

Calendar 2008

May 17,
LP/CP meeting
Bulgaria.

June 17-19
OFFENDER LEARNING &
SKILLS CONFERENCES
London

July 13-15
Pan-Commonwealth
Forum on Open Learning

September, 11-14
Directors conference
Malmoe, Sweden

19 - 22 September 2008
Perspectives on Social
Capital and Social Inclusion

Visit to Council of Europe



EPEA Election 2008

New Chair and old treasurer

Back to the future

Workshop in prison on development of prison education

Importance of counselors

Sustain impact on young people

Cost of education

Price on Norway's prison education

USA, 1% in prison

Sad new world record

VEPS

Project to become evaluated.

Visit to Council of Europe



The VEPS Project partners met in Strasbourg and visited the Council of Europe for a joint meeting between the EPEA, VEPS project and the representatives from the Human Rights and Education Groupings and the administrative office of the NGOs



Speeches were held by EPEA Chairperson Anne Costelloe, Project Coordinator Valentina Petrova and webmaster Per Thrane. In the following discussion the VEPS partners from Ireland, Hellas and Norway told about the cooperation to improve prison education in Europe by transferring good practice.

It was agreed that a follow up meeting is to be held in January 2009 with representatives of all NGOs at the CoE.

The meeting gave the opportunity for the EPEA to ask for a closer cooperation with the Centre of Prevention of Torture. The CPT

evaluates the prison systems of the member countries through regular visits. One of the concerns of the CPT is the situation of education in prison.

Most of the speeches and the dialog at the CoE can be seen online at EPEAs new YouTube Channel on

www.youtube.com/epeatube

Elections 2008

There was only one nominee for the position of Treasurer and also only one nominee for the position of Deputy Chairperson.

Therefore, Gisle Grahl Jacobsen is deemed elected unopposed to his second term of office as EPEA Treasurer. Congratulations to Gisle, the organisation is lucky that control of its finances is in such safe and competent hands.

Dr. Anita Wilson was the sole nominee for the position of Deputy Chairperson and she is thus deemed elected unopposed to that position. As Deputy Chairperson, Anita will take up the role of Chairperson in July 2009. She is at present Secretary of the EPEA and will be a vital asset in leading the organisation forward.

U.S. prison population explodes

On Feb. 28 the Pew Center on the States released a report detailing that 1 in 99.1 adults in the U.S. is locked up. That comes to

2.319.258 prisoners for a population of 230.000.000.

The growth of the prison population has skyrocketed, nearly tripling from 1987 to 2007. The total U.S. prison population is higher than the 26 European nations with the highest prison populations, yet these nations combined have two-and-a-half times the total population of the U.S.

All told there are 750 prisoners per 100,000 people in the U.S. — the highest incarceration rate in the world. This prison population accounts for 25 percent of the world's prison population.

Although crime has dropped 25 percent from 1987 to 2007 (New York Times, Feb. 28), incarceration continues to climb. The lowest level of violent crime was reached in 2005, according to the Bureau of Justice.

US research shows importance of the role of the counselors (teachers)

Findings of this study indicated some similar and some unique program experiences that impacted participants. The following assumption was reported by participants: young offenders who have supportive familial relationships, who function as productive citizens within their communities, and who make satisfactory performance in school, may experience recidivism less

frequently than those who exhibit opposite characteristics.

Findings also suggested that poverty, peer relations, school, family life, self-imposed limitations, and community dynamics were linked to juvenile offending. In order to address the magnitude of this problem, there must be combined efforts on the behalf of juvenile correctional leaders, parents, and communities to exercise maximum efforts toward youth competency development. Although many participants shared positive aspects of their programs' efforts to address the competency development issue, other participants were not satisfied with the educational and counselling aspects of the programs.

They cited counsellors who were ill-prepared and lacked compassion and sensitivity, indicating these drawbacks contributed negatively to their attempts to gain greater competency. Therefore, counsellors and program staff need to be mindful of the vital roles they have in reducing juvenile recidivism. Competent counsellors and teachers can have sustaining impacts on young people.

The research can be found here: http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/28/0c/9b.pdf

ERIC provides free access to more than 1.2 million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials and, if available, includes links to full text. ERIC is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

Information service for adult education in Europe

Spreading information about adult education from the countries of Europe and EU institutions is the aim and objective of the new English service "European InfoNet Adult Education", which has been developed as part of an EU project and is now available for all those interested.

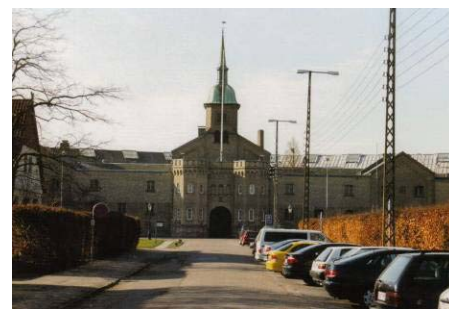
Around 25 correspondents all across Europe - journalists from specialist magazines and other experts - create articles for InfoNet in accordance with certain quality criteria; these are freely available in an online database. Furthermore, InfoNet sends out a free, four-page information service e-mail newsletter every two months, with one main topic; this is linked to the database.

In the InfoNet network, around 30 (umbrella) organisations are interlinked on a European scale and their respective national scales.

Homepage:

<http://www.infonet-ae.eu>, where there is a link with a request form for the InfoLetter and free registration to use the database.

Back to the future



The prison school of Vridsloselille State Prison in Copenhagen has held a workshop entitled "Back to the Future" in order to develop the school. The workshop was headed by two students from the nearby Roskilde University. Inmates, NGO's, The University, Prison Personnel, teacher and representatives from the Department of Probation and Prison Service took part. In a later workshop politicians from the parliament will discuss possibilities to realize the ideas of the workshop. In mixed subgroups it was discussed how education, ICT, an art house and other factors could prepare for a better situation for release.

Meeting the Needs of Higher & Distance Education Prison Students

A colloquium will be held on the 4th of June in Milton Keynes, UK to review progress and plan for future policy for higher education and distance learning prison students. The aims of the event are to bring together international experts and key stakeholders to:

- Discuss developing technologies, identify the risks and examine how the technology and the pedagogy can be improved to better meet prisoner needs

- Discuss the current and future policy for higher education for prisoners and ex-prisoners

- Build partnerships to improve the overall educational provision for prisoners and ex-prisoners

- Identify key successes and problems of Offender Learning in order to inform the international community during discussion later this year.

The primary objective of the colloquium is to prepare for an International Discussion Forum, which will be held at PCF5 on 13-17 July in London where Antonio Viedma Rojas will present conclusions from the EURODESIP project. Further details on this International Forum can be followed on this Wiki. Attendance is free but by invitation only. If you are interested in attending,

please register before the 27th May 2008 at

www.open.ac.uk/colmsct/events
For further details, please contact
COLMSCT-Centre@open.ac.uk

Commission proposes 2009 to become European Year of Creativity and Innovation

Europe needs to boost its capacity for creativity and innovation for both social and economic reasons. That is why the Commission has today adopted a proposal to declare 2009 the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. The decision will be taken later this year by the Council and the European Parliament.

Cost of Prison Education in Norway

Prison Education in Norway has in 2008 an annual budget of 22.1 mio Euro. This is an increase of 8.9 mio Euro since 2005.

The Parliament (called Stortinget) is currently discussing a white paper on Prison Education. Torfinn Langelid comments:

A new report on the Correctional Service from Stortinget is expected in spring 2008. Many subjects are discussed that can cause changes for Norwegian Prison Education.

Source:
www.fengselundervisning.net

INSIDE LOSS

'Inside Loss' is a book of bereavement poems by prisoners and officers in HMP Belmarsh. It is also a workbook that includes creative writing and self-reflection exercises that may help as a way of coping with grief. The book arises out of Belmarsh's bereavement group in collaboration with the writer in residence, Evlynn Sharp who is supported by Writers in Prison Network. Prisoners in other creative writing groups - and officers - also offered their poems. She says: "The grieving process for men inside prison is very hard, and they may feel isolated, lonely and uncertain. Also, bereaved staff can have a difficult time in dealing with the grief and hurt of loss - while also having to get on with their tough jobs. What unite us as a human family is bereavement, and our capacity of compassion. 'Inside Loss' shows that by sharing our painful experiences, we can support each other through the sorrow." Arts Council England funded the publication of this book, which is free to prisoners. A quantity of books goes to Cruse Bereavement Trust, so any proceeds can support its charitable work for bereaved people trying to cope with their loss. Any further donations may be made directly to Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity in London.

Greenwich Council also supports the work of Belmarsh's writer in residence. For further information about 'Inside Loss', contact: Writer in Residence or the Library Manager, c/o The Library, HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead, London SE28 0EB. Tel: 020-8331 4522

Source: Anne Peaker Centre

12th EPEA Conference in Cyprus 2009

In the EPEA Magazine issue 34 the Chairperson Anne Costelloe announced:

"I am delighted also to announce that the 12th International EPEA Conference will take place in Cyprus in 2009. The Cyprian sunshine should make a lovely contrast to the wet, damp weather we had here in Ireland at the last conference and I hope that you will all make a note in your diary to keep time free in October 2009 for a visit to the Mediterranean! I would like to wish the Organising Committee well and I look forward to working with them as they prepare for this significant event".

More information will follow.

News from the VEPS project

VEPS can welcome Sonja Kurten-Vartio, Finland as the VEPS evaluator. Sonja will be in Malmo in September to meet the VEPS project team. Besides working for the prison authorities in Finland she is also connected to the Council of Europe. In Malmoe Sonja Kurten-Vartio will speak on behalf of the Council of Europe.

CEA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2008

The Sixty Third International Correctional Education Association Conference will take place in Denver, Colorado, USA, from July 13 to 16, 2008.

The title of the conference is Soaring to New Heights Through Education.

It is open to CEA members and non-members from around the world. The conference organisers offer the opportunity to practitioners, researchers and administrators to share their experiences with other correctional and prison educators internationally. There will be nearly 100 different workshops during the conference and there are already presenters

from Australia, Norway Ireland and the United States.

The CEA is particularly keen to encourage as many correctional and prison educators from outside North America to attend. To encourage non-US prison educators, there are a number of international scholarships available. Scholarships can include conference fees and other expenses. Full details are available at <http://www.ceanational.org/scholar.htm>.

Details about the conference and further information on scholarships are available from the CEA website,

www.ceanational.org
or from Conference Chair John Palan, at platojp@msn.com.