Erasmus+ and Prison Education –
A review of EU support 2014-2018

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Prison Education in *Erasmus+* (2014-2018) : Overall picture 1 – General statistics

- 93 Prison Education (PrE) projects within Adult education (AdE): 2.4% of AdE projects:
  - 48 “KA104” Mobility projects (2.1% of the Adult education total)
  - 45 “KA204” Strategic partnerships (2.9% of the Adult Education total)
- Also 4 projects under “KA3” (forward-looking cooperation projects)
- Other actions of *Erasmus+* (esp. Youth and VET) may also be marginally relevant for PrE but are not covered in this review
- Considerable overall increase in total PrE projects from 2014 (9 projects) to 2018 (29 projects). In total still <½ the proportion of PrE relative to overall AdE, compared with the 5% PrE (relative to AdE) in “Grundtvig” under the preceding Lifelong Learning Programme, but the average annual number of projects supported is now above the average for the “Grundtvig” years 2000-2013

- 22 countries (out of 34) have so far coordinated a project, 12 not yet
- 30 countries (all except SE, MK, IS, FL) involved either as coordinator or partner
- 20 countries have coordinated a KA1, only 16 countries (under half the participating countries) a KA2 project
- 14 countries have coordinated both KA1 and KA2
- 10 most active coordinating countries: IT 13; FR.TR 9; ES 8; LT.RO 6; BE.UK 5; GR.NO 4
- Highest involvement as coordinating (KA104+KA204) or partner country (KA204): IT 29; ES 23; PT 20; RO.TR 18; FR 16; BE 15; NL 14; DE.GR.UK 10
- Highest proportion of PrE among Adult Ed: RS 11.1%; MT 8.7%; NO 8.3%; IT 5.7%; IE 5.6% (all the rest under 5%, 18 countries under 2%)
- Some countries coordinate more in KA1 (ES.IE.NO.TR), others in KA2 (GR.IT.RO), others are more evenly involved in coordinating projects under KA104 and KA204
- Surprisingly low involvement of certain countries with strong PrE systems, notably in Scandinavia (except for NO): DK.SE.Fl. Sweden (SE) is the only country not to be involved in prison education under Erasmus+ KA104 or KA204 projects at all, either as coordinator or partner, except for MK (only recently involved in Erasmus+) and the very small countries FL (which does not have a full prison system) and IS
Prison Education in *Erasmus+* (2014-2018): Overall picture 3 – Other general aspects

- Significant differences between KA104 and KA204 in terms of funding levels: KA204 partnerships cost on average 9 times more than KA104 projects.

- ...and as regards the coordinating organisations of projects: Adult education centres are the most frequent coordinator of KA104 projects, whereas KA204 projects tend to be coordinated by NGOs or higher education institutions.

- Thematically, many key areas of PrE are addressed, but conversely many of the projects fall outside the scope of ‘prison education’ in the usual definition of the term, dealing instead with VET or therapy for prisoners (notably relating to drug abuse), the further training of prison officers or even experimenting with alternatives to prison etc.). A clarification of the scope of “prison education” in the context of KA104 and KA204 would therefore be useful in the interest of ensuring similarity of approach – comprehensive or restricted – across the participating countries.
Prison Education in *Erasmus+* (2014-2018): Mobility Projects KA104 and Strategic Partnerships KA204
Prison Education in *Erasmus+* (2014-2018): Project funding

- Funding data for 46/48 KA104 and 44/45 KA204 = in total 90/93 projects):
- Total funding €9,623,489
- KA1: €987,406 + KA2: 8,636,083 = €9,247,371, thus >9 times more spent on PrE under KA204 than under KA104
- KA104 Ø €21,465 per project, Ø 14,520 per year of project funding
- KA204 Ø €196,275 per project, Ø 83,039 per year of project funding
- KA204 projects cost on average >9 times KA104, and each year of project funding costs almost 6 times more under KA204 than KA104
Prison Education Mobility Projects: Key features (1)

- **Coordinating countries:**
  - Top countries: TR(7); ES(6); FR.NO(4); BE.IE.IT.LT(3); MT.NL.UK(2)

- **Duration** (data for 46 projects):
  - Even distribution: 1-year projects 52%; 2-year projects 48%

- **Funding** (data for 46 projects):
  - Wide range: \(€1,160 \text{ (FR)} \rightarrow €114,140 \text{ (FR)}\) per project (Ø €21,465)
  - Average per project-year: €14,520
  - Predominance of relatively small-scale projects (76% under €30,000) *(see chart on “Size of grant”)*

- **Mobility ‘volume’** (data for 27 projects):
  - 1-10 ‘mobilities’: 13 (48%); 11-20 ‘mobilities’: 9 (33%); >20 ‘mobilities’: 5 (19%)

- **Mobility duration**:
  - Short-duration mobility strongly predominates (up to one week)
Prison Education Mobility Projects: Key features (2)

• Topics:
  ➢ Frequent: Professional development of Prison education teachers in Basic skills/Literacy, Host country language teaching, Arts (several forms), IT
  ➢ But also many projects on Health issues / drug therapy (not ‘classical’ prison ed., but outside prisons Health is considered an important focus for Adult education, so why not ‘inside’ also…?)
  ➢ Many projects on VET for prisoners...
  ➢ ...or even on further training of prison officers: out of focus for AdE?
  ➢ Post-release and social service strategies, inter-agency collaboration, sensitisation of society at large to issues concerning prisons and prisoner rehabilitation

• Mobility activities:
  ➢ Less formal training formats (especially Job-shadowing and Study Visits, also Conferences) predominate over structured (sometimes customised) courses
  ➢ A few individual training placements
  ➢ Very few teaching assignments (only one clearly identified)
  ➢ Some projects foresee mobile groups, others mobility of individuals
Prison Education Mobility Projects: Key features (3)

• Target groups:
  ➢ Several “general”, some focus on specific groups (foreign prisoners, juveniles, women prisoners)

• Outputs:
  ➢ Mostly local, but some more ambitious (e.g. new plan for prison ed. in NL; new curriculum and certification system for prison ed. in NO)

• Importance attached to dissemination

• Other interesting aspects of certain projects:
  ➢ Reciprocity, involvement of ex-prisoners in mobility, training of serving inmates to become mentors / peer trainers, liberal interpretation of ‘staff’ categories eligible to travel, often several different categories of staff travel within the same project, town-twinning as framework for cooperation
Prison Education Mobility Projects:
Size of grant

- 18 (39%): >€40K
- 10 (22%): €30K-40K
- 7 (15%): €20K-30K
- 5 (11%): €10K-20K
- 6 (13%): <€10K
- 5 (11%): "Other"
Prison Education Mobility Projects: Coordinating organisations

- Adult Education Centre: 40%
- National/Regional Prison Service or sub-Agency: 23%
- NGO/Foundation: 27%
- Prison: 10%
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships KA204: (2014-2018): Key features

• Size:
  ➢ 3-8 participating countries (Ø 4.6 per project):
  ➢ 3 countries: 9 (20%); 4 countries: 11 (25%); 5 countries 14 (32%); 6 countries: 7 (16%); more than 6 countries: 3 (7%)

• Duration:
  ➢ 1-year projects: 2 (4.5%); 2-yr.proj. 24 (54.5%); 3-yr.proj.: 18 (41%)

• Funding:
  ➢ Wide range: €33,970 (TR) → €449,845 (IT) per project (Ø €196,275),
    €17,603 (BE) → €149,948 (IT) per project-yr. (Ø €83,039)
  
    See separate chart for funding clusters

• Geographical participation:
  ➢ Coordination: IT(10); FR.RO(5); GR.LT.UK(3); BE.DE.HU.PT.TR(2)
  ➢ Overall involvement including coordination and participation:
    IT(26); PT(19); ES.RO(17); BE.FR.NL(12); TR(11); DE.GR(10)
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Size of grant (in €)
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Coordinating organisations
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Thematic focus

• In one way or another, all projects focus on successful reintegration in society
• Projects cover a wide range of themes *(see next slide)*
• Few relate to ‘classroom’ situations, more to non-formal / informal learning
• Strong emphasis on ‘personal’ attributes / behaviour (self-esteem…) rather than cognitive aspects of learning
• Many projects span prison education and other aspects of prison régime: making the prison a more positive learning environment
• Many projects link prison education with other aspects of social marginalisation
• Several seek to strengthen links with the outside community (probation, employers, inter-agency cooperation, awareness-raising in society about ex-prisoners)
• Several projects are ‘purely’ VET (for prisoners) or even VetPro (continuing training for prison officers)
• Collectively, the projects challenge the received notion of ‘prison education’ *(see comments in Slide 4)*
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Main Topics

- Basic skills / literacy
- Personal and social skills
- VET and employment-related reintegration of prisoners
- Arts and creativity (theatre, music, dance, video-production)
- IT (digital competence, e-platforms, gaming, coding...)
- Staff development (education and other staff)
- Active citizenship
- Sport
- Cooking
- Language (host country language - L2) and inter-cultural competence
- Anti-radicalisation
- Health-related issues (addiction, mental health...)
- Ageing problems
- Validation / accreditation of non-formal/informal learning
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Target groups

**Staff**
- Prison educators / teachers / learning facilitators
- Other prison staff: Prison officers, psychologists, social workers, health workers...
- Staff in national prison services / training centres

**Prisoners**
- General (most projects)
- Female prisoners
- Juvenile prisoners
- Foreign prisoners
- Remand prisoners
- Older prisoners
- Prisoners with special needs
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Outputs (1)

- Research reports, state-of-the-art reports, best practice reports
- Catalogues of teaching materials
- Needs analyses
- Surveys
- Online tools, games, exercises, blended learning formats, open learning resources, e-books, videos (even a “Dynamic Virtual Reality System”)
- E-platforms and online services, websites
- Training activities, courses, programmes, modules, including joint curricula
- Procedures for validating and accrediting learning outcomes
- Methodological toolkits, manuals, train-the-trainer materials
- Quality assurance procedures
- Competence portfolios and frameworks
Prison Education Strategic Partnerships: Outputs (2)

- Peer-learning and mentoring guidelines (e.g. Inmate Health Contact Groups)
- Guidelines on many topics (e.g. inter-agency cooperation post-release)
- Policy recommendations
- Indicators (e.g. vulnerability to radicalisation)
- Drama productions and other artistic outputs
- Definition of European standards (e.g. 3D-printing in prisons)
- Self-efficacy tests
- Motivation strategies
- Techniques for sensitisation of society regarding reintegration of ex-prisoners
- Reports on project, study visits etc.
- Project newsletters
- European cooperation networks
Prison Education Mobility Projects (KA104) and Strategic Partnerships (KA204): Dissemination activities

- Multiplier events (local, regional, national, European)
- European tools and networks (EPEA, Europris, EBSN, EPALE, IJJO...)
- Reports to Ministry / authorities (e.g. Policy recommendations)
- Targeted training events
- Newsletters
- Websites and webinars
- Social media (e.g. Facebook profile page for interaction with other experts)
- Press releases and press conferences
- Articles in journals and newspapers
- European Study Day
KA3: Forward-looking policy / cooperation projects

2015
• European interaction guidelines for education professionals in juvenile justice (PT)
• Education for foreign inmates (“FORINER”) (B-nl)

2016
• Secularism and radicalisation in prison (FR)

2017
• Transnational prison up-skilling guidance and training model (“SkillHUBS”) (SI)
What benefits do organisations derive from European cooperation?

- New contents, methods and tools (‘Learning Organisation’)
- Enhanced inter-cultural sensibility of staff and learners
- Enriched knowledge and competence:
  - Specific subject areas addressed by projects and mobility
  - Foreign language proficiency
  - Ancillary aspects such as project management, IT and media
- Enhanced motivation of staff, livelier organisation generally
- Sustainable professional networks as a long-term resource
- Strengthened international relations
- Enhanced status of organisation in local and regional community
- Stronger conviction of need for European unity, however defined
- Improved prospects in the acquisition of external funds
- Life-changing experiences for staff and learners
- Lasting personal friendships across borders
European cooperation in prison education: stimulating innovation, changing lives

Icon painting of N.F.S. Grundtvig, the «father of adult education», by Sava Kostadinov (Bulgaria), ex-prisoner, now icon painter and restorer, whose life was changed by participating in a Grundtvig project

Presented by the artist to the European Commission on the occasion of the Conference on Prison Education «Pathways to Inclusion», Budapest, February 2010

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The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission