

RECOMMENDATION No. R (89) 12 OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES ON EDUCATION IN PRISON

Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 October 1989 at the 429th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies

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The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe, Considering that the right to education is fundamental; Considering the importance of education in the development of the individual and the community;

Realising in particular that a high proportion of prisoners have had very little successful educational experience, and therefore now have many educational needs;

Considering that education in prison helps to humanise prisons and to improve the conditions of detention;

Considering that education in prison is an important way of facilitating the return of the prisoner to the community;

Recognising that in the practical application of certain rights or measures, in accordance with the following recommendations, distinctions may be justified between convicted prisoners and prisoners remanded in custody;

Having regard to Recommendation No. R (87) 3 on the European Prison Rules and Recommendation No. R (81) 17 on adult education policy, Recommends the governments of member states to implement policies which recognise the following:

1. All prisoners shall have access to education, which is envisaged as consisting of classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and library facilities;
2. Education for prisoners should be like the education provided for similar age-groups in the outside world, and the range of learning opportunities for prisoners should be as wide as possible;
3. Education in prison shall aim to develop the whole person bearing in mind his or her social, economic and cultural context;
4. All those involved in the administration of the prison system and the management of prisons should facilitate and support education as much as possible;
5. Education should have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners should not lose out financially or otherwise by taking part in education;
6. Every effort should be made to encourage the prisoner to participate actively in all aspects of education;
7. Development programmes should be provided to ensure that prison educators adopt appropriate adult education methods;
8. Special attention should be given to those prisoners with particular difficulties and especially those with reading or writing problems;

9. Vocational education should aim at the wider development of the individual, as well as being sensitive to trends in the labour-market;
10. Prisoners should have direct access to a well-stocked library at least once a week;
11. Physical education and sports for prisoners should be emphasised and encouraged;
12. Creative and cultural activities should be given a significant role because these activities have particular potential to enable prisoners to develop and express themselves;
13. Social education should include practical elements that enable the prisoner to manage daily life within the prison, with a view to facilitating his return to society;
14. Wherever possible, prisoners should be allowed to participate in education outside prison;
15. Where education has to take place within the prison, the outside community should be involved as fully as possible;
16. Measures should be taken to enable prisoners to continue their education after release;
17. The funds, equipment and teaching staff needed to enable prisoners to receive appropriate education should be made available