GENERAL COUNCIL: EPEA General Council
The general council takes place every two years.

DENMARK: Danish Prison Education under the Magnifying Glass
2nd leg of a research is completed

EPEA CONFERENCE 1: Opening Address
Opening address of the EPEA Chairperson and other reports

GERMANY: Der Spiegel reports
Germany reports more closed institutions for juvenile prisoners

COUNCIL OF EUROPE: INGO produces newsletter
1 issue published

ALBANIA: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION UPGRADE
The General Directorate of Prison invest more in prison education

NETHERLANDS: PHOTO WORKSHOP
Photo manipulation – the new subject in prison education

ENGLAND: ERWIN JAMES BLOG
Presentation of an EPEA conference keynote speaker and his blog

CALENDAR – SEMINARS
Grundtvig contact seminars

EPEA CONFERENCE 2: IMPRESSIONS
Pictures from the conference
EPEA General Council

20 members attended the General Council.

Secretary Anita Wilson presented the work of the EPEA since she was elected as a Secretary. The report was accepted.

The treasurer Gisle Gral-Jacobsen presented the EPEA budgets stating that the EPEA has a healthy economy. It was suggested to spend money on a LP meeting in 2008. The report was accepted.

The membership secretary Torfinn Langelid stated that the EPEA currently are having 590 individual members and 1400 members in general. 37 countries have members in the EPEA. The report was accepted.

Central Region: 
Péter Ruzsonyi, Hungary

Eastern Region: 
Valentina Petrova, Bulgaria

Northern Region: 
Kerstin Ekholm-Erestam, Sweden

Southern Region: 
Petros Damianos, Hellas

On a meeting following the General Council the Steering Committee decided to continue the co-option of Valentina Petrova as Project Coordinator, Janine Duprey-Kennedy as CoE representative and Per Thrane as Webmaster.

Danish Research

Prison Education and inmates wishes concerning education has been in focus in a recent research conducted in Danish prisons by the Danish Pedagogical University.

11,5% states that they have not completed any education or training at all. This includes basic schooling. Among the age group from 18 to 24, 16,1% have no education at all. The figure for inmates older than 35 is 8%. In comparison 0,0% of the total Danish population over 18 years of age is registered as having no education at all by The Statistical Bureau of Denmark.

36,6% - of the inmates who does not attend education or training while imprisoned states that it is because the prison does not offer suitable educational programs.

App. 20% of the inmates study while imprisoned.

38,8% - of the inmates who does not attend education or training while imprisoned states that it is because they have never been informed about the educational opportunities.

A full overview will be published in a forthcoming issue of the EPEA Magazine.

Conference Opening Address

The conference was opened with an address of the Chairperson Anne Costelloe. She said:

Since our last conference in Sofia (and I must complement our Bulgarian friends for that success, it’s indeed a hard act to follow), many of the trends in prison policy and tendencies in prison education that were emerging there have become even more evident now. In particular, I am referring to European-wide trends in penal discourse and political rhetoric that are promoting a ‘hard-line’
attitude to crime and punishment. It would seem to me that the ‘get tough on crime’ and ‘lock ‘em up’ discourse has become even more entrenched in our public psyche and is thus given central stage on political agendas. As educators, this can be very disheartening because such rhetoric fuels the public perception that we must build more prisons, put more people in them, and then tighten the regimes within which we operate.

Of course, when it becomes accepted as common sense and justified to imprison more people, increase the length of sentences, reduce the amount of temporary release options, restrict access to open prisons and alternative programmes, and so on, that tightening becomes accepted, the next question, is what do we do with them all now that we have locked them all up? Unfortunately, it would seem to me, that in answer to that question, prison education is finding it increasingly difficult to have its voice heard. Instead, options and regimes that emphasise ‘programmes that seek to directly address offending behaviour’ have become flavour of the month and de rigour. Of course this is not surprising because our politicians, our policy makers, and indeed the public, want to hear of instant success stories. They want to hear that it is possible to quickly, easily and cheaply fix all that is wrong with our criminals once they are imprisoned. Therefore, more traditional, or ‘old-fashioned’, Socratic education programmes and less instant options are finding it difficult to compete, and I believe, are in danger of being sidelined.

The speech in total length can be read from the home page: http://www.epea.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=313&Itemid=375

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**Germany reports many new closed institutions for juvenile prisoners**

The German news magazine Der Spiegel tells that Germany has 19 closed juvenile prisons for young offenders between 10 and 14 year. 260 juvenile prisoners are behind bars. Just 8 years ago this number was 120. More of these prisons are in planning.

Most of the children has lived as prostitutes or have been threatening the life of others like teachers or parents.

The young offenders stay in average 11 months in the institution and they are released when their situation according to psychologists and pedagogues is stabilized.

A recent research shows that most children have recorded severe difficulties already from the age of 8. Over half of the children have been raised by the mother alone, but if the father had been present in the family the children reports that they have been beaten by the father. About 30% come from presumably well situated families.

Almost all of the juvenile prisoners’ miss schooling and education, sports and cognitive activities are an important part of the strict daily routine.

Der Spiegel reports that all prisons have a Jugendschutzraum or a special cell to isolate juvenile prisoners that are getting out of control in the institution.

There are no statistics or research that shows the effect of the special institutions, but the institutions estimates that about half of the juvenile prisoners manage to live an almost unnoticed life in the future.

The closed juvenile prisons are debated in Germany and called Child Prisons by opponents. Der Spiegel asked 1000 persons in a survey if they approve the existents of the institutions. 53% said yes, 35% no.

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**INGOs at the CoE produce a newsletter**

The EPEA representative at the CoE Janine Dupre-Kennedy reports that the INGOs at the Council of Europe has produces a first rainbow issue of a newsletter.

The newsletter will on a regular basis report on recent developments and inform about the work of the INGOs.

A blog with the purpose to discuss the organisation of the INGOs at the CoE is opened for all to take part in.

Retrieve the document here: http://www.coe.int/t/e/ngo/public/INGO_%20NEWS.doc
The wooden sculpture is produced by an anonymous inmate in a prison in Scandinavia. Working with the sculpture the inmate experienced a lot of interesting comments and conversations on what it could be while working on the sculpture. The inmates own explanation is,

"The story this piece of wood is telling is the story about a half burned piece of pine full of knots, tensions and rot - in other words a piece of scrap wood, however there is a beauty and from only waiting for a will to become and get expressed, and through its form, tell its story. The form is the story, which however is determined by the eyes watching..."

The picture was presented in form of a blog and the sculptor got some feedback on his art work.

His reply:
First of all I’d like to express my gratitude for the possibility to work

on this piece of wood as well as for all the positive feedback.

I also think there is ‘hope’ for all of us - and that we all with the will for changes being there as well as the right treatment/ help/ advice do have the possibility to express our ‘inner’ beauty. And yes, I do think that this is part of the message told by this piece of wood - thus the form being the content.

As to what each individual sees in the form, what content it reveals I leave that up to the eyes watching to determine :) ...

See and take part: www.panproject.org

Photo Workshop in Netherlands
www.panproject.org

The special individual care unit of the secure prison of Vught in The Netherlands held a graffiti, rap, dance and photo workshop with the inmates.

An old tradition to work with photos has changed with the use of digital cameras.

Photo art and picture manipulation becomes the new photo tradition in prisons as seen with these examples from Vught.

Erwin James Blog

One of the keynote speakers at the EPEA Conference in Dublin was Erwin James.

Erwin James has a blog on The Guardian home page

http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/erwin_james/

Albania improves prison education

The Albanian General Directorate of Prisons has financed a new prison education initiative.

All prison schools and educational staff has to find vocational schools near their institution to cooperate to include their programs and teachers in special vocational courses. The prisoners that will attend the courses will be certificated by the vocational school. In parallel the Genera Directory of Prisons are working with the Ministry of Education to have an arrangement over the recognition of the certification after inmates have completed their sentences in prison.

Calendar - Grundtvig contact seminars

1st-4th November 2007: Prague, Czech Republic
Theme: 'Intercultural Education'
Target Group: Representatives of institutions/organisations who are interested in the above theme and who are committed to developing a Grundtvig project.

11th-14th November 2007: Berlin, Germany
Theme: "Active Citizenship"
Target Group: Representatives of institutions/organisations who are interested in the above theme

and who are committed to developing a Grundtvig project

7th-11th November 2007: Bordeaux, France
Theme: "Inclusion of disabled adults and their families".
Target Group: Representatives of Institutions/Organisations who are interested in the above theme and who are committed to developing a Grundtvig project.

22nd-25th November 2007: Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland
Theme: ‘Family Literacy and Numeracy’
Target Group: Representatives of institutions/organisations who are interested in the above theme and who are committed to developing a Grundtvig project.

5th-10th December 2007: Toulouse, France
Theme: "LLP and Intercultural Dialogue"
Target Group: Representatives of institutions/organisations who are interested in the above theme and who are committed to developing a Grundtvig project.

11th Conference in Dublin

Congratulation to the IPEA who organised the very successful 11th International EPEA Conference, which took place in Dublin during June.

Over 180 prison educators experienced an excellent mix of practical and academic workshops, cultural activities and social events. The Keynote Speeches were noteworthy and deftly managed to set an uplifting and celebratory tone for the whole event.

A full report on the conference will be published over the coming months; in the meantime, the following photographs might serve to bring back some happy memories.