

European
Prison
Regime
Forum



European Prison Regime Forum (EPRF)

14-15 December 2016

Sofia, Bulgaria

The European Prison Regime Forum was established in 1996 to deal with issues that are related to the employment of prisoners, including prison industries, vocational training and improving reintegration through increased employment opportunities upon release. An important element for the Forum was to stimulate exchange between the different European countries. In the course of the past 20 years representatives of many different European countries participated in the Forum. At the last EPRF conference that took place in Lisbon in 2013, representatives of 13 European countries joined the event. Starting with 2016, it was agreed that EuroPris would organize the EPRF in cooperation with the Steering Group. The EPRF „brand“ would continue to exist, but the organisation of the event would be fully under the EuroPris umbrella.

The 2016 EPRF workshop had a diverse programme with experiences from 12 European countries. The format of the workshop was in such a way developed so that it creates more interactions and discussions. While the presentations can be found on www.europris.org, this report depicts the discussions that took place after the presentations.

Opening

Ms Krasimira Filipova – Deputy Minister of Justice, Bulgaria:

- The employment possibilities for detainees were emphasized.
- The quality of the work by detainees was important.
- Employment reduces recidivism and stimulates reintegration.
- Detainees can use their salary to maintain their family.
- Help should be offered to former detainees to find work in society.

Conclusion: Commitment – development by European Council of Europe – important role of labour and work in prison

Offender Employment and the European Prison Rules

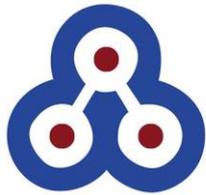
Ilina Taneva, Council of Europe

Ms Ilina Taneva, Secretary to the Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) presented the Council of Europe perspective and rules regarding prison labour.

As a conclusion, she encouraged all European countries to take part in the European Prison Regime Forum.

CELLMADE BELGIUM “Because penitentiary work works” – philosophy, corporate identity and future challenges

Ann de Meyer, Advisor to prison governor, Gent prison, Belgium and Tine Verhenne, Director Cellmade, Belgium presented the Philosophy, corporate identity and future challenges of CELLMADE Belgium.



In-Made Netherlands: Employee skills and how to manage?

Janneke Horlings, Custodial Institutions Agency, Netherlands presented an overview of In-Made, aims and developments, as well as future challenges.

After the presentations, the audience had a roundtable discussion after which they addressed questions to the presenters.

1. **Question** from Italy to Cellmade: Who are the eventual clients?

Cellmade: Our own organization orders furniture and office furnishings in our carpentry workshops. We opt for Business to Business approach; mainly retail and packaging of goods for large companies. We also offer handling and re-handling (flyers, documents, etc.).

2. **Question** from Turkey to Cellmade: Are detainees obliged to work? Do you export to other countries? What rights do detainees have? How many detainees are employed in Belgium?

Cellmade: Contrary to the Netherlands, detainees in Belgium are not obliged to work. Products are not exported directly. Our clients do export finished products abroad. There is a basic law, laying down the rights and obligations of detainees during detention. About 20 % of the detainees is employed in the workshops, another 20 % is employed in domestic service (kitchen, cleaning, etc.).

3. **Question** from Ireland to Cellmade and In-Made: Which companies supervise the prison employees?

Cellmade + In-Made: The employees in the workshops operate under the Federal Public Service Justice – Penitentiary Institutions, which are not commercial organisations. The supervision in the workshops is carried out by security guards with years of service in the prison who, as a result, have progressed in their job. It is difficult to assign these tasks to new security guards who do not have sufficient knowledge of how the prison functions.

4. **Question** from Norway to In-Made: If detainees are obliged to work, who can benefit an exemption not to work?

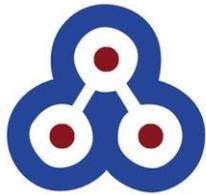
In-Made: We try to help detainees with psychological problems by offering special necessities and special trainings. These detainees are obliged to work, but are allowed to perform less hours. They are also placed in other and more quiet workshops. Sometimes, detainees who do not speak the language have more difficulties. However, we do not make a distinction. This does not influence the work. They learn by doing.

Bulgarian experiences

Gergana Georgieva, Director General Bulgarian Prison Service, presented how the prison labour is organised in the Bulgarian Prison Service, including the educational aspects.

Increase employment opportunities of ex-offenders through social enterprise

Kieran Moylan, Care and Rehabilitation Directorate, Irish Prison Service and Siobhan Cafferty, Project Manager Social Enterprise Project, Irish Prison Service presented a pilot project of a Social Enterprise launched recently.



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After the presentations, the audience had a roundtable discussion after which they addressed questions to the presenters.

1. **Question** from the Netherlands to Ireland: How do you involve society in the employment of detainees?

Ireland: We intend to open outlets and coffee shops outside the prison. As such, the community sector is involved in the employment of detainees. We want to establish different types of partnerships. This creates a win-win situation. The company is obliged to employ detainees and benefits from doing so.

2. **Question** from the Netherlands to Bulgaria: How do you motivate detainees to work?

Bulgaria: We try to offer classes to detainees so that they learn to read and write. Vocational training is very important. If they follow 16 hours of different classes, their imprisonment is shortened by three days. They are offered qualitative courses. On the marketplace, you will find several wooden objects that were made in the carpentry workshops.

3. **Question** from Cyprus to Ireland: how do you manage finances in such shops outside the prison?

Ireland: we want to work with volunteers. They are already active in the kitchen, the bakery and the farm and have proven to be trustworthy. It is also important to establish clear criteria. Detainees with a higher profile such as bankers, businessmen, etc. are eligible as well.

Experiences of social cooperatives in the penitentiary context

Mr. Nicola di Silvestre, Chief Educator, Headquarters of the Penitentiary Administration, Directorate General for Prisoners and their Treatment, Italy presented the main figures about social enterprises in prison, principles about working in prison, legislation and regulations on social cooperatives and work in prison and offered an overview of the types of industries in the Italian prisons.

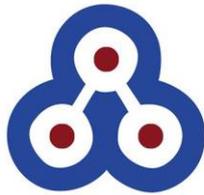
Inmates work - Romanian prison work experiences

Cristi Plesa, National Administration of Prisons, Romania gave a presentation on the way prison labour was organised in Romania.

1. **Question** to Romania concerning sentence reduction, how does it work?

Romania: All detainees who follow six months of training, are entitled to a sentence reduction of 20 days. This is of course difficult for detainees who cannot work. The local warden negotiates with contractors to employ detainees. In Romania, understaffing is also an obstacle to employment as the detainees cannot be accompanied to their workspace.

Italy: there is a daily struggle with the employees to promote change management in order to consider employment as an important part of detention. Safety is always the main concern of the staff. The staff is also trained differently. Italy has the penitentiary police. There is still great resistance to learn from dynamic safety.



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Marketing own label production – experiences from Denmark

Peter Larsen, Danish Prison and Probation Service

Centre for Reinsertion Initiatives (CIRE) Catalonia

Gerard Estella Erill, Ministry of Justice Catalonia

1. **Question** from Sweden to Denmark: A large firm such as IKEA does not want to cooperate with the prison. How is the situation in your country?

Denmark: This is determined by the firm itself. Lidl, for example, opposes as the firm is active around the world and clients might be put off. There are concerns that negative comments might destroy the firm.

2. **Question** from Ireland to Denmark: what about the social security and insurance policy?

Denmark: all conditions for employed detainees are identical to the conditions for employees outside the prison. Only the salary is different and lower.

Catalonia: detainees pay taxes as well. This ensures their social security and pension.

3. **Question** from the Netherlands: Do you have any figures concerning the link between employment and recidivism.

Catalonia: genuine reintegration happens within the prison walls and not outside. Detainees in Catalonia are offered many tools (money, employment, guidance, etc.). We do not have any figures or statistics concerning recidivism.

Denmark: we do not have any reports concerning the influence of employment on recidivism. However, we do have reports concerning training. In Denmark, the recidivism rate amounts to 2.3 %.

MARKETPLACE:

Thanks to Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, the UK, Cyprus, Denmark, Norway, Catalonia, Turkey.

Thursday, 15 December

Ex-Made Netherlands: from the inside out, resocialization a perspective for the future!

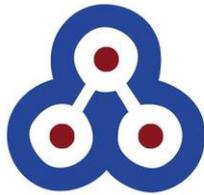
Eric Bouwsma, Custodial Institutions Agency, Netherlands talked about Rehabilitation policy in the Netherlands and presented the project Ex-Made, where detainees can continue work after they have left prison.

Cooperation between prisons and companies – benefits and drawbacks

Peter Larsen, Prison and Probation Service, Denmark, presented different aspects to consider when prisons cooperate with companies: cooperation fields, types of prison industry, Building maintenance and facility management, Benefits and drawbacks.

Improving Employment Outcomes for Prisoners in England and Wales





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Rachael Reynolds, Head of Employment Commissioning Group, NOMS, England & Wales

After the presentations the audience had 5 minutes roundtable discussions after which followed the questions and answers.

- 1. Question:** Netherlands asked Rachel (UK) about private prisons to share her experience with them. We shouldn't be producing arts and crafts but do what the labour is asking for, and that the current request is more for attitudes than skills. Question was if that was the experience for the other countries also.

UK: they didn't do much work with the private prisons.

Denmark: in Denmark the crafts are used for low skill inmates. The focus should be on both skills and attitude, in the end the company would choose the one with the diploma.

Netherlands: in the Netherlands companies look for general workforce where attitude was important.

Norway: in Norway they focused on skills. In the same time you can learn the skills if you have the attitude.

- 2. Question:** Norway wanted to ask further about PPP – how was the cost calculated and who paid.

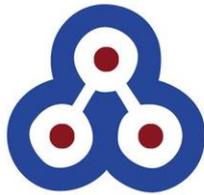
Netherlands: the Ministry of Justice made the business case. You could calculate how much the recidivism must go down and how much the employment must go up. They took a group that was in prison for 1 year. This project was financed by the MoJ as a pilot but for future it should be paid by local communities, as they are the ones to benefit.

- 3. Question:** Cyprus wanted to ask about Ex-Made, if the prisoners worked 5 days per week.

Netherlands: First go to an open prison where you work outside but come back in the evening and have a leave in the weekends and Ex-Made they are at home and under a probation officer supervision.

Kirsten Hawlitschek, Executive Director EuroPris, presented an overview of prison labour in European Prisons. Information was gathered through the KMS system and it answered questions such as:

- Pay rates in prison and compared to salaries outside?
- Is inmates' labour compulsory?
- Use of inmates' remuneration by the prison administration?
- How are prison workshops organized, managed and financed?
- Are products from these workshops sold externally?
- Does national legislation have provisions for incentives granted to employers for the employment of inmates?



Roundtable discussion.

The participants were split in groups and discussed different topics for 20 minutes, after they feedback in the plenary on ideas discussed and conclusions.

1. Unemployment benefits

Finland – 3.000 inmates. 30% are working. They earn UP to 1.000 euro per month in open prison. If you refuse to participate, you receive a small amount of 20EUR/Month.

Turkey – 30% working

Bulgaria – half of the inmates are not involved in any activity.

Lithuania – 7.000 inmates, if you don't work and have no income you can apply for unemployment benefits.

2. Conditions of employment / contract; comparison of conditions inside and outside of prison

Lithuania. 7.000 prisoners. All prisoners work inside prison. Only 200 places in the open prisons, the rest are closed prisons.

3. Connecting work with the talents of the inmates as preparation for reintegration

We are doing similar things and thinking in the right direction with a common understanding that work is important for reintegration. For obtaining finance, security is very important to mention. The jobs available differ in the different parts of the lander so the trainings should be also synchronised. We should go and talk with the companies and ask what they need so that we take it into consideration when strategizing and planning. Digitalising is very important in today's society and we have to consider it inside also.

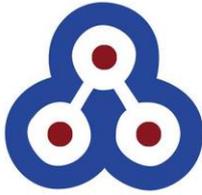
Feedback

- Forms of e-learning and platforms are a very important approach to the topic. Norway, Denmark have very close cooperation with distant universities. Costs are reduced as you need less teachers. They also learn how to operate the computer/internet.
- Better mixture of skills needed for jobs. But political pressure is on increasing security and keeping inmates away from the internet.
- Framework is not the same in every country. More conservative framework will require to show more security, investment in infrastructure.

4. Selection and coaching of staff with good qualifications to work with inmates

Feedback

- Qualifications are low at the entry level.
- Better connections with the outside world, get updated
- Career guidance, more attention on the release plan, which should start at the beginning of the sentence and end after the release
- The training of staff is not only skills based but staff need to be trained to be people managers.
- Certification and validation of the trainings done – comply to certain standards and have outsiders evaluators of their trainings. This is important, to say the trainings have international recognised standards



5. Balance between safety levels and the goal to have all inmates at work

This is quite a hot topic at the moment in Sweden. 46 prisons, 6 of them for women and 4.000 inmates. The driving distance is 1.600km from north to south. In 2004 there were a few escapes which made them to increase the level of security. 1.100 inmates are in closed prisons and only about 500 are in open prisons. In Sweden Security always comes first.

Feedback

Security has an impact on the level and amount of work we can give to the inmates.

6. Staff savings and the demand to be a professional and commercial organization

In Belgium they needed to save in order to decrease the number of staff. We have a team of account managers, we search for customers, etc. Expectations are high from the customers and the shortage of staff makes the work challenging.

Feedback

- In Italy you have penitentiary police and administration staff.
- Ireland don't have commercial organization.
- To be Political choice is a political choice. Conclusion if you really want then you need to change attitudes and adapt.

Norwegian Strategy of Employment

Heidi Bottolfs, Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service, presented a brief overview of the Norwegian prison system, the legal framework, the strategy for the development of the correctional service's work programme and key goals and measures taken.

Prison Workshops - where the future starts

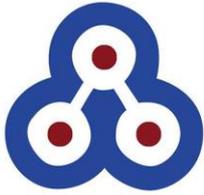
Mehmet Dogan, Prison Service Turkey, gave a comprehensive presentation on the types of industries and workshops the prison service has.

Training Employability Skills - Reducing risk and criminogenic needs

Jorge Monteiro, Prison and Probation Service, Portugal talked about training employability skills starting from the risk assessment tool used to programmes, trainings, education, etc provided to the detainees.

After the presentations the audience had 5 minutes roundtable discussions after which followed the questions and answers.

1. **Question:** Italy asked Turkey what was the criteria for admitting prisoners to workshops, any particular requirements?
Turkey: Working conditions are assessed on their professional capabilities and own skills and tendencies.
2. **Question:** Netherlands was impressed by the assessment tool and had questions for Portugal. How could you use it in prison? Do you have highly educated staff? Do you do it with all prisoners?



Portugal: risk assessment is compulsory by law. In limit of 60 days from the entry into prison, you have to make a risk assessment. So this tool is applied to all prisoners. These instruments are managed by the case managers so they are professionals, and they are also in charge to deliver programs.

3. Question: Slovenia to Portugal. Are you going to have this applied in a 3 step?

Portugal: yes, that is the idea. In the future this could be a model to inform the management what kind of answers the prison system has to provide for these needs.

4. Question: Netherlands to Turkey. Is the work compulsory? How many hours a week? What is the wage?

Turkey: In closed prisons work is not compulsory. In open prisons, only those who have disabilities or other issues do not work. Usually they want to work. A Follow up and support is provided for them to find a job in a public or private institution. The wage is 200EUR/month and work 8h/day. They work in a secure working environment. Additional payment is made for those who want to work extra. Insurance is provided and social care for families is also provided.

Closing

Jorge Monteiro, Board member EuroPris and EPRF Steering Group closed the workshop with conclusions and what to take home. Looking back to the last EPRF in Portugal in 2014, the meeting had 18 participating countries. Between 2014 – 2016, the decision to engage with EuroPris was taken. The current workshop had 43 participants from 19 countries. There are some countries more advanced than others, however we all face similar problems. The main objective was to stimulate the discussion and exchange.

Main ideas:

- Try and move away from old workshop models;
- Recognition of involving more business oriented models;
- Setting up cooperation with private sector, trying to build a bridge between the labour inside and outside.

Challenges:

- Promote the value of ex-prisoners for business;
- The use of digital means;
- The need for qualified staff in the workshop;
- The need for evidence based research that work has an impact on recidivism.

Generic conclusions:

- The more you know, the less you know;
- The need to have another workshop like this, not sure if annually or bi-annually ;
- EuroPris will send an enquiry on what topics to choose.

