISSUES  
for the Grundtvig Conference on prison Education, Hungary 2010*

Digital competencies are increasingly being recognised as fundamental to contemporary education and skills development. Such skills are equally important for those currently in prison, who at some time will be seeking gainful employment in the outside world. It is crucial then that ICT & multimedia form a key part of the offender learning programmes offered in Europe's prisons, given the tremendous benefits for prisoner learners – access to a wider range of information, ability to develop a variety of new communication skills, being able to study on one's own, ease of storing material, etc.

Until recently a number of major obstacles stood in the way of this development, especially those surrounding security, the high cost of obtaining and maintaining the necessary electronic hardware and software, and the lack of suitably trained teachers. However, with increasingly sophisticated control systems now available, the reduction in equipment costs and the inclusion of updating ICT programmes for teachers these are increasingly being overcome.

With most of the practical problems resolved, the crucial next stage is ensuring that ICT is used effectively and creatively in the delivery of offender learning. Given the overall poor level of literacy amongst prisoners, ICT if properly used can provide a practical alternative learning tool for offenders, many of whom reject the more traditional teaching approaches. It is crucial that those unfortunate enough to be incarcerated are able to access training in this area, both to improve their chances of rehabilitation and to enable them to find employment in the outside world – the underlying aim of the *PriMedia Network*.

The Network's main emphasis therefore was to identify, evaluate and disseminate practices which most effectively use ICT and its applications to support those delivering programmes and the inmates themselves. This involved a wide range of organisations covering many aspects of prison education: prisons, educationalists, prison authorities and arts & ICT practitioners. All of these were represented in the *PriMedia* consortium, along with other interested parties in an advisory and supporting role as associated partners. Many of the Network partners were involved in one or more earlier European initiatives and used their experiences to highlight previous good practice. The partnership also covered a range of countries from different parts of Europe, crucial to ensuring both the widest possible coverage of

issues and European-wide dissemination of Network outcomes. A range of approaches and strategies were used both to implement the Network's aims and to fully engage the various partners. On the international side, annual conferences held in different partner countries, the Network website [[www.pri-media.org](http://www.pri-media.org)], regular editions of an online journal and the creation of an interactive database of good practice all helped to raise and promote key issues concerning the use of ICT and multimedia in prison education. At national and local level, undertaking background research into the specific situation facing partners, setting up local stakeholder networks and using other opportunities to explore and identify current practices were actively encouraged; whilst the good practice workshop visits of ICT and multimedia specialists to countries with limited experience in applying new technologies in offender learning, such as Lithuania, Bulgaria and Turkey, proved extremely effective.

The direct involvement of prisoners themselves, such as through the Network logo competition (with the winning design from a prison school in Greece), their involvement in the good practice workshops, contributions to a special section in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the online journal and a further competition for ICT & multimedia products created and judged by inmates in Norway, ensured that our ultimate target audience were part of the process.

Overall, the Network achieved all its stated aims: its 3 well-attended annual International Conferences in Italy, Denmark and the Netherlands all proved extremely successful with a range of high-quality expert speakers, presentations on good practice in offender learning from across Europe and beyond, informed discussions on key issues concerned with ICT and multimedia in prisons and demonstration workshops of practical work. In addition, both the Conferences and the partner business meetings in Barcelona and Norway provided opportunities to witness effective practice in local prisons and also identify many positive policies and practices being implemented by the national justice ministries. The specialist visits to Lithuania, Bulgaria and Turkey proved particularly interesting both in identifying key issues and obstacles to employing the new technologies in prison education and encouraging local prison staff, teachers, authorities and inmates in extending their use.

On the communication side, the Network website proved an invaluable tool, both in disseminating information about the Network's activities and in providing a forum for discussion on key issues. The online-journal, hosted on the website and with four editions completed, proved an excellent method of encapsulating in focused form the main achievements of the Network, its partners and other organisations contacted through its activities. Finally, the online database – currently containing around 50 examples of best practice in ICT, multimedia and arts – provides not only an impressive record of what has been achieved with prisoners in a wide range of countries and contexts, including identification of their specific links of key competences, but also an important basis for developing new initiatives in these fields in the future. Internal communication was supported by regular email Coordinator updates as well as ongoing individual contacts with partners.

In addition to its original objectives, the *PriMedia Network* also produced a range of extra added-value outcomes, such as the development of a specific training programme for ICT and multimedia practitioners working with prisoners. A number of partners undertook further activities linked specifically to other partners, such as the involvement of a Danish musician in a Norwegian inmate concert, whilst amongst the individual initiatives were the idea of a pan-European INTRANET project and the creation of an original musical libretto for male prisoners.

Probably the most important outcome of the Network's three year existence is the real possibility of it continuing into the foreseeable future, despite the many obstacles currently facing the implementation of best practice in ICT and multimedia in European prisons. This was the main emphasis of the final conference in Rotterdam where the determination of the partnership underpinned the whole event. Specific actions were agreed, such as the continued hosting of the website and database with a secure partner, plans to organise regular international workshops, seminars and training programmes in the various partner countries and the agreement to develop new projects building on ideas generated by PriMedia.

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## 1. Project Objectives

The overall aims of the PriMedia Network, reflected in the timeframe structure of its activities, is to identify current good practice in the application of ICT & multimedia in offender learning, including in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of specific examples; to test their potential application in a variety of prison contexts; and to exploit and disseminate good practice in prison education across Europe and beyond. The main objectives of the Network are to:

1. Create an ongoing European network to promote ICT and multimedia in offender learning
2. Encourage the use of ICT and the new technologies as part of the delivery of key competences in offender learning
3. Promote the creative application of ICT & multimedia in offender learning
4. Promote the use of new technologies in adult prison education in centres where they have not previously been used, especially in Eastern Europe
5. Encourage inmates to get involved in ICT and multimedia as part of their prison education.
6. Establish local, regional and national partnerships to support ICT and multimedia in adult prison education.
7. Encourage links between prison educators and ICT & multimedia practitioners
8. Identify current practice and methods in using new technologies of benefit to delivering prison education
9. Identify and disseminate examples of good practice in the use of new technologies in prison education through appropriate means, including via the Network website
10. Organize workshops, courses and seminars in different European countries promoting effective practice in using ICT and multimedia to support prison education
11. Organize transnational meetings & international conferences to discuss key issues and promote good practice in ICT and multimedia in offender learning, including through film & video showings and exhibitions of photographic work
12. Set up an interactive website to promote Network activities & outcomes.
13. Create an electronic database of good practice material and resources to support the use of ICT and multimedia in offender learning
14. Produce a regular online journal to report on network activities, discuss key issues in depth, identify good practice examples and promote the longer term aims of the project
15. Organise new initiatives to promote ICT & multimedia in prison education through the further development of issues identified through the network

16. Create a system for supporting, measuring & accrediting the contribution of ICT & multimedia to the lifelong learning of prisoners
17. Recruit new partners and create new projects during the course of the project within countries not currently covered by the consortium
18. Combat racism, xenophobia and other negative attitudes towards fellow human beings through the creative use of ICT and multimedia in adult prison education across Europe.

## 2. Project Approach

The PriMedia Network divided its activities into five overlapping phases (an increase from the four identified in the original application):

1. Undertaking initial background research to identify the state of ICT & multimedia in offender learning & other areas which could inform its practice
2. Identifying and analysing selected examples of good practice: locally, nationally and internationally.
3. Demonstrating selected examples in different contexts & countries through workshops and visits, especially for partners having limited experience of their use.
4. Promoting & disseminating Network findings and outcomes through a range of methods, including international meetings & conferences, workshops, publications & electronically via the Network website, the online journal and the interactive database.
5. Ensuring the continuation and expansion of the Network after the initial three-year funding period

### PHASE 1

The background research, completed in Year 1, was led by The College of Teachers. It covered 3 areas:

1. The current state of ICT & multimedia in prisons & offender learning
2. The current state of ICT & multimedia in education generally
3. ICT & multimedia applications for potential use in prison education

During this period partners gathered information on current practice in ICT & multimedia from a range of local, national & international sources, including:

- Network partners sharing their own practices & methods
- local partners identifying appropriate examples
- researching relevant information sources, e.g. via the internet
- identifying previous EC projects in the area
- contacting appropriate local, regional, national & international organisations.

This information was collated by the Steering Group & its findings presented at the 1st International Conference in Italy at the end of Year 1.

### PHASE 2

The next stage, mainly undertaken in Years 2 and 3, was to identify examples of good practice and adapt them into more detailed case studies for application in different contexts. Particular emphasis was placed on those activities & approaches which have already proved effective in offender learning, and on those focusing on the delivery of Key Competencies. The examples were recorded onto a generic template & divided into six sections, before being uploaded onto the online database:

1. Good practice in ICT
2. Good practice in video
3. Good practice in multimedia
4. Good practice in performing arts
5. Good practice in visual arts
6. Good practice in European projects

### **PHASE 3**

Ongoing throughout the 3 years was the practical presentation and demonstration of practical examples of good practice in approaches & methodologies, involving at some time all partner countries. It was undertaken in the following ways:

1. through the Good Practice Workshops in Lithuania, Bulgaria & Turkey
2. as part of the transnational partner meetings & international conferences
3. through workshops & courses organised in conjunction with local networks

Monitoring & recording of the Good Practice Workshops was undertaken by selected participants supporting the workshop leaders, whilst evaluations of the international workshops & local events were allocated to appropriate partners and local organisers, with support from the External Evaluator. The presentation of the outcomes were undertaken at the various partner meetings and conference and published via the Network website, the online journal & local outlets.

### **PHASE 4**

This phase was concerned with promoting in a wider context the previously identified examples of Good Practice, so that they can be used & adopted in offender learning across Europe & beyond. The main forms of dissemination are:

- The annual International Conferences hosted in countries with strong traditions of using ICT and multimedia in prison education
- Through the Good Practice Workshops and national events attended by partners
- Via the Network website, including the online journal and most importantly the interactive database
- Through partner contacts and links with other European projects and international organisations connected to prison education and ICT
- Through local and national contacts and publications organised by the individual partners.

### **PHASE 5**

Identifying and committing to a long-term strategy for the continuation and expansion of the Network. This included:

- Maintaining and expanding the Network beyond the end of the official funding period
- Sustaining the website and database with a partner organisation able to guarantee their longevity
- Establishing an online forum for discussing key issues, updating relevant information, recruiting new partners and developing ideas for further projects
- Organising regular face-to-face seminars and workshops in various partner countries, including an annual or bi-annual Conference
- Linking with relevant international organisations, in particular the EPEA, to encourage integration with other aspects of offender learning

This strategy was discussed in depth during the Norwegian meeting at the start of Year 3 and agreed during the international conference in the Netherlands at the end of the project.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

- The creation of a transnational network focused on promoting ICT & multimedia in offender learning [D1]:

Some problems were caused at the start of the project by the withdrawal of two original partners (the Cypriot Prison Service and Plock Prison, Poland) and the delay in their substitution by the Latvia Culture College. Another difficulty which was easily overcome was the transfer of the Norwegian partner from Oslo Prison to Halden Prison. In the final year the webmaster Amitie had withdrawn due to orders from the European Commission but they were eventually able to be replaced by another Italian ICT group, STEPS, with minimal disruption to the functioning of the website.

Despite these changes the overall profile and impact of the consortium was not detrimentally affected. The strength of the partnership was its diversity with a mixture of prisons, education organizations, justice ministries and small-scale arts & media groups from all parts of Europe, enabling it to cover every aspect of prison life. In order to ensure the full participation of each partner, they were all given responsibilities relating to the network's main activities whilst also being allocated a few specific roles. The key tasks in which everyone was expected to participate were: attending the annual conferences and partner meetings; undertaking initial research; contributing information and material to the website, online journal and database; and setting up active local partnerships and links. More specific tasks for selected partners were hosting international conferences and meetings; contributing to the Good Practice Workshops; providing reports and material on Network events; and undertaking specific presentations and demonstrations at Conferences and meetings. The Steering Group members took responsibility for particular areas, for example Amitie (later STEPS) for the database, Halden Prison for the online journal, the Dutch Ministry of Justice for formulating the future exploitation strategy, Omme Prison, Denmark for collating good practice examples, and IMOTEC for monitoring the good practice workshops, in addition to supporting the Coordinator in overseeing the Network.

Regular communication was maintained with all partners. Alongside the face-to-face transnational meetings, email communication through the PRIMEDIA google groups and coordinator updates have ensured that all partners have been kept up to date with Network actions. This was enhanced by regular update emails from the Coordinator, providing progress feedback, coverage of outcomes and future actions. Where necessary individual partners were contacted by phone or Skype. Of particular importance was the involvement of prisoners in the Network for which a range of actions were initiated: their participation in the various practical workshops; a competition for them to design the Network logo; a further one for their ICT and multimedia products, presented at the Norwegian meeting and judged by inmates from Halden Prison; their contributions to the online journal; and inputs in a number of good practice examples presented on the database.

• **Network start-up meeting (London, UK) [D2]:**

The initial meeting of Primedia, attended by 17 representatives from 13 partners, effectively established the organisational and methodological approach of the Network. It focused on organising the Network's future actions, including project management, research organisation, setting up the website and arranging the first Good Practice Workshop and the 1st International Conference. The meeting included a helpful presentation on digital competency by Peter Chatterton from The College of Teachers and the cultural highlight was an evening of prison films in a Soho Film Studio attended by 25 delegates and guests, with contributions from the Koestler Trust and the London Shakespeare Workout. Although a few partners were unable to attend, the meeting established the various roles and responsibilities within the consortium. In order to compensate for the unavoidable absence of the two Northern Ireland representatives, the Coordinator made a special visit to the Province to brief them on the initial decisions and explain their roles in the Network.

• **Establishment of local partnerships [D3]:**

Local partners were an essential aspect of a partner's effectiveness within the Network in a number of ways: in providing information and links in key areas; in actively supporting Conferences, meetings and workshops hosted by the partner; for disseminating and promoting Network outcomes; for encouraging the involvement of prisoners. The make-up of these networks varied according to the different type of partner organization: the justice ministries in Catalonia and the Netherlands and the Izmir local authority clearly had a range of well-established contacts which they were able to utilize; the external links for the prisons in Denmark, Norway and Greece were mainly through its educational and training provision; the educational institutions in the UK and Latvia naturally have a wide range of outside contacts; whilst for the independent media and arts groups such as in Bulgaria and Lithuania are dependent on having strong outside support.

The most public involvement of local networks was through the various international events organized by Primedia – the Conferences, partner meetings, prison visits and workshops – but their support was invaluable in providing material for the background research, website, online journal and database, as well as in disseminating project plans and outcomes. In addition many international contacts, such as the European Prison Education Association, provided additional links to the Network.

• **Steering group meetings [D4]:**

The steering group consisted of 6 partners representing different organisational types and geographical locations– Sonder Omme Prison, Denmark; Amitie, Italy (replaced in the final year by STEPS); the Ministry of Justice, the Netherlands; Halden Prison, Norway (replacing Oslo Prison); IMOTEC, Lithuania (replacing Plock Prison, Poland, in the first year); and The College of Teachers, UK. It was an important element of the Network's organisation, not only as a crucial support to the Coordinator but also in ensuring that the Network's aims were carried out as identified and within the given timescale. Its role was particularly important in sorting out any problems, for example issues concerning the implementation of the database. It met for a couple of hours at the beginning and sometimes the end of all the Conferences and partner meetings to

discuss progress, confirm the event details and identify future actions, and its findings were circulated to the other partners either directly or through the Primedia Google. In between these meetings, regular contact was maintained between steering group members, mainly via email.

• **Collation of research into ICT & multimedia [D5-8]:**

Background research covering the situation in different countries was important to confirm the strategies needed to support the use of ICT and multimedia in the various contexts encountered by partners. Using a common template, partners provided detailed information on the situation regarding ICT and multimedia as implemented in their justice systems. On the basis of these reports, covering 10 countries (Bulgaria, Catalonia, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the UK), the Coordinator produced a summative report which was presented in draft form at the Bologna Conference and the final version published on the website and in a shortened form on the online Journal. A number of key issues were raised concerning the problems and advantages of using the new technologies in offender learning, and these were very helpful in informing the Network's further actions.

• **International Conference 1: "New technologies and multimedia in prisons: (Bologna, Italy) [D9]:**

The first PriMedia Conference at the Museum of Modern Art (MAMBA) attended by 45 delegates and focused on innovative practice in ICT and multimedia turned out to be a highly productive and informative event, reflecting a wide range of high-quality initiatives in the field. Following an introduction to the Network and a summary of research by the Network coordinator, a range of presentations from partners on new media in their penal systems were demonstrated. Particularly innovative were the contributions on ICT practice from the Dutch and Catalonian Justice Ministries and South West College in Northern Ireland, and there were also examples of original practice in multimedia from the Izmir Governorship in Turkey, Sonder Omme Prison in Denmark, Halden Prison in Norway, IMOTEC in Lithuania, and the Avlona Prison School in Greece. These wide-ranging presentations were interspersed with lively discussions on the role of new in prisons and the event concluded with the video showing of examples of good practice from Greece and Norway.

• **Identifying & recording good practice examples in ICT & multimedia [D10-12]:**

Collated by the representatives from Sonder Omme Prison, a wide range of examples of good practice in ICT and multimedia were identified by the Network partners, including social initiatives, prisoner journals, video and sound recordings, interactive projects, performing and visual art products and European project outcomes. The steering group then created a comprehensive yet effective template through which they could be effectively catalogued and cross-referenced for eventual uploading onto the database. Currently with around 50 examples the catalogue is divided for easy reference into 6 sections ([http://www.primedia.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=115&Itemid=76&lang=en](http://www.primedia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=115&Itemid=76&lang=en)). Individual examples have been highlighted throughout the Network's lifetime, including at international meetings and Conferences, through Good Practice Workshops and on the website and database. Summaries of the collection have

been presented at the final conference Rotterdam and in the final edition of the online journal.

• **International Conference 2: “New technologies and multimedia in prisons: (Kolding, Denmark) [D13]:**

Attended by over 60 delegates, including many Danish prison teachers, the Conference discussed a range of topics from concerns about conditions in UK prisons, the excellent example of how the Danish prison system promotes digital literacy and the need to encourage the use of ICT in offender learning to help keep prisoners active, safer, and reduce tension. In his keynote speech Per Thrane of the Danish Prison and Probation Service, emphasised that often inappropriate or obsolete systems and tools are provided by prisons but that with creativity much can be achieved and praised the achievements of the partnership. He further recommended that the right to use ICT in education for all inmates should be stated in law and applauded Norway’s research and development strategy. Per stated that he would like to incorporate the PriMedia project and website into Danish sites, and hoped that it would be available to all Danish prisoners. Further contributions came from Ed Santman, of the Dutch Dienst Justitiele Inrichtingen on the theme of ‘Unlearning’, in which he spoke of the incredible power that ICT affords all learners, including those incarcerated, and examples of good practice by partners from Catalonia, Norway and the Prison Arts Foundation in Northern Ireland.

• **Transnational meeting (Barcelona, Catalonia) [D14]:**

The main focus of the meeting, attended by 16 delegates from 10 partners, was to review the first year of Network activities and prepare for the second year. Updates were provided on the website, the online journal and the database, although the last still remained a work in progress. Other areas covered including partner finances, the Good Practice Workshop in Bulgaria, the 2nd International Conference in Denmark, and a presentation by the external evaluator from Die Berater. Special tributes were made to Mike Moloney, the charismatic director of the Prison Arts Foundation in Belfast, who sadly died following an accident at home shortly before he was due to attend a Primedia workshop. Other inputs included a presentation by Gavin Weston on the TIME IN prisoner magazine in Northern Ireland and the showing of an excellent musical production, involving both inmates and staff of Halden Prison. An additional highlight was the visit to the Quatre Camins Prison where ICT and multimedia were being integrated in offender learning with the help of excellent state-of-the-art equipment available to prisoners as well as evidence of a wide range of multimedia activities.

• **Undertaking good practice workshops (Lithuania, Bulgaria, and Turkey) [D15-16]:**

**1st Good Practice Workshop: Lithuania**

The first workshop, Vilnius, was organised by Vilma Bitkute from IMOTEC and took place in a hostel for ex-prisoners and homeless people run by the Custodial Association of Lithuanian Prisoners in Vilnius. Based on the idea of creating a local TV news programme. The PriMedia team from Greece, Norway and the UK with Vilma as translator filmed a series of informative and personal interviews with ex-

prisoners and staff at the hostel. This proved very effective and enjoyable both for the participants and the workshop leaders. Following filming a detailed group evaluation of the event took place and a number of key social and communication skills were identified as a direct result of the workshop. Overall the team felt that the workshop had been very effective given the circumstances. Although there was understandable reluctance from most of the ex-prisoners to join in at first, the film team were gradually able to involve all the residents by employing different strategies, such as filming the group sitting around a table rather than individually. The filmed material was later presented at the Italian Conference.

### **2nd Good Practice Workshop: Bulgaria**

Organised by the Bulgarian partner Integra Art with support from Valentina Petrova from the EPEA, four Primedia partners from South West College and PAF, Northern Ireland, IMOTEC, Lithuania, and The College of Teachers visited two Bulgarian prisons in Sofia and Lovech. The original idea had been to organise workshops for the inmates and staff there but given the low level of new technology activities existing, particularly in Sofia Prison, it was agreed that it would be more useful for the visitors to present effective practice in other countries as basis for discussions around the possibilities of using of ICT in offender learning in Bulgaria. In both prisons the PriMedia coordinator started with a power point overview of the Network followed by inputs from the Northern Irish representatives on their specific experiences and ideas. These were followed by lengthy discussions with staff and students about the practicalities of using new media in offender learning and specific proposals for improving the provision in Bulgarian prisons.

### **3rd Good Practice Workshop: Turkey**

For the final workshop in Turkey, organised by the Izmir Governorship, the Network were able to offer workshops in three areas: video, music and ICT. The video workshop on the first day, led by teachers from Halden Prison, Norway, with support from Sonder Omme Prison, Denmark, involved filming scenes performed by the prisoners and editing them into a pre-prepared video, the final version of which was shown to the inmates at the end of the day. The music workshop run in the afternoon by the Coordinator, replacing a planned sound recording session, used singing and guitar-playing to connect with the prisoners. Even though language was a barrier, the performance was appreciated by the prisoners and the translator was key to helping them understand the meaning of the songs.

On the second morning, two lecturers from South West College, Northern Ireland, introduced the prisoners to the basics of Adobe Photoshop, helping them to navigate the software confidently and guiding them through the design and layout of a newsletter using their own photos and text. The leaders felt that the methodology and approach used worked very well, with participants seeming relaxed and engaged in the activity throughout. The approach of hands on 'learning by doing' following some instruction/direction worked perfectly.

Overall evaluation of the event was provided by representatives from the Latvia Culture College and the Prison Arts Foundation, who commented that the "language barriers were evident in all three situations but each leader tried to minimise this for example using the translator effectively. Planning the workshop and anticipating

potential barriers and minimising these were key to the overall success or indeed impact on the prisoners.” The many positive comments from the participants confirmed this success.

### **Conclusion**

Although very different in character and approach, all three workshops proved extremely effective both in helping to identify issues relating to the introduction of ICT and multimedia in countries with little experience of them and in demonstrating ways in which these problems could be overcome. Certainly for those partners who took part in the visits these were amongst the most effective activities undertaken by the Network.

#### **• Interactive Network website [D17]:**

The website is the main point of contact for the Network, providing both information about its activities and promoting its outcomes. Evolving over the three years of Network funding, it consists of seven key areas: Home, including the online journal; Partners; Database; Video Gallery; Photo Gallery; Library; and Reserved Area. Organized by Amitie in Italy for the first two years, the running the website had to be transferred to another Italian organization, STEPS, for the final year following Amitie’s enforced withdrawal from the project. Despite a few problems caused by this, mainly the transfer of the Database (see below), the website was able to maintain its effectiveness and will provide the core element for future activities.

#### **• Electronic database of good practice examples [D18]:**

Creating an effective database proved the most difficult of all the tasks, although the problems surrounding its creation have now been resolved and it is providing a crucial function within the Network. The main issue was to find a way of utilizing the many excellent examples of good practice identified by the partners and collated by Sonder Omme Prison (see D10-12 above) so that they could be easily accessed, linked to the many accompanying video and other products relating to it, and identified under clear headings for research and other purposes. In order to share network responsibilities amongst the consortium, it was agreed at the beginning of year 2 that Seeds for Growth take charge of setting up a database, linked to the website.

However, delays and technical issues meant that by the beginning of the final year a functioning database was not yet in place. After much discussion the Steering Group decided to transfer the database back to the website, by now being run by STEPS; design a more effective template, in particular reflecting the educational impact of the examples; give the responsibility for editing the templates to the Coordinator; and link the examples more directly to the videos on the website.

By the time of the final conference around 50 examples had been identified and catalogued under 6 headings: ICT, Video, Multimedia, Performing Arts, Visual Arts and European Projects. Not only is the completed database an excellent tool reflecting the incredible range of effective practices in European prisons but a positive resource for future initiatives.

The template formulated was taken through an accreditation process by the College of Teachers' academic board to ensure its suitability for international accreditation. This template gave the good practices a pedagogical format that can be adapted to various teaching scenarios for contextual applicability.

**On-line journal (editions 1-4) [D19]:**

Edited by the Norwegian partner and the Coordinator, the function of the online journal was to summarize the main actions of the Network and provide a more permanent record of its activities and products. Although in the original bid three editions were foreseen, in the end the consortium felt able to publish a fourth one, reflecting the overall outcomes and successes of the Network.

The 1st edition (30 pages, published in autumn 2013) focused on introducing the project, reports on the Bologna Conference and the Good Practice Workshop in Lithuania, a summary of its sister project, CredAbility, and a tribute to Mike Moloney, the inspirational director of the Prison Arts Foundation in Northern Ireland, who tragically died in accident the day before he was due to attend the partner meeting in Vilnius.

The 2nd edition (27 pages, June 2014) provided a reflections on the Barcelona meeting; a summary of the background research into ICT and multimedia, and examples of good practice in ICT and multimedia from 10 partner countries.

The 3rd edition (40 pages, March 2015) had reports on the Good Practice Workshop in Bulgaria, the International Conference in Denmark and visit to Sonder Omme Prison, the partner meeting in Halden Prison, Norway, and the results of the ICT and multimedia competition for inmates. It also included summaries of the Progress Report from the EC and the PriMedia Training Programme, plus the text of a specially-written musical for prisoners by Alan Clarke.

The 4th edition (40 pages, November 2015) featured the final International Conference in Rotterdam and the visit to PI Krimpen; reports on all the transnational meetings, international conferences and good practice workshops; a section on Prisoner Contributions, including the logo and multimedia competitions, the creation of a clay animation by students at a Greek prison school; prisoner magazines from Northern Ireland and Catalonia; and a musical concert linking Danish and Norwegian staff and inmates. Summaries of the background research, the training programme and the tribute to Mike Moloney were reproduced from earlier editions, together with selected examples of good practice now available on the database. Partner reflections on their experiences with the Network and an overview of the project completed the journal.

**• External quality evaluation [D20]:**

The main external assessment of PRIMEDIA's activities has been through the external evaluator from Die Berater, Austria, contracted by the network. She worked closely with the Coordinator and has undertaken a couple of online questionnaire surveys, obtained delegate feedback from the final conference as well as interviews with partners in Norway and Holland. She has produced two reports, an interim one and a final one, and has provided useful advice and support.

Internal feedback on the first two meetings was informal, although there was an observer report from a Northern Irish partner on the Italian Conference and feedback questionnaires circulated during the Danish and Dutch conferences. Evaluations of the Good Practice Workshops were formally structured, with feedback forms acquired from the workshop leaders, observers and participants at the Lithuanian and Turkish events, which also included feedback discussions. Given the different character of the Bulgarian visit, the evaluation was provided by the two Northern Irish representatives.

**• Financial audit [D21]:**

This was undertaken by the Financial and EU project Manager of the coordinating organisation, The College of Teachers, who has systematically monitored the partner finances to ensure their appropriate and eligible usage for both interim and final reports. He has been in regular communication with all partners, in order to inform partners of the financial guidelines, of the information and evidence required from them and, where necessary, contacted them personally if they are not fulfilling their obligations. He has even attended a number of partner meetings, reserving a specific slot in the agenda and offering individual surgeries for those still seeking advice on their financial commitments. He has been responsible for completing interim and final audits, forwarding the reports arising to the European Commission.

**• Exploitation strategy [D22]**

Following a number of suggestions from various partners during the three years of the PRIMEDIA's existence, the Dutch Ministry of Justice chaired a long discussion during the Norway meeting at the start of the final year during which detailed proposals for the continuation and exploitation of the network were identified. These proposals were finalized during the Rotterdam Conference and form the basis of the exploitation strategy agreed by all the partners, detailed in Section 5 on Future Plans below, but including:

- 1) A commitment from all partners to continue the Network, coordinated by a steering group of 7 partners
- 2) Sustaining the website, database and online journal
- 3) Seeking further funding to organize training workshops in different European countries
- 4) Organizing regular Conferences to discuss and explore key issues
- 5) Promoting Network outcomes through regional and national organisations
- 6) Promoting Network outcomes through local networks
- 7) Encourage the imbedding of the PriMedia Training Programme at national level:
- 8) Developing further collaborative projects
- 9) Maintain copyright for PriMedia outcomes
- 10) Developing closer links with the European Prison Education Association (EPEA)

• **Creation of accreditation strategy [D23]**

Following the successful awarding of international accreditation for the CredAbility project's Training Programme for ICT and multimedia practitioners, teachers and others working in prisons, a similar programme has been produced for PriMedia. Published on the website with summaries in the online journal, the Programme - initially at Professional Practice Award Level 3 - consists of 3 Modules (2 core and 1 generic elective):

1. Preparing to deliver ICT & multimedia activities in a prison context
2. Critical thinking related to delivering ICT and multimedia activities to prisoners
3. Delivering ICT & multimedia activities to prisoners.

In addition individual electives can be offered in specific areas, such as:

- i. Creating online print products with prisoners
- ii. Creating video products with prisoners
- iii. Creating radio programmes with prisoners
- iv. Creating animations with prisoners
- v. Digital storytelling with prisoners
- vi. ICT in prison education

Although the original CredAbility training programme was offered as a comprehensive package, with some artists in Northern Ireland gaining full accreditation, its main usage in the field of ICT and multimedia is most likely to be through offering individual elective options to trainers, ideally linking to the accreditation systems in the particular national context.

• **Transnational meeting (Halden, Norway) [D24]**

The first meeting of the final year of PriMedia – attended by 24 partners from 14 organisations - concentrated on completing the project's activities, including finalising the database, organising the 3rd edition of the online journal, developing the exploitation strategy and preparing for the final conference in the Netherlands. A high point of the meeting was the presentation and judging of the dozen high-quality entries for the ICT and multimedia competition for prisoners from partner countries by a jury of Norwegian inmates.

The visit to Halden Male Prison, a pilot scheme open only 5 years ago also proved highly stimulating, in particular the close supporting relationship between the inmates and prison staff with no bars and comfortable cells. The aim is to try to ensure that life in prison resembles life in the outside community as much as possible, and there is even an impressive, modern 'home' based on the needs of inmates' children, to which a prisoner can have weekend access. Amongst its excellent facilities are a state-of-the-art recording studio with its own label: 'Criminal Records' and during their visit the Primedia delegates recorded a section of a music video which was later premiered at their final conference.

International Conference 3: “Overcoming electronic barriers to the application of ICT and multimedia in European prisons” (Rotterdam, the Netherlands) [D25]

The event was prefaced on the Tuesday evening by an informal talk and video presentation to the partners by Peter Baaijens, who oversees the libraries in Dutch prisons. His talk focused on the future use of E-readers and how technology is and could be used for education and training of offenders in secure learning environments. It was followed by showings of some of the videos concerning aspects of prison life and their presentation in the Dutch media.

The Conference itself was located in a modern cultural centre in the heart of the Rotterdam docks and attended by 46 delegates, including partners from 10 countries. It was introduced by Laurens Visser, CIO of the Dutch Prison Service, whose presentation centred on the potential of purpose-built prisons that supported new technologies which would improve education and reduce recidivism.

After this the PriMedia coordinator, Dr Alan Clarke, gave a brief overview of the Network’s activities, followed by the first keynote speaker, Professor Wim Veen, of the University of Delft. In a controversial presentation Veen shared his research and experience of working with young adults using ICT for communication and learning purposes, Veen asserted that ‘violent games do not cause violent behaviour’ but in fact offer problem-solving strategies. He proposed that gaming teaches that you can win by sharing, and that access is more important than ownership. He ended by posing the question: ‘do we trust students to learn independently?’

After a break there was a forum discussion with a panel of experts responding to three set questions:

- 1) Is education possible without the internet?
- 2) In future will there be no teachers because of E-Learning?
- 3) Is ‘gamification’, serious gaming, applied gaming the future of education for prisoners?

In a lively debate the panellists discussed problems of limiting internet usage in prison; the changing role of the teacher and education itself with the advent of the new technologies; the care that must be taken to prevent further dehumanization of prisoners and stereotypes of prisoners, including representations of women in games; and the importance of two differentiating between the virtual and physical world.

Following a communal lunch, the afternoon session began with Annet Bakker, Chairperson of the European Prison Education Association (EPEA) who gave an overview of the work of her organisation. She was followed by another guest speaker, Aetzel Griffioen who considered the role of philosophy in prison and the acquisition of 21st century skills. His presentation posed questions around how to reduce recidivism, what is employability, how to improve behaviour, and the impact of prison as a power model. He underlined that ‘creativity’ is the most important skill for the 21st century, also a key to being able to compete and work towards employability. The conference closed with Alan Clarke, in his last event before retirement, providing an overview of his experience as an actor and educator of

working on prison projects. The event was interspersed with videos of the wide range of good practice examples created and identified by the Network, including the Oslo competition winning film from Italy, an animation of 'The Giving Tree' by young prisoners from Greece, a music rap of an American prisoner and last but not least a recording of the PriMedia partners and Halden Prison choir singing 'That's what friends are for'.

## 4. Partnerships

The PriMedia Network arose from previous collaborations around prison education and the arts, including PAN Prison Arts Network, The Will to Dream, Art & Culture in Prison and Movable Barres, and many of the partners had previously worked together on such projects. This meant that they were already familiar with the conditions in different countries and the similarities and differences from their own, making it easier to identify those common elements which could be applied across a range of countries and those that were relevant only to specific cultures. This was enhanced by the background research at the start of the project in which a number of key issues and problems were identified. Comparing such problems as access and security alongside identifying the benefits of ICT in offender learning, the report concluded:

“Whilst the overall picture regarding ICT & multimedia activities in European prisons – at least with regard to the countries covered by this survey – is mixed, concerns about access and application are to some extent offset by some encouraging initiatives, both at national and regional and at local level.”

In this way it is able to act as an underpinning agent for future Network activities.

This is particularly important in understanding the issues for partners in those countries with limited experience of ICT and multimedia, such as Lithuania, Bulgaria and Turkey. The experience of the three good practice workshops underline this, where experts in multimedia from Norway, Greece and England visited Vilnius, in ICT from Northern Ireland and Lithuania went to Bulgaria, and practitioners with a mix of skills from Norway, Denmark, Northern Ireland, England and Latvia ran workshops in Turkey. These visits were able to make a stronger impact on prison staff and inmates than had previously been possible merely with local practitioners.

In a broader context, the transnational meetings in London, Barcelona and Norway as well as the International Conferences in Italy, Denmark and the Netherlands emphasised the importance of a pan-European approach where commonalities could be shared and differences celebrated and adapted to new contexts. The three Conferences were particularly effective in this, with the sharing of a broad range of innovative and effective practices, as well as the presentation of the products created by prisoners for the multimedia competition in Norway.

A number of proposals arose from these experiences, especially though the development of the Training Programme for ICT and multimedia practitioners. A number of concrete examples were identified in multimedia, including e-journals (Denmark, Greece, and Northern Ireland), video and animation productions (Norway, Greece, Italy, and Denmark), radio programming (Norway) and digital storytelling (Catalonia). Further a number of highly original projects on adapting ICT programmes for use in prisons were presented by the Dutch Ministry of Justice and South West College, Northern Ireland, as well as some extremely interesting policy proposals from experts during the Danish and Dutch Conferences.

The experience of visiting prisons in other countries proved an illuminating if contrasting experience for participants. On the one hand conditions in Bulgaria clearly needed vast improvements, whilst on the other partners were impressed by some excellent practices in the penal institutions of Catalonia, Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. Background research is helpful in providing a general idea of conditions but it is only when you experience the prison environment and engage directly with the staff and above all the inmates there can you fully appreciate both the difficulties they are having to overcome on a daily basis and the resourcefulness which many of them have in overcoming them.

Outside of the PriMedia partnership useful links have already been established with other projects and continental initiatives. The close contact with the CredAbility project inspired the development of a training programme for practitioners and teachers using ICT and multimedia, whilst the involvement of a number of partners connected to the European Prison Education Association provides real exploitation possibilities across Europe and beyond. On a more individual level a number of ICT and multimedia specialists have expressed their interest in linking with the Network, including a group of European film makers who attended the Rotterdam Conference.

## 5. Plans for the Future

As identified earlier a number of future actions were agreed by the consortium during the final year of the project:

- 1) The consortium stated its firm commitment to continue the PriMedia Network of ICT and multimedia practitioners, teachers and others working in prisons and agreed to sign an agreement confirming this intention.
- 2) A Steering Group of PriMedia partners – Avlona Prison School, Greece; Polo Europa, Italy; the Latvia Culture College; the Ministry of Justice, the Netherlands; Halden Prison, Norway; South West College, Northern Ireland; and the Ministry of Justice, Catalonia - would take responsibility for maintaining contact, promoting Network outcomes, initiating new actions and expanding the Network.
- 3) The website, database and online journal would continue after the end of EC funding and be transferred from STEPS to Halden Prison, who had the resources to guarantee its continued existence.
- 4) Partners would seek funding to organize training workshops in different European countries, based on the Training Programme developed by the project.
- 5) The possibility of organizing regular (biannual?) Conferences to discuss and explore key issues relating to the use of ICT and multimedia in offender learning.
- 6) A number of other possible collaborative projects were discussed and will be explored for future funding, including the creation and distribution of suitable material for a pan-European online intranet.
- 7) In the longer term, support is being sought from a major international NGO, the European Prison Education Association, to incorporate PriMedia in its organizational structure, both expanding its potential audience and establishing closer links with other aspects of prison education.

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

LLP-Obj-f: To contribute to increased participation in lifelong learning by people of all ages, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background

ICT is increasingly seen as an effective tool for involving offenders in education & training programmes, particular given the antipathy amongst prisoners to traditional forms of delivery. It has a number of advantages:

- it is a familiar user-friendly method
- it can communicate information in attractive & accessible formats
- it can encourage active involvement by learner
- it can be delivered on an individual basis.

The need for this has been particularly underlined during visits to prisons in Bulgaria and Turkey.

**LLP-Obj-k: To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes and to exchange good practice in the fields covered by the Lifelong Learning Programme, in order to improve the quality of education and training.**

Whilst good practice in using ICT & multimedia in education & training in prison had already been identified in some partner countries at the outset of the project, the Network has been able to highlight a range of further initiatives through its background research, International Conferences, Good Practice Workshops and identification of good practice examples. It is also providing a unique opportunity for transferring such practices from other contexts – mainstream education, independent IT practice – to new partners, including countries with limited experience of these approaches, such as Lithuania, Bulgaria and Turkey.

**GRU-SpObj-2: To help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences**

As previous research has confirmed, most prisoners have rejected and been rejected by formal education, resulting in high levels of illiteracy & low levels of motivation to learn. ICT and multimedia, familiar to offenders in social contexts, are not usually associated with traditional teaching methods, and thus can provide an alternative way of helping inmates to improve the necessary knowledge and competences they need both to cope with prison life and to help rehabilitate them to life outside and the world of work. Again this has been confirmed through the background research and prison visits in partner countries, and the importance of having more expertly-trained tutors enhanced by the development of the PriMedia Training Programme.

**GRU-OpObj-4: To facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer, including from a participating country to others.**

By bringing together a range of agencies involved in education, ICT and prisons, PriMedia has not only identified existing good practice in the use of ICT and multimedia in offender learning but is actively promoting its application in other countries and contexts. A good example of this has been the Good Practice

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Workshops, where experts from experienced partners have engaged with inmates and ex-prisoners in less-experienced centres in Lithuania, Bulgaria and Turkey with the aim of encouraging the use of good practice methods for educational use in other penal systems.

### **GRU-OpObj-5: To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning**

The main focus of the Network is to promote the use of ICT and electronic multimedia in offender learning, not just as a passive way of supplying essential information but as an interactive tool to aid prisoner learning. It has demonstrated particular through its practical workshops that delivered in appropriately innovative ways, learners in prison can develop their creative potential, especially through such multimedia areas as video making, animation radio programming and interactive media projects, alongside gaining the more conventional key competencies needed for their rehabilitation.

#### **Priority 1: Promoting social cohesion through improved adult learning opportunities for specific social groups**

A particular issue for prisoners is their isolation, both from the wider society and from each other. This often leads to difficulties in relating and working with others, which using ICT & multimedia can help overcome:

- by assisting them to engage with a wider range of online and stored material
- by introducing them to technologies through which they can take advantage of future communication opportunities
- by encouraging them to share and cooperate with others, eg in creating a website or video.

Again a number of examples of this have been identified through contributions to International events, highlighting of good practice by partners and prison visits.

#### **Div: Promoting an awareness of the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity within Europe, as well as of the need to combat racism, prejudice and xenophobia**

ICT and multimedia have become international forms of communication, creating accessible material from across the world. Any engagement with them therefore inevitably reflects a wide range of diverse cultures, contexts and languages. Given that the prison population too reflects this diversity, especially given the increasing number of immigrant detainees, exploring them in a reflective educational context is an effective method of countering any racial, xenophobic or other prejudicial attitudes. Discussions with prisoners in Catalonia, Bulgaria and Denmark have particularly underlined the impact of this process, alongside the encouragement gained for inmates to share their different cultural perspectives through contributing to the ICT and multimedia competition in Norway.

#### **Media**

Clearly any project focusing on multimedia covers many media forms, in this case particularly those concerned with electronic media. A range of easily-usable

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programmes for making videos have been identified within the Network as well as highly sophisticated programmes for recording and editing music and speech. Animation is an increasingly popular form for prisoners using a variety of techniques – an excellent example was produced by inmates of the Avlona Prison School in Greece – and regular website and intranet journals are produced inside prison containing photos, cartoons and illustrations alongside texts.

### **KA3 ICT**

A key aspect confirmed by this project is the focus not so much on the technological issues surrounding ICT but on its effective use as a teaching tool, particularly for those with learning difficulties, as most prisoners have. This enables the deliverer to employ a wide range of techniques and approaches, and also to combine with other subject areas, such as art, languages and particularly multimedia. Another advantage in this area is that prisoners have a lot of time to work on their own.

