



THE EUROPEAN ORGANISATION OF
PRISONS AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Education behind Foreign Bars EuroPris/CEP expert group on Foreign National Prisoners

Two events with a focus on Foreign Nationals took place in Amersfoort, The Netherlands in February. On 12 February the 10th Anniversary of the organisation *Education behind Foreign Bars* was celebrated with an international conference. The next day the EuroPris/CEP expert group on Foreign National Prisoners held an expert meeting to establish a focus and plan their activities for 2015.



Education behind foreign bars started their work for Dutch prisoners abroad in 2004. Each year about 175 Dutch nationals that are detained somewhere in the world start with a distance learning study. Volunteers in the Netherlands support the prisoners with coaching and training materials provided by the organisation. The training needs and potential of the prisoner are assessed. Contacts are made with foreign prisons to provide for the possibility that training material can go in and out of the prison. The volunteers check the ‘homework’ of the prisoner, provide advice and moral support to continue with their study under the special circumstances they are in. The studies offered range from language training to vocational education.

At the Foreign National Expert meeting organized by EuroPris / CEP the participants from the prison and probation services and university of Nottingham discussed the concrete activities that the group can take up in the current year to increase the attention for Foreign Nationals in Prison. Building on the intentions of the Council of Europe to evaluate the implementation of their recommendations, the expert group came right after the meeting to an agreement with the CoE to provide a presentation to the plenary session of the Council for Penological Cooperation on the implementation of the 2012 Recommendation on Foreign Nationals.

Further, the expert group intends to link and provide input to existing activities and projects such as the STEPS 2 Resettlement project, the upcoming conferences of the European Prison Training Academies and the European Prison Education Association. EuroPris and CEP organize in December 2015 a staff training workshop in Dublin and would like to use this opportunity to introduce FNP related issues to the participants. With the support of Nottingham University the expert group will build a database with European contacts that are working on or are relevant for FNP issues. The expert from Nottingham University also offered the possibility to provide practice oriented training to



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prison staff on the CoE recommendation. The group also wants to explore how the TRACKS (www.tracks.uk.net) system that was developed on behalf of NOMS could be used for a wider audience outside of England & Wales. This toolkit is designed to help foreign national prisoners and professionals working with foreign national prisoners to plan for their resettlement upon release. A second joint workshop is planned for 2016 and in order to prepare for this the expert group will collect suggestions for topics and relevant issues from participants of previous events.