



**April 2004**

## **Conference 2005**

The next EPEA Conference will take place in Sofia, Bulgaria in May 2005. This was confirmed following two days of talks between Niek Williams (Chairperson), Torfinn Langelid (Membership Secretary), Petar Vasilev (Director General of the Bulgarian Correctional Service) and an Organising Committee headed by Valentina Petrova (Steering Committee member). Niek Williams and the Organising Committee will meet again in May, November and January to further advance plans. The Chairperson was impressed with the enthusiasm he encountered in Sofia and is confident that the conference will be a good one.

## **Prison Literacy Survey**

It will come as little surprise to many prison educators that recent research indicates that 52% of the Irish prison population scores at the lowest literacy level. This percentage is more than twice that of the general Irish population (23%) functioning at the same literacy level. The research was commissioned by the Irish Prison Education Service and it drew on the same methods and tests as the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), which researched the general population in Ireland and many other countries. As a result it is a valuable comparative study and the accompanying report outlines useful implications and recommendations. Copies can be downloaded from [www.irishprisons.ie](http://www.irishprisons.ie), or alternatively you can telephone 00 353 1 4616000.

## **Liaison and Contact Persons**

- In February Liaison and Contact Persons from 14 countries attended a meeting in Budapest at which they re-examined and prioritised their tasks and formulated an Action Plan for the next two years. A full report of the meeting has been circulated to all LPs and CPs.
- Recent changes of LPs and CPs are listed on the website and we are asking all LP/CPs to update us with their contact details. We are particularly keen to list an email address at which every LP/CP can be contacted. Changes and updates can be sent to Torfinn Langelid at [Torfinn.Langelid@fm-ho.stat.no](mailto:Torfinn.Langelid@fm-ho.stat.no)

## **Art Calendar**

If you are interested in having your students art work included in a European Prison Art Calendar, please contact Pauline at [eduport@eircom.net](mailto:eduport@eircom.net) for further details.

## **Council Of Europe Update**

In January the EPEA was elected as one of eight NGO representatives of the COE Liaison Committee. Thus we are closer now to the heart of the decision making process. The next Liaison Committee meeting will take place on Monday the 26th of April. An agenda for the meeting and information about the status and work of this committee is available on [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int). In continuing efforts to strengthen further our relationship, the EPEA Steering Committee has been invited to visit the Council of Europe at Strasburg in November when they will meet representatives of the NGO's Unit.

## **Website Update [www.epea.org](http://www.epea.org)**

- There are 4 different language versions of the complete COE recommendations available online: French, Norwegian, Estonian and Romanian. Translations of the 17 Recommendations have been published recently in Polish, Slovak, Swedish, Romanian and Estonian. If you would like the Recommendations to be published in your language and can organize for this to happen, please contact the Webmaster.
- Complete versions of the reports from the conferences held in Norway, Netherlands and Greece are available to download. Partial versions of the Hungarian and Swedish Conferences reports are available also.
- A news mailing list will be introduced from the membership page. This mailing list is open for all who want to receive information and if you are a member you are advised to subscribe. The list is offered only as a one way mailing service and therefore it will not be possible to send messages to other subscribers via to the list. Other mailing lists will be opened at a later date.
- Finally, the EPEA is keen to support and encourage research into prison education, particularly that which is carried out by prison educators and students. We are updating this aspect of our website and wish to include 1, brief details of any such research, 2, a reference section and 3, a book review. We are calling on members to help us in this task.

## **Membership Fees 2004**

EPEA has over 500 individual members. Membership Fees for 2004 remain unchanged but are due since February. If you have not already done so, we ask you to please forward your fees as soon as possible.