

# TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON EDUCATION OF INMATES IN SPANISH PRISONS



**EUROPRIS ONLINE WORKSHOP ICT IN  
PRISONS 29 SEPTEMBER – 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**Carlos Fernández Gómez**



## IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN PRISON

Relevant part of the penitentiary treatment

Closely linked to intervention delivered by psychologists and rest of “treatment staff”

Existence of teachers and “education department”

- Young inmates
- Inmates with no reading or writing acquired
- Foreign inmates with no domain of spanish
- Vulnerable groups

# EDUCATION PROVIDED IN PRISON

## FORMAL/OFFICIAL EDUCATION

- Literacy (priority).
- Secondary studies.
- High school studies (pre-university).
- University studies (National University of Distance Education)
- Spanish for foreign inmates.
- Foreign languages education.

## OTHER STUDIES

- Mentor Classroom.
- Non oficial language courses.
- Preparation for University (pre-university courses).
- Professional training courses.



# DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION

- Intended to replace traditional and usual working methods.
- Focused on the modernization of Public Administration.
- Aimed at citizens wherever they live in.
- It provides reliable services in which communication is more effective and possibilities are broadened.

- Prisons are components of Public Administration.
- They are considered a public service to society.
- Prisons are aimed at promoting reintegration into society.
- Education is a key element of the rehabilitation process.



Traditional  
education



New  
developments



INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENTS ON  
EDUCATION FROM A  
TECHNOLOGICAL STANDPOINT



# E-LEARNING PLATFORMS

- Available in most Spanish prisons under the control and monitoring of prison staff.
- They support and update traditional educational methodology.

- To obtain driving license inside prison (no practical part of the process).
- Driving education campaigns for sentenced for crimes against road safety.
- Psycho-educational programmes on the use of drugs.



# DRIVING EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

- Campaigns delivered in most Spanish prisons and closely linked to the obtaining of driving license.
- Also linked to healthy life campaigns on education for relapse prevention and prevention from further drug-addiction problems.
- Use of specific software that keeps inmates motivated, by providing an alternative approach in line with modern technology.





# UNIVERSITY STUDIES

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

- National University of Distance Education

The logo for the National University of Distance Education (UNED), featuring the letters 'UNED' in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a dark green rectangular background.

## SOFTWARE PLATFORM “ALF”

- Connection to university intranet.
- Access to full bibliography online.
- Forums and chats not allowed.
- Delivered originally to university studies.



## SOFTWARE PLATFORM “ALF”



New approach that enriches university studies.

It broadens educational resources for inmates.

It takes university studies in prison closer to ordinary studies outside prison.

- Originally implemented in 17 prisons.
- In 2015, it was extended to more prisons.
- Available in 30 prisons, at the moment.
- Recently, it has been put in place not only for university studies, but also for official studies in some southern prisons.

## ”MENTOR” CLASSROOM

- Available in some Spanish prisons to support oficial studies.
- Fully supported by the Ministry of Education and Professional Training.
- No need for inmates to be registered at university studies.

- It is aimed at facilitating online education by providing computers, internet, software and diverse materials.
- An administrator/tutor is required.



## “MENTOR” CLASSROOM



It is aimed at inmates who wish to update from an educational standpoint, regardless of their level of qualification or professional degree.

- It allows inmates to organise their educational agenda and pace of work.
- It matches individual needs, as the inmate is allowed to decide his/her goals.
- Technological issues and subjects to be studied are specifically supported by “Mentor Classroom”.

## PILOT PROGRAMME: ONLINE CONNECTION WITH INTRANET EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR OFFICIAL STUDIES



- Each Spanish region has its own competences in educational issues. Thus, for such purpose, each prison depends on regional educational services concerning contents and methodology.
- This pilot programme intends to provide online connection with educational resources available for students outside prison, in the scope of each regional administration.
- It is aimed at official education (no university studies).
- Implemented in a few prisons so far with excellent results.

## KEY POINTS

- Covid19 situation has shown how relevant technological developments are, in order to overcome traditional educational practices.
- Digital administration needs to be extended to the prison context.
- Prison should not be excluded from digital and technological developments, as they offer a secure and structured setting.
- Education in prison, as it is now understood in modern countries, needs to incorporate innovations compatible with security.





# MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- New developments in the prison context, are enhancing and broadening educational possibilities for inmates.
- Such technological developments, focused originally in security issues, have also proved their effectiveness when implemented on educational issues.
- Both university studies and official studies have benefited from these practices.
- No threats to security have been reported so far.
- These developments are promoting chances for further re-integration into society, as they improve personal skills on the whole.





# TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON EDUCATION OF INMATES IN SPANISH PRISONS

**THANK YOU!**

