

Workshop 1

Prison Education in North and South

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PENITENTIARY TREATMENT AND EDUCATION IN SPANISH PRISONS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

First of all, let me say that I am very glad to have this opportunity to talk about the status of education in prison in my country. Like I have known from the reports of almost all European countries we have many points in common but also some significant differences. I hope that my contribution serves to this trans-national reflection on the education in prisons.

I have divided my presentation into two parts: a general synthesis of the state of education in Spanish prisons and a review of the European prison projects, in many of which my country is involved. After this I will expose a few brief conclusions and key points for the debate.

Let me begin with some general information about our penitentiary system. The prison population in Spain reaches more than sixty thousand, a 93% are men and 8% are women. They are distributed in 77 penitentiary centres. Like in the rest of the European countries, this population have increased progressively during the last decades. It happens especially with women: unfortunately Spain has one of the higher rates of the European Union female imprisonment.

We have a completely public penitentiary system, since my point of view a factor that influences positively on the status of education in prison. With regard to the distribution of competitions, we have two Administrations: the Secretariat of Penitentiary Services, Rehabilitation and Young Justice (Department of Justice) for Catalonia, and the General Directorate of Penitentiary Institutions (Ministry of Internal Affairs) for the rest the State.

Features of the education in Spanish prisons.

The education in prison in Spain has a long tradition: historically, is one of the first countries in adopting a correctional and human perspective in the penal doctrine. The obligatory existence of school and teacher into prison is ruled since the General Ordinance of the Kingdom's Prisons (1834).

Nowadays, the "General Penitentiary Law" (1979), affirm that "The penitentiary institutions regulated in the present Law take as a basic purpose the re-education and the social rehabilitation of the sentenced ones to prison sentences" (art. 1), and establishes the "penitentiary treatment" like the amount of activities directly oriented to the attainment of this purpose. (art. 59.1).

Consequently, the education is considered as the principal way of social reintegration, close to the work. Because of this the education of inmates in Spain are very complete, and has a modern and integral perspective of adult learning. We look for the complementation between the three big areas of educational intervention in the "penitentiary treatment":

1. Formal education.

It consist in all the official educational levels: primary, secondary, ruled vocational training and universities studies. The first three are completely free, and for the university studies we have a wide system of scholars and grants. Primary and Secondary education is not conceived as a prolongation of the ordinary ones, so the "Educational Units" in Spanish prisons are really Centres of adults' lifelong education (called CEPAS). Normally they are delegations of the existing in the exterior that are destined to the adult population in general. For this reason

teachers are usually very well trained and experienced in adult learning. The prisoners can study ruled vocational training in a institution outside or by distance learning, and the National University of Distance Learning is the responsible institution of the higher education in prison. This is the international university of Distance Learning, most important and advanced, and offers a range of 26 degrees in all knowledge areas. None of these levels is obligatory, though the inmates must study at least Literacy.

The penitentiary institution gives to the inmates all the support, included the economic one, for the remaining studies that can be studied by distance learning. Also does an special emphasis in the measures that facilitate a good environment for study: for example, there are Units exclusively destined to university students in some prisons. There, extraordinary activities are organized by the own University as a complement to the specifically academic ones.

All this educational competitions are dependents from each Autonomous Community (we have 19) and from the Ministry of Culture and Education (University level).

2. Non formal education.

It consists in occupational vocational training and diverse educational and cultural programs. Though there are covenants with the educational authorities, this education is directly managed from the "Autonomous Agency of Work and Prison Benefits"(OATPP), inside the General Directorate of Prison Institutions. In practice, it is fundamentally coordinated by NGOs (about 200 are working today at the Spanish prisons), that are encouraged to present their programs inside the following educational general lines:

1. Programs for preparing for the labour reintegration:
2. Programs for social rehabilitation:
3. Programs of Attention to specific collectives:
4. Sanitary programs and directed to drug addicts:
5. Educational programs:
6. Activities of training and cultural diffusion:
7. Programs of collaboration in the fulfillment of alternative measures to the prison.
8. Others programs:
 - 8.1. Formation in ethical principles.
 - 8.2. Religious or popular celebrations

Nowadays more than 2000 programs are developed inside these lines within the Spanish prisons.

In both, formal and non formal education, we do efforts for extending new methods of distance learning to avoid the traditional learning by correspondence. Inside these new initiatives we can underline two:

Mentor Classroom project.

It is e-learning project that guarantees a great flexibility in the learning and a nearby and direct attention to students. The courses are directed essentially to the learning of labour skills, and the students obtain an official certificate. Thanks to a covenant between the General Directorate of Penitentiary Institutions and the Ministry of Education and Science, two Mentor Classrooms have been established in the prisons of Madrid I and Madrid II, in which the students have personal computers to be able to continue the courses. For further information about this project see: <http://www.mentor.mec.es/>

Bip Bip Classrooms

It is a programme promoted by the Foundation Bip Bip, in which people in risk of exclusion receive training for their labour and social reintegration. One of its objectives is to promote the digital learning. At present, a Bip Bip Classroom has been installed in the prison of Segovia, and the experience seems quite positive.

Seated in front of the keyboard, youths from among 20 and 32 years they register in the traffic school through Internet or enjoy with the recently learned computer game, and all it helps them to do more tolerable their prison sentence.

3. Productive workshops inside the prison

Its purpose is to provide to the prisoners habits of work and skills that allow them a professional insertion in conditions of equality with the rest of the citizens. These workers have received before a training that qualifies them for carrying out their job, for which they get remuneration and quote to the Social Security as the rest of the population. To guarantee the productive activity the OATPP establishes agreements with public institutions and companies, offering industrial facilities, human resources and competitiveness in the following labour specialities:

- Graphical Arts: graphical design, works of edition, advertising, cartels.
- Manipulated: wired up, packed, electrical and electronic assemblies, paper and cardboard, plastics.
- Clothing industry: clothes for work and for dressing the home.
- Furniture and others: furniture, metallic carpentry, crafts, gifts.

Educational staff

Besides the teachers and the Masters of the occupational workshops, the Spanish prisons have two more professionals of education: the Pedagogue and the Educator. Both are inside the "Teams of treatment", a specific Department in the Prison Administration, which are located in each prison. With a Psychologist, Sociologist and a Jurist, they are the responsible people of coordinating the treatment activities.

Really we have in Spain a discussion about the profiles and competitions of the educational staff in prisons. For instance, the Pedagogues and educators have a certain discomfort with the action of NGOs. Even though they admit that the labour of these organizations is important, also denounce the entry of unqualified people into the profession. In fact, they affirm that while they are absorbed by bureaucratic work, "The really nice thing, the treatment and the education, is in NGOs hands".

Educational prison projects in the European framework: Great Spanish participation
One of the most important tasks to identify the potentials and challenges for European prison education is to know the cooperation and joint work between the different countries of our continent. This is precisely the aim of a project that is carrying out by a Bulgarian NGO (Its Chair is Valentina Petrova, one of the regional representative of EPEA) and the Norwegian and Irish Branches of the EPEA (FOKO and IPEA). The project ICCEPE (International Conference "Challenges for European Prison Education") in itself aims to make a full collection of Prison projects supported by the EU funding programs.

To contribute to this project I am going to do a brief review about the past and current most important European prison projects, in many of them Spain is involved as a coordinator or partner.

Projects about education in prison in Grundtvig 1:

Model for supporting-correctional training (2003-2004)

Reference: 110673-CP-1-2003-1-BG-GRUNDTVIG-G1, two year project involving 8 partners from Spain, Germany, Italy, Malta and Netherland.

Description/Objectives:

- The target area for this project is the education of women in prison.
- The key activities are in the sharing of experiences and ideas about this, before and after developing training manuals.

- The purpose is to support the development of methodologies for improving women's education in prison.

You also have a chance: Vocational reactivation of disadvantaged groups - bringing ex-prisoners back to the society (2003-2004)

Reference: 110950-CP-1-2003-1-PL-GRUNDTVIG-G1, two year Project involving 6 partners from Spain, Slovakia, Lithuania, Germany and Norway.

Description/Objectives:

- To bring a support for prisoners and for young delinquents by working on the possibilities of training in the self-confidence and training in search of an employment.
- To elaborate for that purpose three entitled modules: "How to work with groups socially disadvantaged?", "Believe in itself" and "Find an employment".
- The product finished by this project will be a manual of teaching and and a CD.

Another way (2003-2004)

Reference: 110534-CP-1-2003-1-SK-GRUNDTVIG-G1, two year project involving 6 partners from Spain, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

Description/Objectives:

- To approach the question of alternative sentences to the prison for the group of the young men.
- To evaluate the current situation of the mediation and the parole in every associate country.
- To visit the Sweden and Spanish prisons to inter-exchange good practices.
- To create a standard model of education for social workers and the responsible persons in prisons of the parole.
- To present the Swiss model of alternative sentences, led to the practice in Prague.
- To develop a web page and to publish a brochure with information about this topic.

Teatrodentro (2004-2005).

Reference: 116674-CP-1-2004-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G11, two year project involving partners from Spain, Belgium, France and Italy.

Description/Objectives:

- To make a model of training for prison workers based in theatrical techniques to improve their socio-relational competence and capacity of reorientating the basic needs of prisoners in the perspective of their reinstatement in constructive social groups.
- The module of training proposes:
 - o To receive experiences about the learning of techniques of expression used in prison contexts with advanced treatment.
 - o To do a well articulated plan by the necessary basic conditions to promote similar plans in other countries of the European Union.
 - o To specify successful techniques and methodologies

Developing training programmes for qualified teachers to teach in prisons (2004-2005)

Reference: 113991-CP-1-2004-1-MT-CRUNDTVIG-G11, two years project involving partners from Denmark, Norway, CZ, Portugal, Ptum, Italy, Netherland and Malta.

Description/Objectives:

- To create a training course to qualify teachers to teach in prisons, to avoid their use of the methodology applied in primary schools and achieve a quality education in prisons.

- To study the actual classroom practice, analyse the findings, draw up a curriculum, develop the teaching/learning units, prepare training course materials for the teachers and prepare a manual for the course tutors (piloted and evaluated both internally and externally)

Teatro e carcere in Europea. Formazione, sviluppo e divulgazione di metodologie innovative (2004-2005).

Reference: 116571-CP-1-2004-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G1, two years project involving 6 partners from Spain, United Kingdom, Italy, France, Denmark and Sweden.

Description/Objectives:

- To integrate the experiences of prison theatre presents in Europe.
- To analyze the experience made in each partner country, and to select the good practices.
- To promote a way of learning and vocational training for inmates using informal languages.
- To promote professional qualification for categories that already are operating in association with prisoners.

Learning for a life in freedom (2004-2005)

Reference: 11388-CP-1-2004-1-DK-GRUNDTVIG-G1, two years project involving 10 partners from Spain, Denmark, Lithuania, Belgium, Swede, Norway and Estonia.

Description:

- To produce, test and evaluate models for individual based learning for prison inmates to replace the existing traditional "class room" offers.
- These models will combine the learning of general basic skills demanded in daily life as well as on the labour market.
- This approach towards learning will be passed on to teachers involved in teaching prison: is focus on both the individual formation of this approach and the learning on how to materialize the approach.
- To develop 10-15 new education models (collected in a manual for the exchange of teaching practice between colleges)

EURO-DESIP: Diagnosis on High Education in prison (presented in the current year, marked as a very good project and surely approved).

Reference: 225396, involving 11 partners from Spain, Germany, Greece, France, Latvia and Romania.

Description: evaluation of the status of High Education in prison.

Projects about education in prison in Grundtvig 2.

Social inclusion of persons returned from imprisonment (2004-2005)

Reference: 04-LTU01-S2G01-00003-1, two years programme involving 5 partners from France, Bulgaria, Greece and Lithuania.

Description/Objectives:

- To prepare an educational programme, which helps ex-prisoners to reintegrate into society and prevents recidivism.
- The educational programme would include: development of interpersonal skills, communication skills, orientation in changing labour market, training on use of information and communication technologies, literacy courses, programs for psychosocial support and other related topics.

Marginalised Young People – Cultural Similarity, Diversity and Good Practice (2004-2005)

Reference: 04-GBR01-S2G01-00090-1, two years project involving three partners

from Spain, United Kingdom and Finland.

Description/Objectives:

- To create a platform for marginalised young people to share and contrast social and cultural experiences (A visual presentation which portrays of social issues, cultural diversity and youth empowerment)
- To provide opportunities for practitioners from different European cultures to share good practice: the project will contribute to both teaching and learning.
- To develop successful strategies that help young people overcome social, psychological and economic barriers to active citizenship and economic participation.

MABEL – Multi-disciplinary Approach to Adult Basic Education and Learning (2003-2005)

Reference: 03-GBR01-S2G01-00139-2, three years project involving 6 partners from Ireland, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Norway and Poland.

Description/Objectives:

- To explore the potential of a multi-disciplinary approach to Adult Basic Education and Learning for prisoners and young offenders, with emphasis on a common core curriculum (Basic Literacy, ICT and Social and Life Skills)
- To have a rich library of real life experiences:
 - o Staff involved in the teaching of these subjects will explore themes together, share ideas on methods and techniques and develop lessons.
 - o The prisoners will produce three collaborative magazines to share information about themselves, prison life, their local area, their country, customs, traditions and beliefs (conceived as a teaching/learning resource).
- To create a web page so that the results of the project can be widely disseminated.

Adapted Adult Education in Prison and how to follow up after release (2003-2005)

Reference: 04-NOR01-S2G01-00009-2, three years project involving 8 partners from Spain, Norway, Italy, Latvia, Germany, United Kingdom and Finland.

Description/Objectives:

- To exchange experiences and working sessions in cross-national meetings, as well as by involving the partners in trying out methods/models, to improve the adult teaching provided to offenders.
- To reflect about how to use ICT as a tool in the education provided to the offenders, how to manage the co-operation between the teaching staff and the other services in prison, how to improve the knowledge of different cultures and languages in Europe and how to co-ordinate the inside prison education with follow-up education after release.
- To make a common web page: the project partners will present local projects and experiences for each other, and they have made also a CD with the project results. ADHD among prison inmates. How can the health, welfare and school departments cooperate in finding a positive way of improvement? (2003-2005)

Reference: 04-NOR01-S2G01-00017-2, three years project involving 4 partners from Norway, Germany, Estonia and Italy.

Description:

- To find out in what way the health / welfare and the school departments can cooperate in finding ways of achieving improvement for the prisoners with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
- To exchanging experiences with the ADHD problem as well as teaching methodology, and carrying out research on the topic.

Conclusions: Key points for reflection.

The focus of my remarks is the main tendencies that we can guess in all this European prison projects, what are related with some aspects of education in prison in Spain. As you can see my country has an active role in them.

The principal topics that underline the projects I have mentioned are:

The status of the knowledge on education in prison:

- We need to research about an authentic Philosophy of Education in Prison: aims and principles.
- The Theory and methodology are still undefined: the difficulty raises because of the increasing importance of non formal education.
- We have to know more about the educational needs of specific groups, like immigrants, women, children in prison or young people. For this objective I am carrying out my doctoral thesis about "Educational intervention in mother and babies Units".

The professional staff training and their qualification:

- Besides the increase of the educational staff, we need to define better their functions and competitions.
- If we define these professional profiles, we could design the curriculum of formal and non formal education for teachers and educators in prisons: in this sense we have to mark the efforts made by EPEA, the Correctional Education Association and the American Correctional Association.
- We have to realise the great importance of including the education in prison as a university subject in educational studies.

o In this sense we must take advantage of the European Convergence on Higher Education: a comparative analysis of educational studies in Europe (except Teacher Training Studies) shows the increasing importance of two professional and academic areas:

- ♣ Lifelong education and Adult Learning.
- ♣ Specialized Education, prevention, orientation and social attention. Institutional Pedagogy (hospitals, prisons.)

o In Spain we have some examples: the University Lecturer Mr Fernando Gil Cantero (Complutense University) is teaching "Penitentiary Pedagogy" and "Penitentiary Education" in Educational Studies since 1993.

The construction of an international and European framework about education in prison:

- We should elaborate a virtual platform to spread the work of all this international groups: products and reports of the projects.
- We have to be capable to influence in the educational policy inside prisons: to go towards a common educational system in European prisons, that also consider the special features of each country.

I hope that these questions help us to continue working together on education in prison.

