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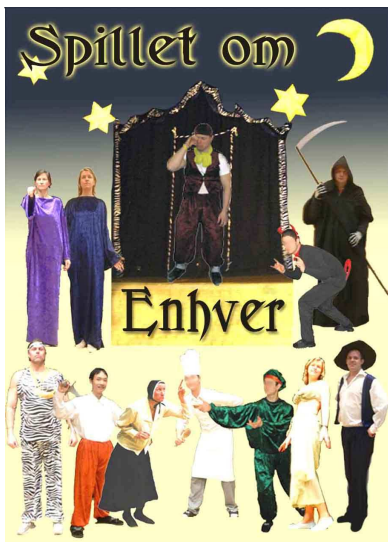
EUROPEAN  
PRISON  
EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION



Summer 2006

## EPEA - MAGAZINE

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EVERYMAN, an allegorical play from the Middleages, put up and acted by inmates at ILA prison, Norway 2006.  
See page 21 - 22

Registration form and Provisional Programme for the International Conference of Policy Makers in the Field of Prison Education. Page 35 -38

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Prison system in Estonia, By Cees Boeij

«Since August I work in Tallinn as a Resident Twinning Adviser in a Transition Facility project that concerns rehabilitation of inmates and drug treatment.»

See page 12 - 13

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## **FOREWORD TO THE SUMMER ISSUE OF THE EPEA MAGAZINE**

Dear Members of EPEA, dearest  
Friends,

Spring is getting near...everything in God's nature is getting greener again, flowerbuds are being borne, the world is dressing up in its spring outfit... In the various European countries it has been extremely cold this winter. Spring is the season of hope, of everything getting better than before. This also goes for our EPEA. A strong Steering Committee, competent Liaison- and Contact persons and last but not least very committed Members are making EPEA grow, and stronger every season.

For this I am grateful. My time, as Chairperson of EPEA, is almost through. July, Anne Costelloe of Irland will take over my position for the next 3 years. She will be the second woman as a Chair, only predeceased by Janine Duprey-Kennedy, now our Liaison Person at the Council of Europe. I am sure, knowing Anne, she will do an excellent job to serve EPEA for the years to come, making it even stronger and better. I wish her lots of success to achive this.

To you, dear friends, I would like to say thank you very much, for your trust and cooperation during my 3 year's period, during which I had the pleasure of organizing two Conferences: in Langesund and Sofia.

We will all meet again during the 2007 Conference in Dublin, Irish Republic..  
And finally, may this Spring develope into a great summer for all of you!

Niek Willems



### **EPEA - MAGAZINE**

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# Inside this issue:

Foreword by Chairperson	2
Book Review	4
Correctional Education Association International Conference 2006	5
Captivating Arts	6
Danish, Norwegian Prison Education in 1807	10
Prison system in Estonia	12
Training Teachers in Prison. A European prison education prosjekt.	14
Drama activities in Norwegian prisons	17
A brief introduction of Furuskogen Department of Steinkjer Secondary School	19
EVERYMAN, an allegorical play from the Middle ages, put up and acted by inmates at ILA prison, Norway 2006.	21
«Social reintegration of prisoners» - Council of Europe report	23
Liam Minihan Memorial Lecture	28
6 <sup>TH</sup> European conference of directors and co- ordinators of prison education	35
- <i>Provisional Programme</i>	36
- <i>Registration form</i>	38

## Next issue of EPEA-magazine will be published in autumn 2006

If you would like to submit an article, please contact Mr. Asbjørn  
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# Book Review

by  
Cormac Behan

Nordic Council of Ministers, (2005). *Nordic Prison Education: A Lifelong Learning Perspective*. Copenhagen: Norden. ISBN 92-893-1147-9. Translated by Linda Schenk. Available from [www.norden.org/order](http://www.norden.org/order)

Educators working within prison face unique issues and challenges. There can be many different agendas vying for dominance within the prison complex. The prison system is a confused and contested concept, but generally inward looking and negative. The environment can be claustrophobic, the regime dehumanising and most of the learners have had a negative experience of school first time round. However, it is up to educationalists to try to create a space for learning, both physically and philosophically and be careful not to adopt or adapt to an agenda created by the state or institution that can be inimical to the objectives of pedagogy.

The Nordic Council has provided a positive contribution to the debate about the education of the incarcerated. In September 2001, a Nordic project group was appointed to carry out a study with the prison education services from Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. The result, *Nordic Prison Education* has wide-ranging reports from the different countries covering topics such as the history of prison education, use of the internet and ICT, the role of the prison and probation service, teacher training/professional development for prison educators and the management of prison education services.

What immediately emerges from this report is the Nordic penal philosophy that treats prisoners as members of society. It seeks to include rather than exclude. Denial of liberty is the punishment and otherwise prisoners should have the same rights, responsibilities and obligations as those outside the prison. The concept of Normalisation is stressed to underpin their philosophy. There is a much greater use of open prison and day release programmes than in other countries. They try to encourage prisoners as far as possible to remain part of, rather than outside society. In Sweden, the 2002 Enforcement of Sentences Act «stated that prisoners have the same rights to services and activities, and the same obligations and responsibilities as the population at large» (p.73).

The profile of «the typical Nordic prisoner can be described as: over 30, having left school early, with

very little experience of the labour market and, in many cases, a substance abuse problem» (p.128). The Nordic countries tend to use alternatives to imprisonment for younger offenders and try to use imprisonment as a last rather than first resort as is the tendency in many other nations internationally.

The use of imprisonment is a social, cultural and political reflection of society. The authors locate the use of imprisonment in context. The numbers incarcerated in Nordic countries are very low by international comparisons. In 2003, the numbers incarcerated per 100,000 in Norway was 65, Finland was 69, Denmark was 72, and Sweden was 73 (p.126). By stark contrast, in 2004, the USA was incarcerating 702 people per 100,000, the Russian Federation 550 per 100,000. Britain incarcerated 144 per 100,000 and Ireland 85 per 100,000. In its conclusion to the report on the numbers incarcerated in Iceland, 37 per 100,000 we are given an indication why so few are incarcerated in the Nordic countries. «One of the reasons is probably that Iceland uses more alternative sanctions» (p.124) as punishment.

Drawing on European and international documents concerning education, the philosophy underpinning prison education in Nordic countries appears far-sighted. As the title suggest they locate their practice in an adult education and life-long learning approach to education. The authors argue for the following characteristics to be reflected in educational options open to prisoners «if the aim is to offer education that will give prisoners a better point of departure to return to society, live a life without crime and drugs and to develop as individuals» (p.128). These include:

- .. A legal right and obligation to provide prisoners with the same right to education as other citizens
- .. Normalisation through the utilisation of public schools, libraries, treatment services by giving prisoners day release
- .. A broad definition of education from primary to third level
- .. Programmes should include theoretical, vocational and creative education
- .. Access to the internet, ICT and library facilities
- .. Immigrant education and education for second generation immigrants (pp. 203-204).

Finally at a time when there is much debate over defining education in contrast to training, personal development and cognitive skills programmes, it is clear that «there must be pedagogical experience at management level to provide quality assurance for the education activities offered» (p.203).

The authors are aware that as educationalists they cannot operate in an economic or political vacuum. Debates about the connection between recidivism and education and the financial costs of educating prisoners are also examined. They outline the total cost of education as a percentage of total cost per day to keep a prisoner incarcerated, ranging from two percent to just over 5.5 percent. This according to the authors costs the prison service «the equivalent of one package of cigarettes per prisoner per day» (pp.177-178). They point out that every single prisoner that breaks a cycle of drug dependency means a benefit of several million euro to society. However, they are in no doubt that the education of prisoners is a valid objective in its own right.

Although it has not always been the case, prison education is no longer in principle, meant to be used for the purpose of reducing recidivism. Education is a right of Nordic prisoners as of all other citizens. Thus educational programmes have an inherent value – irrespective of their long-term effects. (p.182)

The report acknowledges that there are other factors outside the control of the educational authorities that will impact on the effectiveness of transformation for the incarcerated. «Education is one important part of a larger puzzle. If that piece falls into place, it may be decisive both for the success of the inmates' schooling and for his and her life as a whole.» (p.205)

The report rather modestly notes that there has not been enough research carried out on prison education in Nordic countries. The fact that this study was undertaken and the seven pages of bibliography somewhat contradicts this. A review of studies and reports of prison education in other countries would yield rather more paltry results. And the report is not all self-congratulatory. It reflects on what it deems shortcomings in their provision of education and how these issues may be dealt with in the future. There are many prison educators in other parts of the world who would be delighted to have these «shortcomings».

While they locate the education of prisoners in its structural context, the authors also locate the prison in societal context, reflecting on the fact that there are many crime prevention programmes, focusing either on individuals or groups. However, «there is

far less awareness of and will to change fundamental aspects of society which may be a breeding ground for crime. If prevention is to have any clout, all these programmes must be seen in their societal context» (p.24). There is an interesting contribution from the Deputy Director of the Norwegian Crime Prevention Council which argues that while crime prevention is a complex concept, it must take place at societal and individual levels.

Prison Educators should constantly undertake research, interrogate our practice and locate our philosophy within a pedagogical environment. *Nordic Prison Education: A Lifelong Learning Perspective* has given us a very thought-provoking and challenging contribution to that discussion about the role of pedagogy behind prison walls.

*Cormac Behan teaches history and politics in Irish prisons. He is Chairman of the Irish Prison Education Association.*

## **CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006**

The Sixty First International Correctional Education Association Conference will take place in Anaheim, California, USA, from July 30 to August 2, 2006.

The title of the conference is *Turning Success into Failure*. It is open to CEA members and non-members from around the world. The conference organisers are inviting practitioners, researchers and administrators to share their experiences with other correctional and prison educators internationally. They are particularly keen to encourage as many correctional and prison educators from outside North America to attend.

There are a number of scholarships available to members of the CEA. Scholarships can include conference fees and other expenses. The deadline for applying for a scholarship is April 30, 2006.

Details about the conference and further information on scholarships are available from the CEA website, [www.ceanational.org](http://www.ceanational.org).

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*Cormac Behan, International Representative, Executive Board, Correctional Education Association.*

# Captivating Arts

**Petros Damianos, Greece**  
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**James King, Scotland**

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«Storybook Dads» was initiated at HMP Dartmoor (England) in 2003 by an independent charitable organisation to help offenders maintain contact with family and friends and provide a vehicle for them to engage in creative and educational activities during their term in jail. The project utilises contemporary technology to provide a state of the art medium for producing CD-ROMS of children's stories in conjunction with a personalised message that are subsequently forwarded on to family and/or friends. The project is now established in 24 prisons in England and Wales and produced 600 CD-ROMS last year. We have now introduced the project into 2 Scottish jails at HMP & YOI Cornton Vale (women's prison) and HMP Glenochil (long term adult males).

Although the concept is not new, the benefits over video technology include the availability of sophisticated sound effects, graphics and voice manipulation software to produce a high quality professional product. The CDRom facility is cheaper to make, less cumbersome than video, more flexible for distribution and not as daunting

for offenders to undertake. Furthermore, a major benefit of the CD-ROM format is that offenders can be trained in the mechanics of sound recording techniques and can therefore gain skills that may be of subsequent benefit for employment or post liberation activities. Moreover, the medium can be further exploited to produce musical recordings, poetry and classes in creative writing. Accordingly, offenders can engage in producing their own stories for inclusion within the recording process and thereby enhancing engagement, literacy, ICT, comprehension, explore latent creativity and raising of aspirations and self worth.

Benefits include:

- Popular positive and creative activity
- Opportunity to improve literacy skills
- Enhanced family contact/communication for prisoners with family/friends
- Improve confidence and esteem
- Indirect benefits including positive behavioural changes
- Promotion of education in general
- Promotion of importance of education/reading for children
- Novel context for communication where

relationships are difficult or strained  
•Raise awareness of importance of parenting

**Thierry Hanssens, France**

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Here are a few activities that have been done in 2005 in the prison where I'm working, in the suburb of Paris:

- Theatre: The theatrical company, «le théâtre de Jade» created during the school holidays small spectacles with adults and young people on subjects dealing with the problem of the tobacco or the risks of traffic.
- Activity «analyzes images» to make it possible to

the prisoners to approach the nematographic writing through French and foreign films.

- «the wall of the sound»: musical workshop based on the practice (song, percussions, creation of sound tracks...) leading to a representation of end of the year.

- a workshop «circus-juggling» for the minors. Sporting activity concentrated on arts of the circus.

**Eleanor Jones, Ireland**

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Exhibition of Prison Artwork

There is an exciting exhibition in the planning stages happening now in some of the prisons in Dublin.





The women at the Dochas Centre, Women's Prison, and men from Mountjoy and Medical Unit, as well as Arbour Hill, and St. Patrick's Institution have again been invited to put forward art pieces at a show that is planned for February next. Many disciplines of art will be represented including painting, printmaking, ceramics, glasswork and batik.

This kind invitation was made by Rev. Katherine Polton, who has offered the church where she is a minister « Saint George and Saint Thomas» as a venue to host the event. . This will be the third such exhibition, the last one being a great success in 2003.

The Church is a great exhibition space in the very heart of Dublin City Centre and provides a valuable platform to put on show publicly the wide range of talent and skills demonstrated by the students in the prison school system. This not only also gives relatives of these artists a chance to see first hand but also an opportunity for them to experience a sense of pride in the achievements of their family members.

**Lannart Frandsen, Denmark**

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Inmates just made new frisks at the Western Prison in Copenhagen with a theme call pre historic animals



# Danish, Norwegian Prison Education in 1807.

## Per Thrane, Denmark

With the publication of the book «Nordic Prison Education - A lifelong learning perspective»<sup>1</sup> the interest for historical backgrounds of prison education is more in focus in Scandinavia. The book describes the recent year's development in the Nordic countries. As the digging for historical backgrounds has started more documentation of early signs of prison education come up what the present article witness:

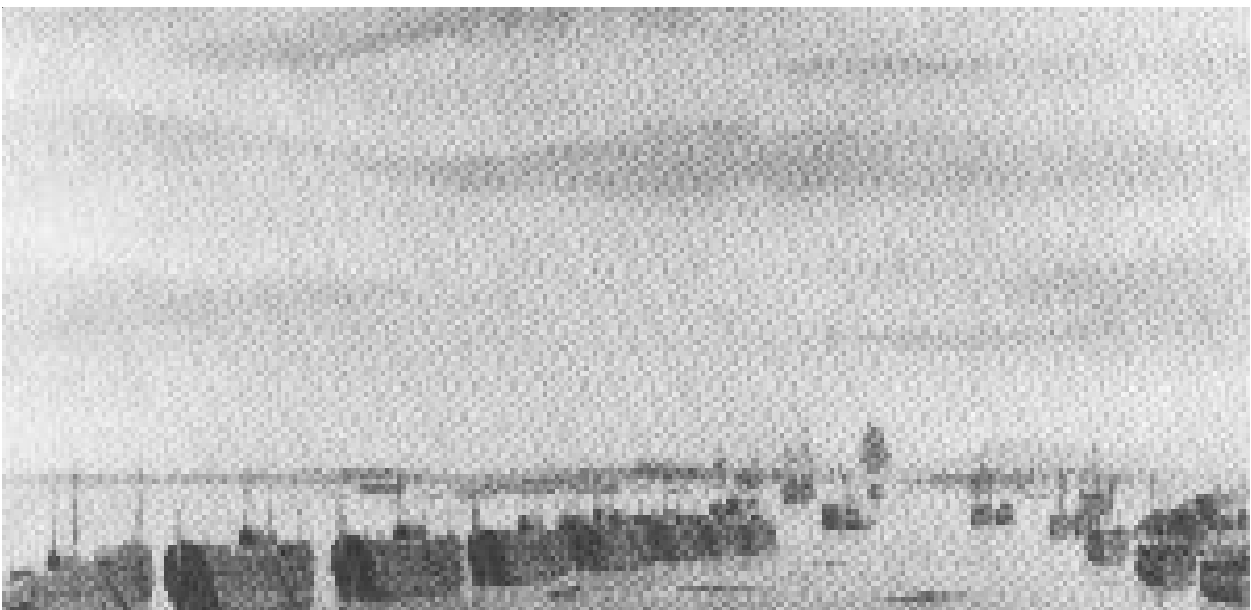
Our history starts in 1807 when The British government decided to seize the Danish fleet to avoid its ending up in the hands of Napoleon and attacked Copenhagen<sup>2</sup> without any declaration of war. At that time the Danish Norwegian trade with food and materials for war was considerable and the fighting parts in the war had no intention to have neutral counties dealing with the enemy.

As a consequence of this bombardment all ships under the Danish Norwegian flag were forbidden

to pass through the Canal like the ships under French flag. Sailing north of the British Isles was risky and reduced the very high profit sailing with food and especially gun powder and many sea captains decided to take the chance with the Canal.

Many ships were seized and the crew was brought to imprisonment a shore. Very soon the prisons on land were full and even if prisoners were used to build new prisons they could not keep the up with the number of new prisoners of war from all European countries. The admiralty took up an experience that they had from the war in America<sup>3</sup> and used ships for incarnation.

Among the unhappy seamen was the Dane Jens Christian Krog (1787-1862) that was kept imprisoned from 1807 to 1814. Through the years he took notes about his life on board, the war happenings, his fellow inmates and his gaolers. If the notes of Jens Krog should be published in a modern book, it would be about 300 pages heavy.



*Prison ships at Portsmouth*



*Jens Krog (imprisoned 1807-1814)*

Jens Krog take notes of what must be the first signs of Scandinavian prison education:

*«at the gun ports, where a better light came in, the prisoners in old racket clothes was introduced to the secrets of algebra and geometry. The teachers were officers that for a small amount or just to while away the time had transformed themselves into pedagogues».*

The purpose for many was to become navigator or master. Regular examinations took place. Jens Krog explains:

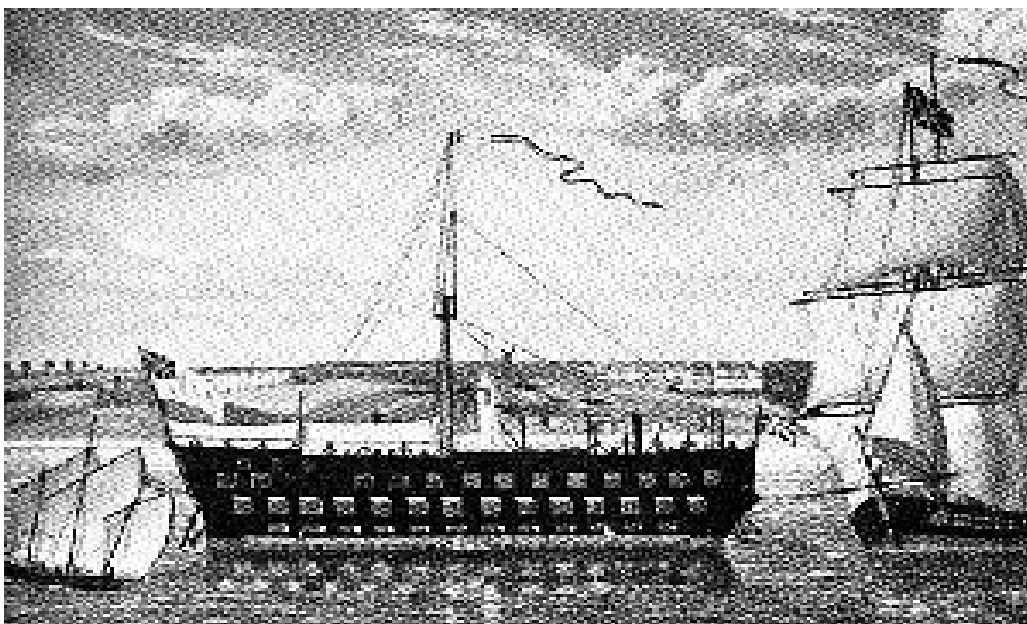
*«Examinations were held in front of an invited board of censors. Marks were given and all were given an official certificate of competency as first mate or navigator if they passed»*

The education was well organized and in notes taken by Consul Scow and General Consul Hornemann it is mentioned that the teacher Sven Torstensen from Norway had brought 200 from the prison ship Bahama to examination and for this achievement received a Nautical Almanac and £5.

The clergymen also got themselves involved in education of prisoners, as they saw many candidates for confirmation among the many young prisoners. From a special foundation from the Danish Norwegian King the clergymen got £1 a month to teach «*Christianity and what else could be useful*»<sup>4</sup>. «What else could be useful» could be to teach the young boys the English language.

Not all of the young boys would take education and one clergyman wrote in the ships journal: «*As there is a few of you that completely refuse to take the needed time to follow your duty to learn Christianity and does not want to take your seat in the school every day to learn your lesson, you will be taken your right to your daily ration of bread*». From the report of 1811 to the King it is mentioned that 32 received confirmations and 234 attended the ceremony.

The need for teaching materials was desperate. Many books were copied over to handwritten notes. Jens Krog writes that on August 23, 1813 prison education on his ship was given blackboards, pens, books and candlesticks. Jens Krog did not know where all this material



*Prison Ship Bahama, the ship was used for Scandinavian prisoners*

# Prison system in Estonia

By Cees Boeij

came from but other sources tells that it came from the special foundation. The Dane Mr. Postbroe and the tree Norwegian Wagle, Baade and Petz Axen was working with the distribution of funds for a salary of £1 a month. They distributed materials worth £50 in the years 1811-13. The students paid £7 themselves but £6 was given back in form of rewards for the best students.

Prison education also took place in the land prisons. Master Kaald who was born in Norway, but had Danish parents, could bring his ship journal with him in Greenlaw prison on land. Master Kaald had impressed the English commander that captured him with a fair fight and good speech and he was given the permission to keep his journal and a sword in prison. Kaald was not interested in intellectual activities and happenings like Jens Krog, but he mentions education twice. First time he tells that Master Oxholm from the ship Roland came to the prison in 1809 and Kaald refreshed his knowledge in longitude calculations by taking education by Oxholm. The second note is very interesting. Kaald tells that two young boys were taken their possibility to take education outside the prison due to bad behaviour.

The story about the early prison education is based on the book «Prisonen» from 1953 by Carl Roos. The book is written in Danish.

Since August I work in Tallinn as a Resident Twinning Adviser in a Transition Facility project that concerns rehabilitation of inmates and drug treatment. The project will take 27 months and 595.000 euro is reserved for this EU project. Though I work for Brussels I originate from the Netherlands. Lately I was a prison governor in Amsterdam. I have been abroad many times and I have been active in many seminars and lectures, especially in Eastern Europe. Before I started living in Estonia I knew a bit about this country because I had been there on holidays a few years ago and because I had taken part in a conference three years ago.

Now that I work here for more than half a year I could give some impressions about the Estonian prison system.

First of all there are many prisoners: 333 per 100.000. It is about the same as Latvia but about 50% higher than Lithuania and Poland. Estonia likes to compare itself a bit with Finland and those figures are a lot lower: 70 per 100.000. Compared to other countries like Belarus and Russia, Estonia has a good performance. They have about 400 and 600 per 100.000. It is the intention of Estonia to bring back the present number of 4500 prisoners back to 3000 in 2008.

The reasons why there are so many prisoners are that sentences are long, there is a high recidivism and conditional release is only given in few cases. Plans exist to give conditional release to everyone. This would at least help to solve the problem of overcrowding. Overcrowding means that the limited facilities that are available in closed prisons need to be shared with too many persons. This means that living conditions for prisoners are not quite ideal. Two big prisons in Tallinn and Murru are camp type prisons. This means that prisoners often stay in groups and spend the night together in dormitories. Some of the prisoners like it to be in groups and they would experience a stay in an individual cell as a kind of torture. Others are more the individualistic type and they prefer to be alone or utmost with two persons in one cell. They feel quite uncomfortable and unsafe if they need to be in a camp type prison. The conditions in Tallinn and Murru are rather bad and are not according European standards.

The modern prison in Tartu could easily be in use in many countries in Western Europe. This prison was built with the intention to offer every prisoner his own cell but lack of capacity forced the ministry of justice to place two persons on one cell. For the control of the prisoners this cell type prison

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<sup>1</sup> «Prison Education - A lifelong learning perspective» can be downloaded from the EPEA web site <http://www.epea.org/reports.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Copenhagen\\_\(1807\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Copenhagen_(1807))

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.newsday.com/community/guide/lihistory/ny-history-hs425a,0,6698945.story?coll=ny-lihistory-navigation>

<sup>4</sup> The actual wording in the instruction letter.

is a far better system than the camp type prison since the interactivities between the prisoners can be monitored much better.

The ministry of Estonia appreciates this modern prison in Tartu and intends to build a new prison based on the same ideas in the eastern part of the country. Here is much unemployment and criminality and therefore one needs a prison there. It is the plan to build a prison of about 1000 prisoners, the same size as in Tartu. After realizing this prison one wants to build a replacement for the old prison in Tallinn. Also this one should have about 1000 prisoners. Those three together will have 3000 places and one hopes to be able to satisfy the needs. In my opinion there are a few problems with these big prisons. First of all one can ask if the interest of relations of prisoners is taken into account by just having three prisons. Distance to family, distance to education centers, distance to employers is a problem that counts in modern prison system. Regionalization is nowadays an important issue. Secondly one can ask about the interests of separate groups like juveniles and women. In near future they will just be part of the big group of 1000 and it can be asked if the interest of special prisoners is guaranteed in big prisons. Thirdly one can ask about the loss of human capital when small prisons like the prison for females in Harku, prison for juveniles in Viljandi and long term prison in Pärnu will be closed.

At this moment there are only limited possibilities for variation in detention. Most of the prisoners will have to stay in closed imprisonment and that is a pity because this is a more expensive way of detaining and prisoners are offered more opportunities in rehabilitation when they could be detained in a half open or an open prison. With some fantasy one could think of the idea of having three big and modern detention centers and besides that some half open or open prisons. Those small prisons who are nominated to be closed could have that function.

Another way of taking away the pressure from the system is to diminish overcrowding by allowing all prisoners conditional release. At the moment only one third gets conditional release and then often limited to the very last part of the detention. When allowing every prisoner with a good rehabilitation plan to leave prison after serving two third of the sentence one would work in the interest of the prisoner, prison system and probably Estonian society. This way of finding solutions urges an intensive co-operation with probation service and NGO's like Convictus.

Convictus is specialized in supporting those prisoners who are addicted to drugs and alcohol. Addiction is really a problem in Estonian society and also in prison system the drugs are an

important factor. Many prisoners will use needles to take the drugs and often hygienic circumstances are bad. About 800 out of 4500 suffer HIV. Most of them had already this disease when they entered the prison. Heroin, amphetamine and fentanyl are the most common drugs that are injected. Prisoners also use hash and this is smoked mostly. Reasons why one uses drugs are boredom, addiction and pressure of the group. It is assumed that it would help to fight addiction if prison system would be able to offer a good daily programme including labor facilities, education programmes, extend visit facilities and recreation programmes. Until now there are not sufficient resources to do so.

Staff is paid less than persons in similar positions get paid in civil sector. This means that staff is often not well motivated and that when they have the opportunity to take a better job they will leave prison system again. The relation between staff and prisoners is often not positive. This problem can be solved by giving better education to staff and make their work more interesting. If this will happen depends on budgetary possibilities and this is again dependent on political issues. As in many countries it does not seem that prison system is high ranked on the political agenda.

Yet there are several reasons to assume that in near future developments in prison system will take a positive direction. Building of new prisons helps, prison system is investing more in co-operation with other organizations, managers are young and searching for opportunities, staff in the ministry gets inspired by many international contacts. Economical developments in Estonia are positive. With good political decisions it can be expected that the systems will make big steps the next few years and with many efforts it will reach western European quality levels.





## A EUROPEAN PRISON EDUCATION PROJECT

### ***Project Rationale, Objectives and Products.***

The «Training Teachers in Prison» Project is currently developed within the Grundtvig Actions of the EU Socrates Programme. The project partnership is integrated by eight European countries and the EPEA: Malta, Denmark, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal (University and Caxias Prison), Norway and Czech Republic.

Initially was promoted by the EPEA after informal observation of «prison schools» in many European countries, together with direct discussions with senior officials from Ministries responsible for the prison system. The picture formed as a result shows that teaching in prisons follows the methodology applied in primary schools, and that therefore these teachers need a specific training in prison education.

Consequently, this project is intended to start the first steps to rectify this situation by creating a training course to qualify teachers to teach in prisons. It follows that the desire to have better qualified teachers serves the objective of providing quality education in prisons. The scope of this project is ambitious since the target groups are the serving and prospective prison teachers and the prisoners, who will benefit from a better education.

The resulting training course will be delivered and available for teachers across Europe through

Grundtvig 3 action. In general terms this course will include in the knowledge about adult learning + the prison environment and prisoner requirements/special needs. Clearly, this two elements will be analyze in deep for to identify more specific competencies likewise other key topics: learning difficulties, assessment or obstacles for teaching in prison, in addition to successful experiences and problem solutions that could be applied and useful in different context/countries.

In order to achieve all these goals the partners are developing the following **Specific objectives:**

- Study the actual classroom practice and analyze the findings.
- Draw up a competency-based curriculum for these teachers: from theory and empirical integrated analysis of training needs.
- Develop the teaching/learning units.
- Prepare training course materials for the Grundtvig 3 course tutors.

Then, the tutors' course manual and the teachers' course material will be products of the project, and eventually both will be available in a CD format. Another product and at the same time a communicational tool of the project is the Website, which is permanently updated.

Obviously, the European Dimension is a transversal topic of the project, since the general aim is to



## A EUROPEAN PRISON EDUCATION PROJECT

introduce good practices in education in prison across Europe, and the specific one to identify common

### **Project development**

The work plan of the project is organized in the following stages:

- Design of Research Guidelines.
- Data analysis and discussion: objectives, contents and methodology of the course.
- Development of module content/ curriculum.
- Implementation stage of the curriculum.

Internal, external evaluations: permanent feedback

### **Research Guidelines**

In studying the actual classroom practice and analyzing the findings, the profile and training needs of teachers in prison emerge. Thus, the course will be based in the real competencies, according to the specificities of both the context of work and the learners: prison and inmates. The first stage of the project was the design of the common framework for this field research in each country.

These research guidelines include:

**1. Topics:** some common variables that they orient the field work, which make possible the comparability of results (teacher-student relationships, different pedagogical approaches, school handbooks and spatial organization, innovation and technology in the learning process, prison environment...)

**2. Tools:** In general terms it combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

2.1. Questionnaires for teachers and inmates, based in the selected key- topics.

2.2. Interviews Schedules: for complementing the questionnaires in specific issues.

2.3. European Dimension Questionnaire: structured in areas like: Prison Administration, Legislation or Education providers.

2.4. Literature review: analysis of bibliography (research, handbooks, papers, institutional documents...) which can enriching the project work.

### **Data Collection, Analysis, and Development of Modules Content.**

The research has been extremely successful and was conducted in 12 prisons: Porto Azzurro, Sollicciano and La Dogaia (Italy), Horsens and Ringe (Denmark), Caxias, Tires and Linhó (Portugal),



## A EUROPEAN PRISON EDUCATION PROJECT

Vught (Netherland), and Svetla nad Sazavou, Všehrdu and Valdice (Czech Republic).

Once collected and analyzed the results of these partners research, emerge three main areas in which develop the modules/units of the course: The Teaching-Learning Process (Teacher), The Personal Dimension (Prisoner) and the Institutional Dimension (Prison). Interestingly, many new topics have been identified and classified in these general fields. The modules have been already distributed among the participants, who currently are developing the sessions and themes included in them following a common Module Template.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The participants maintain permanent communication and exchange of information and progress status via website. With regards to evaluation, the project provides has both internal and external evaluation. All modules will be screened and evaluated by the partnership regardless of who actually wrote each individual module. These will be piloted so that there will be feedback from the target: teachers and instructors. Furthermore, external evaluation will be carried out by three experts in adult education with diverse and complementary specialties. They will be expected to examine the cohesion between the stated aim(s) of the module and the goals that are expected to be reached.

### ***EPEA in the TTIP project***

The EPEA is ideally placed and connected to disseminate the project process and results through its website, membership in about 35 countries and personal links with Justice Ministry and prison service senior officials in most of these.

It is also our feel that we have to take advantage for promoting the EPEA's Vision during the project:

- Improvement of EPEA's networking and communication.
- Promotion of Council of Europe Recommendations on Prison Education
- Research
- Stabilisation of the Organisation
- Interfacing with other languages
- Placing EPEA in a secure financial position: to market the organization and gain new members.

### ***Contact the Project***

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# DRAMA ACTIVITIES IN NORWEGIAN PRISONS

By Elin Barth

Since year 2000 there has been permanent drama activities in several prisons in Norway. «Music, dance and drama» is successful so far both in Steinkjer, Ila prison, and at my school; Gronland Adult Education Center in Oslo prison.

Oslo prison is situated close to the center of Oslo and has approximately 400 inmates. The prison is for men only, where almost 50% are in custody.

Most of my students are doing their sentences, although their stay varies from a few months up to a couple of years. One of the challenges is therefore to find a group of men who will be there for the same period of time. What a «terrible» situation if one of my actors is being released few days before the performance ! So far this has happily not happened except from our last play in December 2005 where we had an extra stand- in for the main character, just in case.

The main focus is on the drama education, although we always like to implement some music and singing as well in our performances. Both students and other inmates in the audience are very fond of music, an international and common «language».

Normally I start the process with 4 – 5 students in the group. Later on, other inmates join the group in order to decorate the stage, and to manage all technical tasks. Our class room is situated in the basement of the 150 years old prison, and has actually a warm atmosphere in spite of the surroundings. I like to believe that this is due to happy moments, laughter and many experiences into a total new world, the world of creative thinking and fantasy.

«Do you really appreciate my crazy dreams and wild fantasy ?»

Yes, indeed I do. How sad it must have been in their former years in school where teachers became angry instead of encouraging when a free, artistic and young mind tried to do his best.

The age of my students vary from young people in their early 20s, up till 40 years old, and they have a wide international background. Because many of the inmates will be sent out of the country after sentence, we sometimes have both process and performance in English.

In our last play for instance, «Hotel Norway», my actors came from Iran, Algeria, Turkey and different African countries.

In every new group, whether they are Norwegians or foreigners, it is always a challenge to find interesting subjects, get ideas that we eventually can use in a performance. Through various improvisations I can after a while see the potential in each one of them. It is important that the goal is realistic and not too difficult to achieve. When introducing drama 6 years ago, I often combined different «cabarets» with familiar songs and lyrics from other plays and musicals.

Is it always necessary that the drama activities in the class room shall end in a performance ? Yes, from my earlier experience , both grammar and college level outside the prison walls, I would definitely let the inmate students enjoy the wonderful experience to succeed in front of an audience. Other inmates are eager to see their serious effort on stage and help them to shine as successful artist in the spot light.

So far, my different groups of students have all together made 17 different productions. The most

familiar plays are: «Brave New World», «Les Miserables» and not to forget «Othello».

It is both impossible and totally wrong to talk about «the greatest success» in our performances so far. From my point of view, each student succeed if he has achieved a goal, obtained self-confidence, and is being seen and acknowledged as a normal human being – and not only as a prisoner.

As many of my students have put it, « I discovered new dimensions and talent in my self.»



# A brief introduction of Furuskogen Department of Steinkjer Secondary School

Furuskogen is one out of ten follow-up classes in the Norwegian prison education system.

Furuskogen is affiliated to Steinkjer Secondary School, however, there is no geographical link to the «mother school»

The premises themselves function as a pedagogical tool (remedy); an old venerable rectory which in itself creates a homely and cordial atmosphere. The premises do not remind of any ordinary school.

The target group consists of: persons newly released from prison, clients advised and recommended by the Probation Service, persons awaiting to serve their prison sentence and inmates at Verdal Prison. The maximum number of students at any one moment (time) is 6 – 7, and in the course of the year a total of 25 – 30 will have attended lessons.

The school has three employees; head of department, teacher and therapist. In addition some recourses are earmarked for project activities.

Furuskogen has a very flexible form of instruction (teaching) which will suit any student regardless of his previous knowledge. However, over the years the subjects taught have been changed. From being a disseminator of book learning the school now directs its teaching efforts to the individual student addressing his needs and abilities. Together with the student an individually adjusted curriculum is made which not only emphasize on book learning.

## **The drama activity at Furuskogen named «Drama in 3 acts»**

We have through a period of three years worked on a drama project in a bid to improve on the students' abilities to better master the challenges of the everyday life. By theatre activities we hope

to contribute to their professional, social and personal growth.

The term «Drama in 3 acts» refers to the three years duration of the project and the three different ways to approach the drama as a modus operandi in our teaching:

- 1.The drama is integrated in the teaching of Norwegian.
- 2.The drama can help to better master the daily problems.
- 3.The drama as a means to obtain a richer and more meaningful personal life.

This activities are budgeted for and in addition some recourses are spent on provision of artists and specially competent persons to be instructors or tutors.

Our activities are based on an abundance of ideas. We focus in particular on the local cultural diversity; films, theatre plays, art exhibition etc. We receive visitors like painters, musicians, composers, theatre directors, writers, journalists, teachers of media etc. We work with processes within the fields of sound, colour, shape, body language, story telling and poetry. We work with communication, improvising and observation. We make radio programs and write manuscripts for short plays which are presented to invited guests.

## **Working with drama is like going through a process. It is about growth.**

To grow as a human being is a strongly felt need in all human beings. When we talk about growth, we actually talk about professional, social and personal growth.

**Professional growth.** The students get new theoretical and professional knowledge of drama, the theatre and language. They learn about methods, techniques, body language and genres. They read new texts and short stories, they learn about writers and directors and they learn about media and communication. They learn new skills, they write texts, they paint, they perform plays and concerts, they learn breath techniques and how to relax. They learn how to apply for a job with their CV attached and through role play they get familiarized with job interviews. They learn to listen, to observe and to analyze. They learn to air their views and opinions and to look at themselves and others in a context of cooperation and coexistence. They learn to use their fantasy and creativity, to cooperate and to tolerate each other.

**Social growth.** The students experience the atmosphere of solidarity, they share their initiatives and energy, laughter, joy and vulnerability. They get very close to each other mentally and physically. This secure atmosphere makes them feel self-confident and therefore they more easily open themselves to each other. AS one of the students said; «I dare to make a fool of myself because I feel accepted – being one of the group» By doing new things, overcoming obstacles they enter onto new social arenas. They discover and visit new places; theatres, art exhibitions, libraries etc. They meet people they have never met before; writers, actors, artists etc. They learn to better interpret and to understand other people. They learn to air their views, to exchange thoughts and opinions and to solve problems and conflicts through cooperation.

**Personal growth.** The students get surprised by their own intensity and enthusiasm. They feel that they overcome obstacles and limitations – they feel that they can conquer the world. They better understand and express their own feelings. They more easily open themselves and they get a feeling of mastering and want to use their creativity in a

positive way. What is even more important is their feeling of being accepted – their self-confidence is renewed and strengthened.

## **Recommendations.**

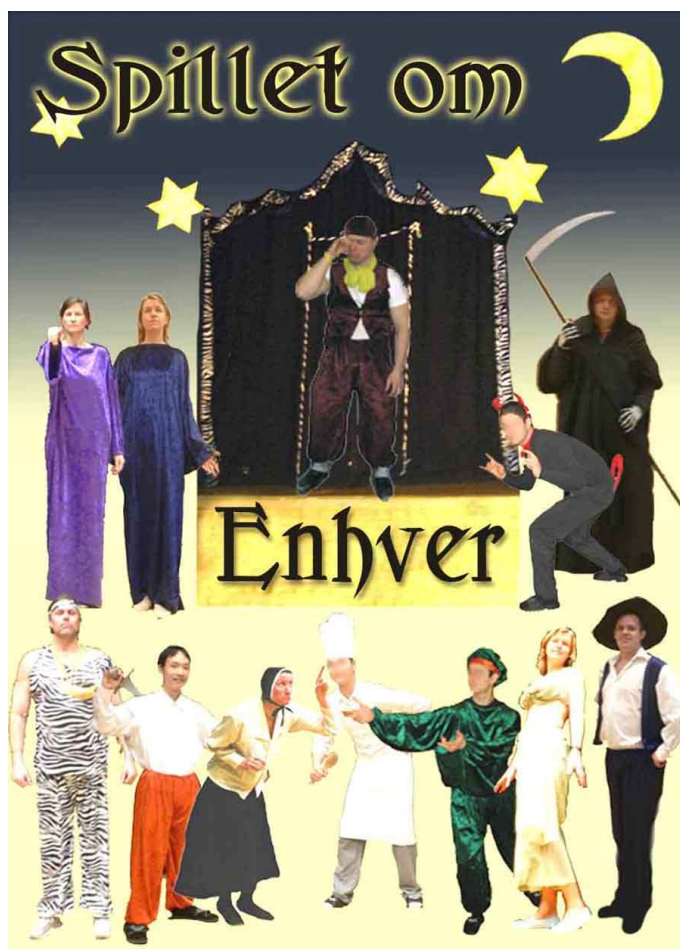
We have all these years believed in a flexible and varied form of teaching in which we can challenge «the whole person» What we have experienced through this project has indeed proved our belief.

We recommend working short periods with the same group. Seize the opportunities, be spontaneous, seize the «golden moments» We have very good experience in using professional artists and skilled trained persons. They bring with them new ideas, new ways of thinking in other words a new «aura» onto the school.

We recommend that colleagues teaching at prisons and who want to improve on the inmates“ professional, social and personal growth to implement such a project and thereby gain their own experiences.



**EVERYMAN, an allegorical play from the Middle Ages, put up and acted by inmates at ILA prison, Norway 2006.**



For the last four years there has been put up relatively large theatre productions at Ila Prison. Large in terms of *time spent* on preparing for the performances and large in terms of the *amount of performances* for the public. We invite people working with care and confinements of criminals, school classes and people generally interested in theatre. The different plays have had averagely eight public performances each.

The prime questions for the drama teacher are *which play* to choose and *what is our theme?* The common answer is – something funny, preferably something relevant to the everyday life of the prisoner himself. We get the well known show numbers on the «ignorant guards» versus the «pitiful inmate». There are other themes!

Perhaps it was very daring to choose a morality from the Middle Ages. The theme of bad deeds, sinful living, redemption and salvation might be too relevant

a theme in a prison! But when I presented the play for the prisoners it was not rejected, the inmates agreed with me that it could be interesting to look deep into another century, in this case the fifteenth century. We decided not to modernize the play in any way. In that way the *message* of the morality became less importunate (pushing), it was meant for another audience, it simply was medieval. On the basis of three different Norwegian versions of the play I put together a new version that in length and complexity fitted our group of actors, maintaining the old style and rhythm of language.

**EVERYMAN a morality or an allegorical play.**

The Church started early to illustrate the content of the Bible by means of theatre. As the mass was celebrated in Latin, the need of visual illustration was great because the congregation did not know any Latin. Shorter *tableaus* were performed in front of the altar. Later the church developed the didactical plays that were meant to teach the congregation moral lessons. These were the

socalled moralities or allegorical plays and were acted outdoors, either in front of the church or at the market. The subject matter of the moralities was man's salvation, his sins and his faith. The battlefield was his soul, his inner life. By use of allegorical characters (as pictures of inner qualities like Faith, Virtue, Wisdom or concepts like Death, Mammon or Mankind) the combat between good or evil was visualized to the full.

ELCKERLIC (Flemish for Everyman) was first time performed in Antwerp 1485. Later it was translated into English and German and Nordic languages.

The plot of the play is this: God asks his servant Death to go and fetch Everyman and make him account for his deeds, the good and the bad, for the Lord. Everyman, being at the top of his earthly might and happiness is not at all ready to die. He goes to his friends and relatives asking them to cross the threshold with him. They all refuse. Everyman then turns to his inner qualities. By revitalizing Faith and Virtue that first only slumbered in his soul, he manages to bring balance into his heavenly account and gains salvation.

The moral, the didactic lesson of the play was obvious: Bring balance into your account of good and bad deeds before it is too late, or you will end in Hell.

How make an inmate of 2006 interested in old theological questions like this?

I believe in the *magic* of the theatre. If we allow the imagination to take us for a ride, we can go to any century. It is a mental exercise. Dream! The *drama* of the play lends itself easily to anybody once they first acquaint themselves with it. It has a lot of contrast: God / Satan, life / death, earthly career versus spiritual awakening, types versus psychological individuals. The play also has a strong plot and turning point. In the first part of the play we follow Everyman as he deals with, though also

allegorical, real people. After the turning point, which is when he realizes that he rests utterly on his own resources, all what we see goes on in his mind. His inner life is projected out onto the stage (i.e the ground of the marked place). These are mental pictures that we have to keep in mind acting.

What else might be the reason why inmates liked to act in this play? Could it be that the truth in religion, the depth, the universality and the moral lesson of the play is something the inmates actually need to deal with?

As we never left the perspective of ourselves as coming from one century looking into another and trying to copy what we thought we saw, we did not spend much time discussing how the theme and moral message worked on us. I would never want to force such a discussion on the inmates. Rather do I believe in the subconscious effect of speech and drama. Prose or lyrics that contain hope and truth will stay with those who spoke or heard the lines long after we stop performing the play.

A prison is a place where people have violated the truth («I'm innocent»), where a lot of harm has been done by the prisoners but also have the prisoners earlier been victims. This is why I find it particularly important that the words spoken again and again from the stage are of high quality. Words work.

Erle Skaar, Ila April 2006

Rolleliste (etterhverts som de viser seg)	
Prologus	Marco/Patrick
Satan	Are
Guds røst	Rino
Døden	Harald N.
Enhver	Richard
Kokken	Patrick
Moren	Ingunn F.
Vennskap	Espen
Elskerinnen	Nina G.
1. sønn	Hoang
2. sønn	Are
Mammon	Geir
Dyden	Nina G.
Troen	Ingunn F.
Lys og lyd:	Brian
Instruksjon, kostymer og tirettelegging:	Erle Skaar
Takk til Snekkerverkstedet, Småindustrien og Fritidskontoret for rekvisitter og hjelp.	

Kjære Publikum,

Vi har arbeidet med SPILLET OM ENHVER siden august i fjor. Vi har skiftet hovedrollenehaver et par ganger og først nå helt på slutten har vi vært fulltallige. Bare to i gruppen har teatererfaring fra før. Det er flott når nye kaster seg ut i det og/eller bruker det til å lære norsk!

Teaterstykket er gammelt, fra den tiden da kirken ennå brukte teater som virkemiddel til å bibringe det kristne budskap. Men det var borgerne i byen som var skuespillerne og som tok ansvar for oppsetningen. Derfor ser vi også at mange underholdende elementer fra det folkelige teatret har sneket seg inn. Ideen om at mennesket skal vise regnskap for Gud etter døden er i tråd med datidens teologi, men at Enhver ikke tar de alene, men vil ha sine aller nærmeste med seg i døden, er komisk og er en slags latterliggjøring av den rike oppkomsten av en byborger som Enhver representerer.

De første skriftlige nedtegnelsene om Enhver, (ELCKERLYC på flamsk), er fra 1477. Første forestilling var i Antwerpen 1485. Siden er spillet oversatt til engelsk (EVERYMAN), og til tysk, (JEDERMANN), og er også blitt gjendiktet på nordiske språk. Versjonen vi spiller består av utdrag fra tre svært ulike norske gjendiktninger av SPILLET OM ENHVER.

For teatergruppen  
Erle Skaar

Spilles mars / april 2006



## «Social reintegration of prisoners» - Council of Europe report (Doc. 10838).

*The Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe produced a report on the 7 February 2006 regarding the social reintegration of prisoners. EPEA members might find aspects of this report useful as provides a basic analysis of the post-release situation for many prisoners and outlines recommendations on the complex issue of prisoner and ex-prisoner reintegration to society. A summary of the report is outlined here.*

### Summary

A good prison policy is one of the bases of our democratic institutions.

Unfortunately, in a great number of member states, prison does not have the desired effects for a good integration. This is particularly the result of the isolation of the prisoner, the split with the family, the friends and society but also of the lack of training of the prison staff.

The Assembly, therefore, recommends taking measures during and after imprisonment and concerning, in particular, the setting up of social reintegration counselling and the use of alternatives to custodial sentences.

The Assembly underlines the necessity to draw special attention to the situation of young offenders as well as to the situation of women in prison.

### **A. Draft recommendation**

1. A good prison policy aiming at the social reintegration of prisoners is an important factor when it comes to assessing the functioning of democracy in Council of Europe member states.

2. In this connection, the Parliamentary Assembly draws attention to Committee of Ministers Recommendation R (83) 7 on participation of the public in crime policy and its own [Recommendations 1257 \(1995\)](#) on conditions of detention in Council of Europe member states and [1656 \(2004\)](#) on the situation of European prisons and pre-trial detention centres.

release and reintegration into society, the Assembly notes that, in most Council of Europe member states, imprisonment does not achieve the second objective as a large number of former prisoners reoffend within five years of their release.

4. There are many causes for this, including socialisation to prison culture, lack of family support, lack of education and vocational training and social prejudices.

5. Spending many years in prison may be a factor in desocialisation as it very often destroys prisoners' ties with their families, friends and the rest of society.

6. The chances of successful social reintegration also depend on the nature of the offence committed and the sentence served. In this connection, the Assembly draws attention to the possibility of alternatives to imprisonment for petty offenders.

7. The Assembly underlines that education is a fundamental human right and that prison authorities should provide appropriate measures of education for prisoners.

8. As knowledge of events in the outside world is also an important factor, prisoners must have access to information.

9. Since adjusting to freedom can often be difficult for individuals who have served long prison sentences, the Assembly believes that a system of conditional releases, prison leave and day releases can help ensure their successful reintegration into society.

10. The Assembly underlines the importance of the proper organisation of prisons and the role played both by prison staff and by social, medical and judicial services.

11. Prison policy must be geared towards enabling prisoners to lead socially responsible lives when released and preparing them for this during their imprisonment.

12. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers ask the relevant committees of experts:

12.1.1. provide social reintegration counselling;

12.1.2. train prison staff appropriately by creating special training centres, if they do not exist ;

12.1.3. take steps to keep first-time offenders and young offenders separate from repeat offenders and other prisoners;

12.1.4. organise information for prisoners' families;

12.1.5. use alternatives to custodial sentences (placement, conditional release, electronic tagging), in appropriate cases;

12.1.6. apply flexible and tolerant rules on visits, including «conjugal visits»;

12.1.7. take the necessary steps to enable prisoners to follow vocational training courses;

12.1.8. allow prisoners to keep up with events in the outside world through newspapers and radio and/or television;

12.1.9. launch awareness-raising campaigns to combat discrimination based on criminal records;

12.2. to organise exchanges of information between European prison governors so that they can share their experiences with a view to improving detention systems;

12.3. to give specific consideration to:

12.3.1. the situation of women and minors in prison;

12.3.2. the health, hygiene and drugs situation in prisons.

13. In addition, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member states which have not already done so to sign and ratify without delay the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## **B. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Ali Riza Gülçiçek**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The first question which arises is whether prison is compatible with a social reintegration project.

2. A good prison policy is one of the bases of our democratic institutions. Imprisonment may, however, be a factor in desocialisation, as it often destroys the ties between individuals and their families and the rest of society.

3. The purpose of a prison sentence is twofold: to punish offenders and put them where they can do no harm for a given period, while preparing them for subsequent release. This is only possible if the time spent in custody is used to make sure that, upon release, prisoners are able to make a living as law-abiding citizens. In this context, the role played by prison authorities and, in particular, support and surveillance staff is very important.

4. Reintegration presupposes that detention is organised in a manner which facilitates a return to normal living and working conditions. This is a long and difficult process and also requires the co-operation of the social, medical and judicial services if it is to be effective. Returning successfully to a life in mainstream society prevents repeat offending.

5. A steady job is therefore vital for social integration, and released prisoners should not be steered towards jobs that offer them no security, where they are likely to be exploited and underpaid, as that would just perpetuate their exclusion from society.

6. It is also important for released prisoners to have access to decent housing but before all, human and social contacts in order to prevent any repeat offending.

### **II. Current situation and shortcomings**

#### *i. Situation in the member states*

7. Throughout the Council of Europe's member states, prison does not have the desired effects in terms of successful reintegration and is very often an obstacle to former prisoners' prospects and future employment opportunities.

8. It is the duty of governments to offer alternatives to protect society against repeat offences while respecting the dignity of prisoners and leaving them the hope that they will one day be fully-fledged law-abiding citizens again.



9. Very often this process is hindered by a lack of receptiveness and co-operation on the part of the people concerned, a lack of specialisation among prison staff and a general lack of resources and infrastructure.

*ii. Evaluation of the problems and needs*

10. The problems frequently encountered include debt, lack of housing, isolation, lack of social support and poor schooling, etc. These are often major obstacles to rehabilitation.

11. Many prisoners find themselves in prison because they were not really integrated into society, as they had no real opportunity to lead normal lives because of poor education, inadequate emotional support or psychosocial problems.

12. Imprisonment often only makes things worse, as prisoners are frequently released without any preparation or information to help them.

13. Particular attention also has to be paid to the social problems that women prisoners face because of the stereotypes they suffer and their even more limited chances than men of finding employment again. In addition, imprisonment usually leads to the loss of their parental rights.

14. For their part, children suffer even more than adults from the traumatising experience of detention. Imprisonment should therefore remain the penalty of absolutely last resort here. Temporary placements should also be preferred to detention on remand.

15. In France, for example, 60% of former prisoners commit new offences and 40% return to jail within 5 years of their release.

16. To achieve successful rehabilitation, prisoners need to be able to consult psychosocial services, welfare workers and other relevant services.

17. Support from their families when the family exists is also a very important factor in prisoners' desire to return to a normal life upon release.

18. Very often families visiting prisons seem to suffer from feelings of shame, guilt and exclusion that tend to cut them off from others, when in fact they also need help.

19. As well as providing families with material and psychological support, efforts should be made to avoid geographical separation, for example by improving local transport facilities and developing outreach services.

20. Social prejudice against ex-convicts clearly also needs to be stamped out and civil society encouraged to give them another chance.

21. The importance of temporary jobs should not be underestimated, as they can serve as a stepping stone to a better future.

22. As a general rule, very few prisoners seem to have access to proper vocational training and demand far exceeds supply. As their level of schooling is generally very low, the training dispensed should be adapted accordingly.

23. Social rehabilitation means working on all aspects of prisoners' problems: administrative situation (they often have no identity documents), family situation (isolation, divorce, geographical separation, etc), state of health (drink, drugs) and accommodation, etc.

24. Obviously, the chances of successful rehabilitation depend on the nature of the offence committed and the sentence served. The chances of success are better the less serious the offence and the younger the offender.

25. Alternatives to imprisonment should be sought for petty offenders.

**III. Means of achieving successful social integration**

26. It must be borne in mind that when people are imprisoned they bring with them all the problems that put them in that predicament. It is therefore essential that prison authorities make every effort to provide them with social, psychological and legal assistance and are able, wherever possible, to offer them suitable vocational training.

27. Vocational training and the prospect of stable employment are undoubtedly the keys to successful rehabilitation and the prevention of reoffending, although account must also, of course, be taken of prisoners' past records and personal experience, as well as labour market trends.

*i. During detention*

*a. The right to education and vocational training*

28. Education is a fundamental human right and must be treated as such. Imprisonment should not deprive prisoners of other rights, like the right to education. If the aim is to turn prisoners into law-abiding citizens, society must also help to make them independent and restore their self-esteem.

29. Above all, prisoners' needs must be evaluated and co-operation with local businesses organised so that prisoners can work outside prisons and acquire real work experience. This can only be done properly with the help of social workers and with the co-operation of firms and their managers and employees.

30. The possibilities offered by the new information technologies and the Internet should also be explored in this respect.

*b. Prison work*

31. Prison work contributes actively to social reintegration by placing prisoners in a situation similar to normal working conditions and giving them a chance to gain experience and even acquire skills and qualifications. In most cases, unfortunately, the work consists in manufacturing things for government concerns or doing community work.

32. Unfortunately, the conditions in which prisoners work tend to fall outside the scope of ordinary law. No employment contract is signed and the labour code does not apply. The same is true of wages.

33. Except in Denmark and Spain, all convicted offenders serving custodial sentences are required to work. Since May 2001 this has not been the case in Denmark, where prisoners are not obliged to work. Instead, Danish law stipulates that prisoners must have an «occupation» but also access to training.

34. In Germany the law stipulates that work and training contribute to the rehabilitation of prisoners. This is also the case in the United Kingdom and Italy.

35. This obligation does not apply to untried prisoners, however.

36. As a general rule, prisoners are paid a minimum wage.

37. Spain has the fullest law governing prison work. There the law provides for the classification of jobs and the publication of vacancy notices and lays down criteria for job assignment.

38. The remuneration of prison work must be well regulated and enable prisoners to save some money for when they are released.

*c. Access to social rights and information*

39. It is also important to prepare actively prisoners' social integration and return to work by dispensing advice in prisons on social benefits and employment, as well as on basic services such as housing, the minimum wage and the various benefits available.

40. Access to social rights and information in general is a key aspect of social reintegration.

41. It is important to eliminate the administrative obstacles to access to information and to take measures to permit the effective exercise of the right. In addition, it should be ensured that former prisoners are entitled to unemployment benefit upon release. This can be made possible with legislation that recognises prison terms as periods of unemployment.

*d. Contact with society*

42. Contact with society is another important factor in successful rehabilitation. It strengthens the feeling of belonging to society.

43. Conditional release, prison leave and the like facilitate reintegration by easy stages.

44. Such opportunities are generally granted to prisoners who offer serious guarantees and have already served part of their sentence.

45. One solution that might be envisaged in this connection is to organise regular meetings with former prisoners so that they can share their experience of reintegration and adjusting to the working world.

46. In the vast majority of cases, family contacts help ensure stability and maintain prisoners' sense of responsibility. As far as possible, the rules on visits, including «conjugal visits», should therefore be applied in a flexible and tolerant manner.

47. Prisoners should be allowed to keep up with events in the outside world through newspapers and radio and/or television so that they are less out of touch when released.

*e. Physical and mental health*

48. Prisoners should be allowed to practise sports and spend at least one hour a day in the open air.

*ii. Alternatives to custodial sentences*

*a. Electronic tagging*

49. Electronic tagging, which was developed in the 1960s, has been introduced in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. The system considerably reduces the prison population, while also bringing about a very sharp drop in levels of reoffending.

50. It offers clear benefits for petty offenders in that it enables them to return home and also avoids

their having to pay bail, which is sometimes too expensive. The countries which have introduced the system believe, on the whole, that it is also a good means of preventing reoffending, as it enables offenders to keep their jobs and maintain their family ties.

*b. Placement*

51. In the case of petty offenders and minors, placement in institutions can serve as a stepping stone between prison and freedom.

*c. Conditional release or community service*

52. If it is to be effective, conditional release must be subject to very strict supervision arrangements.

*iii. Post-prison assistance*

53. Upon release, prisoners often have some difficult obstacles to overcome. In the days leading up to their release, they are often beset by doubts and become increasingly agitated.

54. Adjusting to their newfound freedom is particularly difficult for individuals with fragile personalities and those who have served long sentences. After years in custody, they can find it hard to take initiatives and some have problems of identity and orientation in their new living space.

55. Psychological follow-up can be highly beneficial in such cases.

56. Generally speaking, however, this kind of support is virtually nonexistent. Governments should therefore play a more active part in helping ex-prisoners to find work. Possibilities here include the development of subsidised job-creation programmes in the third sector (local services, voluntary sector, etc), which would enable those concerned to develop their skills and enter the labour market again. Another possible solution would be to introduce quotas for the employment of ex-prisoners, in particular in the public sector. On the other hand, it is important to launch awareness-raising campaigns for employers to combat discrimination based on criminal records.

57. In Turkey, for example, firms with more than 50 employees are required to recruit an ex-convict.

58. Social rehabilitation goes hand in hand with rehabilitation through housing. Having a place of their own helps individuals find their place in society.

59. One solution would be for the government to introduce legislation or regulations enabling the relevant public or private bodies to foster the social reintegration of prisoners through employment, training, housing and so on.

60. NGOs play an essential role in the social reintegration of prisoners by providing support, follow-up, guidance, etc.

61. In some cases, the return to work may mean exercising a self-employed activity or setting up a small family or community business. This also increases their independence and allows the development of services that are socially or economically useful at local level.

62. It is therefore important to support the development of this type of enterprise by providing information of a legal and practical nature and some management training and facilitating access to credit, in the form of micro-credit schemes, for example.

63. Firms should also be encouraged and helped to offer quality jobs, through special subsidies. The measures could include reimbursing the cost of creating new jobs, and providing appropriate technical and financial assistance.

64. Returning to stable employment is one of the keys to preventing repeat offences. Measures must therefore be taken to adjust sentences and to provide prison staff with training, particularly staff working with young offenders. In the case of young offenders, it is essential to take action immediately after offences are committed and adopt an active approach in terms of support, guidance, reintegration, education, employment and supervision.

65. In addition, first-time offenders and young offenders should be held in separate premises to prevent contact with repeat offenders and criminals.

66. Wherever possible, therefore, sentences should be adjusted to take this dimension into account, and alternatives to imprisonment should be preferred.

67. This applies in particular to lesser offences (white collar crime, delinquency), where alternatives to imprisonment might be envisaged and contact with the outside world maintained, through prison leave, for example. Placement in institutions other than prisons could contribute to successful rehabilitation.

68. For prisoners serving longer sentences for more serious offences, prison work, education and appropriate vocational training should be envisaged. Circumstances permitting, this training could be dispensed outside the prison establishment.

69. Conditional release, prison leave and day release are some of the measures that can help prisoners gradually return to the social mainstream.

70. In Quebec, for example, a reform of the prison system was introduced in 1995 under which experiments were carried out with electronic surveillance as an effective and economical alternative to imprisonment for petty offenders.

#### IV. Conclusions and recommendations

71. The Assembly draws attention to Recommendation R (83) 7 of the Committee of Ministers on participation of the public in crime policy and Assembly [Recommendations 1257 \(1995\)](#) on conditions of detention in Council of Europe member states and [1656 \(2004\)](#) on the situation of European prisons and pre-trial detention centres. Unfortunately, in spite of some improvements, detention conditions do not have the desired effects in terms of the successful reintegration of prisoners.

72. The Assembly is convinced that prison policy must be geared towards enabling prisoners to lead socially responsible lives when released and preparing them for this during their imprisonment.

73. In this connection, successful reintegration is possible only if we can define and evaluate the problems that land people in prison and help them to understand where they went wrong and what they can do about it.

74. The Assembly therefore recommends the governments of member states to take measures during and after detention.

75. Concerning the detention, the Assembly recommends, inter alia, to provide training to prison staff by opening training centres, to avoid cutting prisoners off from their families, to organise information meetings for prisoners' families to help them help the prisoners to prepare for reintegration, to take the necessary steps to provide social reintegration counselling and whenever possible to use alternatives to custodial sentences which are equally effective (placement, conditional release, electronic tagging) and enable prisoners to remain in work and maintain their family ties.

76. The Assembly is of the opinion that necessary steps should be taken in order to keep first-time offenders and young offenders separate from repeat offenders and criminals in prisons and to apply flexible and tolerant rules on visits, including «conjugal visits».

77. The Assembly also recommends that measures should be taken for the period after detention, as for example, by encouraging firms to recruit prisoners by providing them with technical and financial assistance and to launch awareness-raising activities and campaigns aimed at combating discrimination based on criminal records.

78. Taking into account the situation of women and minors in prison the Assembly is of the opinion that it would be useful to have a specific consideration to their reintegration as well as to the health conditions (health, public health, drugs) in the prisons.

The Irish Prison Education Association was delighted to host this year's

#### **Liam Minihan Memorial Lecture.**

**Fr. Peter McVerry, SJ**

**«Rehabilitation: Are We for Real?»**

**Chairperson: Jacinta Stewart  
(CEO, City of Dublin VEC)**

**9<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**(Reception 7 p.m.: Lecture 7.45 p.m.)**

**Marino Institute of Education,  
Dublin 9**

Liam Minihan was Head Teacher of the Education Centre in Limerick Prison until his untimely death in 1994. He played a pioneering role in the development of curriculum in prisons and the integration of education efforts with those of the larger Prison Service. His contribution to prison education is honoured annually by the organisation of a memorial lecture.

Fr. Peter McVerry SJ grew up in Newry, Co. Down and was educated at the Christian Brothers in Newry and at the Jesuit school at Clongowes Wood College. In 1962, he entered the Jesuit Order and was ordained in 1975. He worked as a priest in the Inner City in Dublin from 1975 to 1980 and there he encountered some homeless children. He opened a hostel for homeless children in 1979 and this subsequently became his lifetime work. He moved to Ballymun in 1980 and opened three more hostels, a residential drug detox centre for homeless people and two drug-free after care houses. He has written on many issues relating to young homeless people, such as accommodation, drugs, juvenile justice, the gardai, the prisons and education. He has a regular article in the monthly Redemptorist magazine, Reality, and speaks on issues of homelessness, justice and faith to groups around the country. He has recently produced a book of writings, called «The Meaning is in the Shadows». He has been a critic of government policy on issues such as homelessness and criminal justice.

## *Previous Liam Minihan Memorial Lectures*

1995: Professor John Coolihan

### Prison Education and Adult Education

1996: William Rentzmann  
Three Cornerstones of the Danish Prison Service:

### Normalisation, Openness, Self-Administration

1997: Dr. Paul O'Mahony,  
What we can learn from who we put in prison?

1998: Ian Dunbar  
Prisons: The Importance of a Sense of Direction

1999: Dr. Ian O'Donnell  
The Crises Building in Irish Prison

2000: Dr. Carolyn Eggleston  
International Trends in Prison Education

2003: Professor Sean McConville  
The Moral Element in Punishment

2005: Professor Stephen Duguid  
Canada's Cognitive Corrections: Diagnosis, Dosage, Treatment

Copy of Fr McVerry's Lecture

### Rehabilitation – are we for real?

#### *Rehabilitation*

If money were scarce, and one had to prioritise where to invest in rehabilitative facilities within prison, where would you invest it? I suggest that the greatest return is likely to be found amongst the younger prison population who are still at a very decisive developmental period in their lives, namely the 16 -21 age group. Hence for evidence of any sort of political commitment to rehabilitation within prison, one might expect to look at the detention centres and services for young offenders.

Fort Mitchell had a capacity of 102, almost all under 25, the majority of them between 16 and 21. The regime was very much educational focused. Despite offering young people a far more rehabilitative programme than any other prison in the State, it was closed in the dispute about overtime between the Minister and the Prison Officers Association .

Shanganagh Castle, despite being the only open centre for young offenders, and despite the fact that it is widely recognised that imprisoning people in conditions that are unnecessarily secure is harmful to their rehabilitation, was closed, as it occupied a financially valuable site.

That leaves St. Patrick's Institution as the only dedicated prison for young offenders. Surely, the closure of Fort Mitchell and Shanganagh Castle were unfortunate, but, for reasons unknown to us lesser mortals, necessary decisions made by a Department of Justice whose commitment to rehabilitation can be found in that only institution for young offenders which remains, namely St. Patrick's Institution?

St. Patrick's Institution caters for about 200 young men, aged 16 to 21, of whom about 60 to 70 are under the age of 18, who are at a most impressionable age, still in adolescent development and full of vitality and energy. It accommodates the most difficult (and therefore the most damaged) children in our society. Many of them suffered abuse, violence or serious neglect in their earlier childhood, sometimes in other institutions of the State. That abuse was never adequately addressed, sometimes not even acknowledged. The failure to address that abuse is partly – largely – responsible for the subsequent behaviour which has led them to St. Patrick's Institution. Almost all of them have left school early, without any qualifications. 50% are illiterate. In short, it contains young people who by and large have been victims of family and community dysfunctionality and have already been failed by all the important State services with which they have interacted during childhood and adolescent. What happens or does not happens to them during these years in St. Patrick's Institution can have a very significant impact on the rest of their lives.

St. Patrick's Institution is a disaster, an obscenity and reveals the moral bankruptcy of the policies of the Minister for Justice. In the 1970s and 80s, when this country did not have two pennies to rub together, there were 18 workshops in St. Patrick's Institution providing a range of skills to those detained there. Today, there are none, all closed since 2003 because of funding cutbacks. The one-to-one literacy scheme was closed, because of funding cutbacks. In 2004, out of 1300 committals to St. Patrick's, 24 sat for one or more subjects in their Junior Certificate. Most young men in St. Patrick's spend 19 hours each day alone in their cells and the other five hours mindlessly walking up and down a dreary, depressing yard with nothing to do except to scheme (with enormous ingenuity, it must be said) how to get drugs into the place to kill the boredom. Young people who explode in frustration, are punished by being placed in solitary confinement in the basement, where they are locked in their cells for 24 hours a day, with no contact with other

prisoners, no cigarettes, and nothing to do except sleep for three days. Other lesser punishments for infringement of rules include deprivation of visits, letters and phone calls, the very things which help to make time in prison bearable. Despite the fact that about one-third of the population of St. Patrick's are legally children, under the age of 18, there are no staff with child care qualifications, the various agreed standards for children in the care of the State do not apply, there is no inspection by Special Services Inspectorate, there are no care plans for the young people there as required for all children in the care of the State, the young people there do not necessarily have a social worker as required for all children in the care of the State, the required documentation detailing all interventions by staff with the young people in care is not kept and the Children's Ombudsman is prohibited from investigating complaints or allegations by the young people accommodated there. Notwithstanding the fact that there are many fine prison officers who wish to do their best for the young people in St. Patrick's, the system dictates that any aggression shown to staff will frequently invite a totally inappropriate violent response towards the young person, which would, in any other residential institution, result in instant dismissal of the staff involved and possible prosecution for assault.

St. Patrick's Institution is nothing but a «warehouse» for young people, many of whom were broken by their childhood experiences. In this harsh and punitive system, they are further broken down. It is a demoralising, destructive and dehumanising experience, with no redeeming features, characterised by idleness and boredom, for young people, who are full of energy, at a critical time in their development. One young person there summed it up very succinctly when he told me: «This place brings out the worst in you.»

## **Education and Literacy**

### *Priority of Education within rehabilitation*

The young people in St. Patrick's Institution are, almost universally, characterised by educational failure. The educational system has failed them and they consequently have failed to achieve within the educational system. Given the critical importance of education for the future life prospects of a young person, rehabilitation must give priority to making up for the prior failure of the educational system, in order to give these young people some possibility, in future life, of competing on a level playing field. Low educational achievement reduces a young person's options in life to such a level that they are likely to no longer share agreed values.

## **Priority of Literacy within education**

Within the educational system, literacy is of course the most basic issue. In the Literacy Survey of 2003, 80% of the population of St. Patrick's scored at or below the second lowest literacy level, with one-third of the prisoners at such a low level that they have to be described as «illiterate». Illiteracy, or low levels of literacy, not only contributes enormously to low self-esteem but also excludes a person from almost all further education. Rehabilitation then must first enable young people to achieve a competency in literacy and numeracy, without which further educational achievement becomes impossible.

One would therefore expect that in St. Patrick's, a commitment of resources would be provided to enable every prisoner to achieve basic literacy levels. There would also be a commitment of resources to enable each prisoner, within the time-frame available to them, to make up for the failures of the educational system in their childhood. While acknowledging the commitment of the teachers in St. Patrick's which enables 50% of the prisoners to participate in at least one educational activity per week, and 25% to avail of at least 10 hours education per week, a serious attempt at rehabilitation would seek to achieve a lot more. The biggest obstacle to achieving a lot more is the daily regime of St. Patrick's. Despite «serving» a client group whose needs are quite different from any other group within the prison system, St. Patrick's Institution has not only a physical structure which is identical to that of the adult Mountjoy Prison but much more seriously, has a daily regime that is also identical to that of adult prisoners in Mountjoy. By the time prisoners are actually unlocked and a prison officer collects them for the school, there is less than one and a half hours available for education in the morning and the same in the afternoon. Apart from a further hour and a half in the evening, when the school is closed, this is the only recreational time available to them. The desire to freely associate with their friends during these periods, the negative experience of school that they bring with them into prison, the embarrassment of being illiterate and the total boredom and mindless meaninglessness of most of their day makes the effort needed to engage in educational activities distinctly unattractive for many. Locking juveniles up on their own for 19 and a half hours a day, with educational activities having to compete with recreational activities for the other four and a half hours, does not encourage young people to engage in education. A serious attempt at rehabilitation

would have made sure that the one-to-one literacy scheme was expanded to include all those who require it – instead it was abolished, because of funding cutbacks.

### **Training for post-release employment**

Most of those committed to St. Patrick's Institution were unemployed at the time of committal, many had been unemployed for all or most of their lives. Helping such young people to obtain the personal and interpersonal skills which would help them to secure employment, which they could access on release, would surely be very worthwhile and might even make a significant difference to some offenders. The Connect programme, which sought to do just that and was already operating in some prisons, was due to be introduced into St. Patrick's in 2003. It never happened - instead it was withdrawn from even those prisons in which it was operating and most of the €46 million allocated to expanding the programme to all prisons appears to have been used to compensate for prison officer overtime.

### Drug Rehabilitation in prison

A majority of those being committed to prison these days have a drug problem. While, again, successful drug treatment within the confined and isolating environment of prison is difficult to achieve, some prisoners are more than willing to accept help even within prison. The only dedicated drug treatment service within the prison system is the 12-bed detox facility in the Medical Unit in Mountjoy prison. There is a waiting list to get into it. On completion of the detox, prisoners are transferred to the Training Centre where the possibility exists of continuing their rehabilitation by engaging in training programmes, sometimes linked to outside agencies. Apart from the Medical Unit, any drug treatment that takes place in prison happens *despite* the system. In Mountjoy, there is absolutely no drug-free space to support a person who wishes to tackle their drug problem; in Wheatfield, out of 320 cells, there are 16 cells available to those who become drug free. For prisoners in Dublin who want to become and remain drug free, their best option is to go to the Midlands prison, but the isolation from family and reduced possibility of visits is a serious obstacle. There are no counsellors to support them, no incentives to encourage them, no nothing! The Minister is planning to create drug-free prisons by a policy that has already been tried in Scotland for ten years and is now being abandoned as a failure, namely random drug tests with punitive sanctions for testing positive. Presumably (but that may be

a presumption we cannot make!) the Minister has consulted with the management personnel of the Irish Prison Service. However, 15 minutes consultation with anyone who knows the prison system or anyone seriously connected with the lives of prisoners could tell the Minister to get real. The Minister's proposal appears based on the premise that prisoners' drug use is simply irresponsible and selfish pursuit of pleasure. Many prisoners take drugs to forget their past, it is their only way of coping with childhood traumas or other overwhelming experiences that they find too difficult to bear. As one drug user said so eloquently: «Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to ride away so fast that our memories could not catch up.» Being alone in your cell for 19 hours a day ensures that your memories are your constant companion. Indeed, when imprisonment was first introduced as a penal sanction, the whole rationale for imprisoning people was precisely to keep them alone with their memories so that they could learn the error of their ways! People *can* overcome their addiction, they *can* learn other ways of coping, but they need intensive support to enable them to do so successfully. One-to-one counselling, group therapy and the realistic expectation that the future can be different from the past is necessary. Many prisoners are afraid to become drug-free in prison, because on release they may be returning to homelessness, boredom, or family problems and they know that if they relapse they may have to wait many months to regain their place on a methadone programme. To try to force people to abandon their learnt mechanism for coping with their problems without giving them alternative ways of coping is a recipe for increased tension within prisons, mental health problems, violence and self-harm. The Minister's proposals, recently publicised, never mention harm reduction policies, although such policies are now part of mainstream drug programmes. A drugs policy that focuses exclusively on the elimination of drug misuse has long since been abandoned almost everywhere, as evidence-based research shows it to be much less effective. But the Minister's proposals to *end the supply* of drugs in prison is quite detailed with very specific policies – although many of them are already in operation in most Dublin prisons - with a few new policies such as random testing of 5-10% of prisoners each month. However, the proposals on *helping prisoners to deal* with drug misuse is remarkably short on specifics, such as is the Minister planning to introduce full-time, trained drug counsellors into prison and in what numbers relative to the number of prisoners who need them.

## *Models*

A serious attempt at rehabilitation within prison would necessitate a serious programme of evidence-based research which would try to identify what works. However, there is little serious research taking place on prisons or indeed on the whole criminal justice system. The absence of hard information or evaluation of programmes ensures that political expediency and the imminence of the next general election inform decision-making. It is not that there are no models available which could provide a much more rehabilitative experience while in prison. Three examples, within our own system, come immediately to my mind.

- a) Wheatfield Prison might become a juvenile centre.

When Wheatfield Prison was being considered, the Department of Justice scoured Europe to examine different prison structures. The design of Wheatfield Prison was based on the best model then available. It is divided into separate units containing 16 single rooms per unit. Each unit has access to its own small, open-air, grass space. In that model, prisoners have free association from 7.30 in the morning until 10 in the evening. They have the key to their own room so that they can lock it when they are out. They have unrestricted access to the open-air space. They cook their own meals, taking it in turns to cook for the whole group – thus each prisoner has to learn basic cookery skills. They have to learn the social skills of group living, how to reach decisions by compromise, how to deal with conflict in a positive way, skills which they may not have possessed before coming into prison. Prison therefore becomes much more demanding, both for prisoners and for staff. Each day prisoners have to make decisions (something that is almost *forbidden* in the current prison regime) and prison officers need a whole new range of skills. In such a regime, education becomes a more attractive option, the prisoner knowing that they have many more hours in the day to associate with their friends and engage in other recreational activities such as hobbies or football.

- b) Training Unit.

It has been shown time and again that rehabilitation programmes are more successful when offered *outside* of prison. Prison isolates young people who have already been isolated from main-stream society and this makes rehabilitation all the more difficult. Rehabilitation, when it must take place in prison, will be much

more successful when linked to outside agencies and programmes. The Training Unit provides a model which could be expanded and improved. There, prisoners can undertake a range of educational programmes within the prison and graduate to programmes or to work opportunities outside the prison, as they prove their commitment and reliability. Prisoners leave each day to go to the PACE workshops or other training courses or to employment. A serious commitment to rehabilitation would ensure that each young person committed to prison would be helped to draw up a personal plan with a graduated programme of working or training in the community. This only requires resources, a bit of effort, a little creativity and a willingness to take risks. Not of these appear to be available in the Department of Justice.

- c) Temporary Release and Sentence Review.

Every young person in St. Patrick's that I know describes the place as a «kip». They do not want to spend their day in idle boredom, but they have little choice. They are well aware of their illiteracy, their lack of education and absence of skills. They are often so proud of the certificates that they gain in prison and give them to me with strict instructions that I am to keep them in a safe place for them for when they get out. Many of them have never received a certificate in their life before. Sometimes the certificate merely states that they have *participated* in such and such a programme – it doesn't say that they have *achieved* anything, or even successfully completed the programme, but they are still so proud of it! I have no doubt that a little encouragement, a daily regime that is supportive and a choice of meaningful educational or training opportunities would attract an almost 100% participation. As evidence of this, when judges handed down a sentence, with a review to be held after a given period of time in prison, many prisoners spent their time doing programmes which offered them certificates. They tried to accumulate as many certificates as possible to show the judge at the time of review. They wanted to show that they had spent their time in prison constructively and therefore deserved a chance. Despite the Supreme Court decision which effectively abolished sentence reviews, some legislation to re-instate them should be considered. They provided a wonderful, and necessary, motivation to use their time in prison constructively. Similarly, temporary



release, as part of a planned, personal educational or training programme, with links to outside agencies and services, could be an integral part of the management of offenders, providing a goal for the prisoner to achieve by means of an agreed set of achievements, with the knowledge that they will be recalled to prison if they fail to maintain their agreed programme.

#### *The Context*

I would suggest three reasons why rehabilitation for prisoners is not on the agenda. There is an ideology, consisting of three concentric circles, as it were, which militates against rehabilitation.

- 1) First, *money spent on rehabilitation is considered wasted money.* The primary criterion by which rehabilitation is judged is whether prisoners, on release, will re-offend. With a current 70% recidivist rate, to pour money into programmes for prisoners is seen as ineffective and therefore inefficient. However, with a paucity of resources, an absence of programmes and no support on release, such a recidivist rate is only to be expected. Would a serious attempt at rehabilitation reduce recidivism? We don't know because it has never been tried. However, common sense suggests that it might. Research, if seriously undertaken alongside rehabilitative programmes, would inform the rehabilitative process, making it more successful and cost effective. However, in my view, programmes of rehabilitation are first and foremost an issue of justice, an attempt to compensate for the failure of the educational and other systems which have been part of their lives before imprisonment. They ought not to be an optional add-on, to be provided, or withdrawn, at the political whim of a Minister, still less to be a pawn in a dispute between the Minister and the Prison Officers Association.
- 2) Secondly, over the past twenty years, there has been a growing *movement away from rehabilitation of offenders to control of offenders*, a movement that has been accelerated in the past ten years. Our criminal justice system has traditionally been characterized by a fine balance between the needs of the offender and the seriousness of the offence. Whether an offender receives a prison sentence or not, and for how long, depends not only on the seriousness of the offence, but also on the circumstances of that person – their childhood experiences, the level

of deprivation they may have endured, issues such as addictions, mental health or low intelligence and whether they have shown any remorse or motivation to deal with these issues and so on. Current policies have been shifting the balance away from the offender and on to the offence. It is a shift of focus from rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders to the control and exclusion of offenders. It is a shift from rightful intolerance of the *behaviour* of the offender to intolerance of the *offender him/herself*. Control measures such as more powers for the gardai, tougher legislation, restrictions on the right to bail, mandatory sentences, legislation to reduce the rights of the offender, and yet more new powers for the gardai have been introduced. Most recently, the proposed introduction of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, which can see people being imprisoned for behaviour which was not, in itself, criminal behaviour, continues this trend. This shift towards excluding offenders from society has widespread public support. This support arises because we live in an increasingly fearful society with little sign of it getting better. As long as an excessive desire to *control* offenders who disturbs us, by excluding them and keeping them apart from us, is dominant, then the desire to *change* their behaviour and thus to re-integrate them will be pushed into irrelevance.

3 Thirdly, the focus on the economy that has driven Governments for the past ten or fifteen years appears to see money spent on anything other than the economy as a waste of resources. Those, like prisoners, who are of little value to the economy or who are likely to be of little value in the future, are seen as a drain on valuable resources. This is not entirely a cynical or hard-hearted perspective. The ideological justification for such a perspective is that the route out of poverty is through employment and so investing as much as possible into the economy is the most efficient way of lifting all boats. Diverting money into rehabilitative programmes for people who will be, at best, marginal to the economy is to slow down the process of eliminating poverty. However, in my view, this ideological position is deficient – while the Celtic Tiger has certainly lifted many people out of poverty, people who had never or rarely worked before in their lives, there remain those, including prisoners, who find it extremely difficult to secure employment, despite their best intentions and efforts to do so. Furthermore, some of those who

do find employment can only find low-paid, insecure employment which does not lift them out of poverty. The need for direct investment into the lives of those on the margins to enable them to find a greater sense of fulfillment and self-esteem will always be necessary, particularly for those who will be marginal to the needs of the economy.

### **The carnage on our roads**

A rehabilitative programme which offers offenders early release, which gives offenders the opportunity to engage with outside agencies and programmes and which makes their time in prison more meaningful and constructive requires a willingness by the Minister of Justice to take risks. Many will fail and the public are unforgiving when they do. The Department of Justice is one in which enlightened leadership can easily lead to political extinction. A major public awareness campaign would be required to demolish the myth that is so prevalent in the community that «longer sentences make communities safer.» A public awareness campaign would focus on the very obvious question: «What do communities want prisoners to be like when they leave prison?»

Most people have absolutely no idea of what life in prison is like and most people don't care. How do we change that? Some high profile persons, like Jeffrey Archer, who have unexpectedly found themselves in prison have subsequently talked about how the experience of prison has been a real eye-opener for them. They discovered, to their amazement and shock, a prison system that was destructive and dehumanising. They discovered that prisoners were much like themselves, a mixture of good and bad. And most telling of all, they discovered how their former apathy and lack of interest in what happens in prison had enabled them to preserve myths which they had grown up with and to insulate themselves, by their ignorance, from the uncomfortable questions which their time in prison opened up for them.

The carnage on our roads is an issue that generates much discussion and much criticism of the lack of effective political action to reduce it. Perhaps it is time to consider much more drastic action.

My suggestion is somewhat ironic in that I spend much of my time trying to keep people out of prison. But perhaps we should consider introducing mandatory 30-day imprisonment for drunk driving. Drunk drivers injure and kill far more people each year than joyriders – yet a conviction for joyriding will almost guarantee a

prison sentence while a conviction for drunk driving will rarely do so. This minister seems to love mandatory sentences, so here is another opportunity for him. He is also building a brand new prison to expand the prison capacity so here is a way of making use of it. A mandatory 30-day prison sentence would send a strong message that drinking and driving is not acceptable in this society. As the deterrent effect of imprisonment is largely a middle-class concept imported into a criminal justice system which focuses predominantly on the poor, it might even work in reducing the number of people killed or injured on our roads, as many of the 9,500 people who were arrested for drink driving each year over the past four years are middle-class people who would never consider that prison was a possibility for them. If so many middle-class people were to experience the destructive, dehumanising effect of imprisonment, perhaps it might create a move for reform. If so many middle-class people were to live alongside, and get to know, prisoners from a very different social background, they too, like Jeffrey, might begin to question the myths that they have grown up with.

Is it only a coincidence that the most humane prison regimes in Europe are to be found in Scandinavian countries which have mandatory prison sentences for drunk driving?

I appreciate that a commitment to rehabilitation is a difficult issue for any Minister for Justice. The public doesn't care what happens to prisoners, most don't want their tax money spent on improving the lives of prisoners, money spent on rehabilitation shows few visible results (as you cannot see someone *not* committing a crime!) and the investment needed to really make a difference is very substantial. Nevertheless, rehabilitation is an issue of justice towards people who are amongst the most excluded and marginalized in our society and as such should be, as a matter of principle, a fundamental cornerstone of prison policy.

Fr. Peter McVerry SJ  
5<sup>th</sup> May 06



## 6<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Directors & Co-ordinators of Prison Education

Prague, September 21 – 24, 2006



### 6<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS AND CO- ORDINATORS OF PRISON EDUCATION

The Prison Service of the Czech Republic, in association with the European Prison Education Association (EPEA), is hosting **the 6<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education**. It will be held at the Corinthia Panorama Hotel, Prague, from Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

Previous conferences of this kind were held in Poland (1994), Estonia (1996), Cyprus (1998), Malta (2000) and England (2004). The conference is intended for those who administer or manage prison education at national or state level, for example, the “Co-ordinator” or “Director” or “Advisor”, who is responsible for implementing policy in relation to prison education in each European country or state.

As in previous conferences, the agenda will concentrate on exchanges of experience in relation to developing the education of prisoners, including the practical problems that arise in this field; also, visits to education programmes in prisons will be part of the agenda. Sessions will be held in both plenary and workshop form. The official language of the conference is English.

**Closing date for applications is 15<sup>th</sup> July 2006.**

On receipt of the completed application form, confirmations of registration will be sent to those accepted as participants in the conference. Along with this confirmation participants will receive detailed information on how to pay the conference fee, which is 780 euro, and which covers accommodation for three nights, catering and the costs of the full programme.

Application form and draft programme are attached overleaf

## Provisional Programme

### Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September

- 11.00 – 13.30**                      **Registration**
- 14.00 – 14.30**                      **Opening session (plenary)**  
-Representative of Czech Republic (Ministry of Justice or Czech Prison Service)  
-EPEA representative
- 14.30 – 15.30**                      **Council of Europe Conventions and Rules** (New European Prison Rules, Convention on Human Rights, Access and Right to Education)  
*Representative of Council of Europe*
- EPEA – «Education in Prison»**    *Representative of EPEA*
- 15.30 – 16.00**                      **Coffee break**
- 16.00 – 16.30**                      **Education and Training in the Correctional Services «Another Spring»**  
**A White Paper from Norway**  
**By senior Adviser Torfinn Langelid, Norway**
- A Green Paper: Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment**  
**By Jane Bateman, Offenders Learning and Skills Unit, England**
- 16.30 – 17.00**                      **Recent research in Norwegian prisons: Inmates educational background and educational intentions**  
**By Professor Terje Manger, University of Bergen, Norway**
- 17.00 – 18.00**                      **Discussion panel & Closing – practical information**
- 19.00**                                      **Dinner in Hotel Restaurant**

### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

- 08.30**                                      **Breakfast**
- 08.30 – 14.30**                      **Prison visits ( 3- 4 groups), Lunch served in prisons**
- 15.00 – 15.30**                      **Coffee break**
- 15.30 – 15.45**                      **Plenary session: Introduction to policy challenges**
- 15.50 – 17.00**                      **WORKSHOPS**
- **Interventions – entering a labour market?**
  - **Getting prison education off the ground**
  - **Physical education**
  - **Minorities, languages, literacy. «Managing diversity»**
- 17.15 – 19.00**                      **Plenary session: Continuing, Discussion, Reflections from prison visits**
- 19.30**                                      **Dinner in Hotel Restaurant**

## Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

### *International dimension (Plenary session)*

<i>09.00 – 10.00</i>	<i>Overview of Czech prison education system</i>
<i>10.00 – 11.00</i>	<i>Updates from different countries</i>
<i>11.00 – 11.30</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<i>11.30 – 12.30</i>	<i>Updates from different countries (incl. USA, Canada, Australia)</i>
<i>12.30 – 13.30</i>	<i>Lunch in Hotel Restaurant</i>
<i>14.00 – 17.00</i>	<i>Guided city tour (walking)</i>
<i>17.30 – 19.00</i>	<i>Free time at the hotel</i>
<i>20.00 – 23.00</i>	<i>Dinner at Restaurant «U Marcanu»</i>

## Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September

### *Plenary session:*

<i>09.00 – 10.00</i>	<i>PIPELINE project - Partnerships in Prison Education: Learning In Networked Environments. By project coordinator Andreas Lund, University of Oslo, Norway and a person from Slovenia (partner in the project) discussion, questions...</i>
<i>10.00 – 10.30</i>	<i>Swedish Project, discussion, questions...</i>
<i>10.30 – 11.00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<i>11.00 – 11.45</i>	<i>Suggestions for future conference</i> <i>- Forming of organising committee</i> <i>- Content</i> <i>- Host country</i>
<i>11.45 – 12.00</i>	<i>Closing of conference</i>
<i>12.30 –</i>	<i>Lunch in Hotel Restaurant, depart</i>

## REGISTRATION FORM

### International Conference of Policy Makers in the Field of Prison Education

(Directors / Co-ordinators of Prison Education)

Prague, Corinthia Hotel Panorama, 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2006

Title:	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Job title:	
Country and Organisation:	
Address:	
e-mail:	
Tel.:	
Fax:	

Kindly return completed registration form by mail on the address:

Mr. Martin Vana  
Vezenska sluzba CR  
Soudni 1672/1a  
140 67 Prague 4  
The Czech Republic

or by e-mail on [mvana@grvs.justice.cz](mailto:mvana@grvs.justice.cz) .

The registration has to be returned by **15<sup>th</sup> July, 2006**.

Confirmation of your participation in the conference will be delivered by the end of May together with instruction how to settle the conference fee in amount approximately 780 €, which involves accommodation for three nights, catering and accompanying program.