



**Prison officer training in Europe -
Comparative Analysis of Prison Officer Training in Belgium, Germany,
France, Italy, Portugal and Spain**

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1. Foreword

This report presents the findings of the comparative analysis carried out within the Twinning-project (TR 16 IPA JH 05 19). The aim of the project is to improve the service quality of the prison staff and raise operational standards by strengthening the institutional capacity of personnel training centres of the penal institutions in Turkey in line with the EU principles.

The report gives a comparative overview of the prison staff training systems in Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, and Portugal. related to their legal and organizational framework, staff structure, training environments, as well as assessment and evaluation practices and curricula designing. The data for this report has been gathered by conducting individual interviews with the representatives of each countries' training systems. We will express our gratitude and appreciation for the informative interviews that will improve and deepen our understanding of the challenges and issues the European prison staff training faces today and in the near future. The information provided will also be helpful while responding those goals this Twinning-project has.

Disclaimer

The interviews are based on the interview guide produced during a previous mission week. The guide proved to be too ambitious to cover fully during the interviews lasting 2-3 hours. Because of this not all questions are covered in in detail. There was no time to retrieve additional information or conduct a second interview round to fill in gaps. This report has been compiled in a very limited time and thus the reader is kindly reminded of the results not being comparable but presented in a general level.

All parties in the interviews spoke English, which is not the first language for any of the parties. This report will then be translated to Turkish. The reader in kindly reminded nuances, concepts and even some important details might be lost in translation.



2. The challenges facing the prison staff training in European countries

According to das Neves and Adams (2020),” every day more than 203 772 prison officers all over the 28 EU member states, work to ensure safety to society and to provide opportunities to inmates that will ease their reinsertion process back to society”. In their efforts to reach the security and rehabilitation goals, each European country is dependent on its professionals’ skills and knowledges. The everyday practices and actions by prison officials have a direct and indirect” impact in inmates’ life, their attitudes and behaviours while in prison and after release. Therefore, it is important to be aware what kind of education the prison professionals have been offered and how well it addresses those challenges prison staff faces today.

The educational and training needs of the prison officers have increased during the last ten years in European countries. While supervising and ensuring the security in the correctional facilities the prison officers must also participate in rehabilitation and other activities which help and motivate the inmates to desist from their offending behaviour lifestyle. To be successful in their professional goals the prison officers need an appropriate education, covering all those subjects and components that are considered essential in the current prison work (das Neves & Adams 2020.).

Regardless of the above-mentioned educational needs, the prison officers training differs in the European countries, regarding policies and educational practices. Procedures for recruitment and selection criteria of prison officer trainees’, concerning the personal profile and basic levels of education, as well as the duration and content of the education (das Neves & Adams 2020) are . The duration of the initial training in the European countries varies according to das Neves and Adams (ibid.)” from 50 days training up to a 3 year’s university-level degree”. The contents of the education also vary, so that the desired balance between security and control as well as rehabilitation and integration components have not always been reached. (ibid.).

In the following chapters, we will provide a detailed picture of how six selected European countries have organized their prison officers’ training and how they would like to develop it.



3. Analysis of the interviews

3.1 Penal system as Part of Public Administration

The six countries differ regarding their administrative structure and the scope of the public sector. Nevertheless, the common feature between the countries is that the Penal System is an integral part of the Ministry of Justice and governed by the body of law related to the Criminal Justice and regulation of the criminal behaviour. Within the Ministry of Justice, the penal field is governed by a separate department as in Italy (Department of Penitentiary Administration within the Ministry of Justice) or in Portugal (reintegration and Prison Services Department). In France, a specific directorate (Direction de l'administration pénitentiaire) subjected to the Ministry of Justice, has been established to manage and coordinate the penal field also including prison staff training issues.

Germany is a federal state consisting of sixteen partly sovereign federated states (Bundesländer). Federalism is one of the main constitutional principles of Germany. This means that some topics, such as foreign affairs and defence, are governed and decided at the federal level, while others like penal system, fall under the shared authority of the states (Bundesländer). In Baden-Württemberg, the penal system is governed by the Federal Ministry of Justice (Justizministerium Baden-Württemberg). The system is similar in other Bundesländer also. The legislation regulating the penal system and prison staff training is comparable with each other.

3.1.1 Guiding Principles and Values for the penal System

The guiding values and principles underlying the goals of the penal systems, in all the interviewed countries are quite similar, even though the focus in some countries can vary e.g., how the rehabilitation or the security aspects should be considered, while implementing the penal sanction. The guiding principle in each country is nevertheless a human approach to the sentences. This means that within the corrections, no one shall be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment. The main goal for the penal system is to support the social reintegration of the offenders. It is also important to respect the rule of law, to protect the society from the offending behaviour, and prevent recidivism by utilizing such control methods (e.g., electronic monitoring), which make it possible to utilize early release and other community-based measures, instead of incarceration. Other shared values and principles are belief in peoples' capacity to change their behaviour. This capacity should be enhanced and strengthened within the correction by offering different types of rehabilitation, programs influencing the offending behaviour, and supportive measures, which make it easier to be reintegrated into the normal society.



3.1.2 Legislation for Penal Staff Training

Legislation regulating the penal staff training varies from countries in which the training is regulated with separate laws and decrees to countries, and in others in which the training is regulated by administrative orders. France belongs to the first mentioned countries. The prison staff training is regulated there for example by the Prison Law of November 24, 2009 and Decree No. 2019-50 of January 30, 2019 relating to the special status of penitentiary integration and probation officers of the prison administration. Germany belongs to the last mentioned countries. In Baden-Württemberg, which can represent other federated states too, the Prison staff training is governed by an administrative rule named Verordnung des Justizministeriums über Ausbildung und Prüfung für den mittleren Vollzugs-, Werk-, und Verwaltungsdienst im Justizvollzug (Ausbildungs- und Prüfungsordnung für den mittleren Vollzugs-, Werk- und Verwaltungsdienst im justizvollzug APrOmVWV). ‘

3.1.3 Essential Professional Development Needs of the staff and How Does It Impact the Training Staff

In all the countries, the main challenge is how to integrate the public service and criminal justice values into the training so that the trainees are capable to adapt them as guiding principles in their professional career and to able to further develop them as a working practice. It has also regarded important to improve the training, so that the trainees learn different types of interactional methods to discuss with the prisoners, and to support and motivate them in efforts to desist from offending behaviour. There is also a need in each country, to improve the trainers’ ability to teach communication methods and skills for the trainees.

Safety and security issues are also prioritized in each countries’ training, and the methods to learn both, technical and dynamic security practices and principles, have been developed. There is still much to do and improve in this aspect. In France, for example, methods and practices have been developed to detect and assess signs of risky behaviour, and how to prevent them constructively, so that it does not hinder the rehabilitation efforts too much. In connection with this, it is important to learn using force and weapons in a right and balanced matter. Part of security training is also the question of influencing radicalisation. How to train the trainees on the mechanism and reasons of radicalization among prison population, and how to detect and influence this behaviour, so that it does support the efforts to desist from the offending behaviour.



To train the prison staff to work with the foreign prisoners is also an important educational task to solve. Foreign prisoners constitute a remarkable part of prison population in each country. For example, in Germany, the average proportion of foreign prisoners in all the prisons in the Republic of Germany has risen from 29 percent in 2013 to 41 percent in 2019. In Baden-Württemberg the figures have increased from 35 percent to 49 percent during the same period. Important skills while working with foreign prisoners are communication skills, cultural sensitivity i.e., how to approach prisoners from different ethnical background, how to learn and help them to adapt to the prison environment, and how to prevent different types of conflict situation between ethnical groups. In this connection, it is also important to improve the staff's language skills. Besides the majority languages like French, German, or Spanish, it is important to learn English. Also, other languages like Arabic or Turkish are important to learn.

3.2 Penitentiary Training Systems' Status within the General Educational System in the Countries

The status of the prison staff training within the national educational systems, is equivalent to level 4 of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Applicants to the basic grade prison staff training should be of legal age and have upper secondary level education. Prior professional experience and vocational education can be an asset to the applicants. In practice, applicants in many countries are career changers. For example, in Baden-Württemberg, the average age of the applicants is 27 years. They have worked within the industrial or service sector, before applying to the basic training for prison staff.

The health and physical fitness to prison officer work shall also be assessed before the entry to basic training course. In addition, other competencies necessary for the prison officer job (communication skills, personal characteristics and professional attitudes and values) can be assessed. The background check of applicants is usually also executed according to the national laws.

3.2.1 The Number of Prisoners and Probationers versus the Number of Staff Within the Penitentiary System

The number of the staff varies depending on the number of the prisoners and probationers in the countries. On 31 January 2020, there were 1,528,343 inmates in 51 prison administrations (out of 52) of the Council of Europe member states, which corresponds to a European prison population rate of 103.2 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants (Council of Europe, Penal Statistics 2020). The number of probationers under the



supervision was at the same 1,512,765 corresponding to a median rate of 149 probationers per 100,000 inhabitants (Aebi & Hashimoto & Tiago 2021).

The rates per 100 000 inhabitants varied in the selected countries. In Baden-Württemberg, the number of prisoners in 2021 was approximately 65/100 000 inhabitants corresponding to the prisoner rate per 100 000 inhabitants in the Whole Germany varying between 60 – 70/100 000 inhabitants. In France, the rate of prisoners in 2021 was 123/100 000 inhabitants.

The number of staff is divided so that the majority of staff is working within the prison service. For example, in France, the total number of all kind of penitentiary staff is 41 000. About 30 000 of them are working within the prison service and 6000 within the probation service.



3.3 Training Environments

As expected, there were several different ways of organizing the training environments in the countries represented.

- Central vs. Regional Training centres
 - France and Portugal have one main training centre. In addition to the main campus or training centre, some training takes place in regions and other facilities. Belgium has two training centres, one for training in French, and the other for training in Dutch. In Germany, each land has a training institute, except for the smallest land Saarland.
- Facilities
 - In this comparison, France has an exceptionally big campus area, providing a wide range of functions related to training, research, and development. The 16 hectares campus area contains 20 000 square meters of buildings.
 - All training centres have dorms. As all training centres
 - Regarding libraries there, the French training centre reported impressive library resources, and some training centres are not equipped with libraries at all.
 - Training centres reported using facilities outside the training centre, shooting ranges, sports facilities, and on-site training in prison facilities.

Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- Good learning facilities are useful for training. A good alternative to on-site training and cooperation with other educational institutes and actors. Many centres report using sports facilities and shooting ranges outside the campus area or training centres.
- All training centres report having dorms. The access to housing, limits the number of trainees and trainings conducted face to face. As e-learning is increasing, the future of the dorms is to be revisited, both, from an economical perspective, and regarding increasing the efficiency of education.
 - What will the role of dorms be when e-learning is increasing?
 - How can the dorms be utilized more effectively when e-learning is increasing, and trainees do not have to live at the training centre in order to study?
- As e-learning is increasing there is a need to support trainees' studies by offering good tools. Trainees have been found to not have computers themselves and studying on mobile phones or tablets has proved to not work. There are alternatives for solving this listed below. However, there are circumstances that are to be addressed; can trainees be expected to study from their homes, if that is not the dorm at the training centre? Can spaces for studying be organized at the workplaces in the prison and probation services?
 - Trainees are lent laptops or tablets for the time of their studies.
 - Trainees study in allocated work time in prisons, using rooms and equipment provided by the prison (Internet, computers, possibilities to take part in webinars at the workplace)
 - Computer rooms at the training centres
- Library services
 - In order to enhance the quality of the training, library services are warmly recommended.



- Modern library services are not limited only to paper books. Adding library services does not have to mean a need for large spaces or investments in books. The library services could as well focus on digital materials and user support, like information retrieval.
- As the Turkish training centres include dorms, library services could offer also means for civic education.
- In Laurea UAS library services include the access to audiobooks, which has proved to support the successful studies, also of students with challenges regarding reading.

Table: Training environments						
Training centres	Belgium	France	Germany	Italy	Portugal	Spain
National main training institute		One main Academy for initial training in Agen.			One main facility near Lisbon.	One main Training Institute in Madrid.
Regional training institutes	Two One training institute of training in Dutch and one training institute for training in French.		One training centre in each federal land.	Eight separate training institutes (administration and penitentiary staff)		No information
Training facilities						
Shooting ranges	No shooting ranges, as weapons are not used in Belgian prisons	2 shooting ranges	No information	Not all academies have a shooting room	Shooting range outside the facilities.	No
Simulation facilities	A simulation wing, similar to a prison corridor, equipped with a control centre	Simulation building	No details	No details	Simulation cells	No
Library	No library	Media library open for trainees. Resources centre and museum for history of crime and punishment. Applied criminology centre to be built in 2025.	Small library.	Library in each training centre	No library	In the Training Department in Madrid a library for internal use.
Physical exercise	Outdoor sports field (football, basketball, running)	Sports centre	Local sports centres are used for physical training	Gym in each academy	No information	No information



3.4 Practical and Theoretical Training

- All trainings presented are based on blending theory studies and practice.
- Mentorship is recognized as useful, but shortage of staff is a challenge in practice.
- In Germany the mentorship lasts for 2 years
- Germany has training officers in each facility. Their job is mainly training new applicants. Training officers prepare training situations, repetition of theory learned in Training centres and plan practical training situations and locations. Good news was that the social value of training officers has increased. Portugal reported a system with certain similarities to the German. In Portugal there are 92 local trainers for safety work, as part of the lifelong training. These trainers are prison officers and work as trainers when needed. These prison officers teach riot control, search of places and people, prisoner escort, filling forms and paperwork (administrative work), personal defence and use of force.

- At least France and Portugal are found to offer mentors educations for their task.
- Mentors are generally not paid extra for working as mentors.
- We did not discuss the tasks of mentors in depth during the interviews.
 - However, we learned in Portugal the management unit for the course keeps daily contact with tutors. Training centre representatives also visit prisons and discuss with the tutees and tutors separately. Tutors get a task plan to follow with the tutees. As the tutors assess the work of their tutees they are supported in making their assessment by the training centre staff.

Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- Mentorship
 - There is need for structured and goal-oriented mentorship programmes. These programmes would recognize the value of the mentors and include goal-oriented methods to support mentors in their work.
 - The mentors provide valuable contribution to the professional development of prison officers. Especially when the initial training is short the value added by good mentorship could be strengthened.
 - Another way to increase the support of education prison officers is the German model with training officers. At least in big institutions investing in training officers could potentially enhance the level of skills



- Educating mentors would most likely increase their capacity and quality of mentorship, and in the end serve the tutees and organization even better.
- To motivate staff to become mentors and additional payment is recommended. In addition to that we recommend clear job descriptions for mentors giving enough time from other duties, to realize their mentorship in a satisfactory manner.

Table: Theoretical and practical training						
Training programmes	Belgium	France	Germany	Italy	Portugal	Spain
Length of training. Theory and practice rhythm.	Practice and theory are blended in the current training program and will be so also in the new one.	6 months of training: 1. Theory 5 weeks 2. Discovery internship 5 weeks 3. Theory 5 weeks 4. Internship 5 weeks 5. Theory 3 weeks	2 years of training: 1. Prison facility 1 month 2. Theory 2,5 months 3. 12 months 4. ..etc. (see Joachim's annex).	9 months of training: 1. Theory 4.5 months 2. Practise 4.5 months	9 months of training: 1. Theoretical training 2 months 2. Observation period in prison 2 months 3. Theoretical training 2 months 4. Accompanied work 3 months	Some 18 months of training 1. Selection and theoretical course (necessary to pass) including: face-to-face classes with duration of 5 weeks + some 25 days supervised practice. 2. Internship period 15 months
Mentorships and coach system in practical training	Pair working model	During the internships, each prison has a training officer supervising trainees on internship.	The mentor is the same for 2 years as the studies last.	Tutors who work as mentors (experts from different fields/parts of the system) (part of the school management team) who model the content and give feedback on individual students.	Tutors more experiences officers assigned to tutor for 3 months (practical part in training) and evaluate the tutee.	Part-time lecturers training act as mentors in the specific trainings when take place on-site in prisons.
Training for mentors	No information	Mentors have educations for their task	No	No information	Yes	No information



3.5 Procedure for Assessment of Training Needs

3.5.1 Organizational process

The process of determining when and what training is required, follows similar guidelines and procedures in all the countries. The training-related needs and expectations, as well as requirements of different stakeholders involved within the educational planning, are identified and discussed. The training needs within separate learning areas (e.g. security and safety, legal studies, communication skills, knowledge of rehabilitation services, influencing the offending behaviour) are investigated and identified, to specify in more detail, to what extent the training contents should be changed or expanded, to achieve the desirable level of knowledge and skills the prison officer needs in their daily activities.

Organizationally, the training needs assessment is usually conducted as process involving both, staff members from the units (prisons) and trainers (training centres and academies), as well as policy and strategy representatives (higher administrative bodies like directorates of the penitentiary field). For example, in France, the training needs analysis is drafted annually by ENAP (l'École nationale d'administration pénitentiaire) and validated by Directorate of the Penitentiary Administration (Direction de l'administration pénitentiaire). The representatives of the trade unions are involved in the process, if there will be remarkable changes in the training.

3.5.2 Digital Applications in Use while Assessing the Training Needs and Quality of Training.

The use of specific digital applications in training needs assessment is not so usual. To conduct questionnaires is the most usual way to gather information of the quality of training. The questionnaires are usually conducted after each course. The quality and applicability of the knowledge and skills provided by the training are also assessed in the discussions with the trainers and trainees, as well as with the mentors during the practical periods.

Finding the right balance between e-learning and practical training is a common challenge in each country. The pandemic has forced the training centres to adapt their education and move it to online applications. There is not enough of staff to take care of the e-learning. Additionally, the technological equipment as well as the staff's skills and knowledge of how to arrange training online, can be inadequate. The training centres are willing to develop their on-line training methodologically and technically. The countries are also willing to improve the trainer's professional e-learning skills.



Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- It is vital that trainees and POs have a platform in which they can express their views and worries about study-, and work-related matters
 - Online questionnaires could be created for different matters:
 - Trainees being able to express their worries and suggestions regarding the studies, and the transition to work life.
 - POs could express their ideas and possible suggestions regarding new necessary courses or lectures (e.g. for a new drug being used in the prison setting, detecting radicalization etc.)
- As the pandemic forced many training facilities to move towards more e-learning, the assessment of the trainings needs is highlighted
 - The training environments as well as technical equipment should be improved
 - Questionnaires should be of importance, to maintain a basic knowledge on the students' well-being and development, throughout the course, as some trainees can face issues with these, when face-to-face contacts are limited



3.6 Training Staff

A challenge for almost all participating training institutes is to find trainers. The main way for recruiting trainers seems to be employing prison officers and other prison staff for training, either on short time basis or longer contracts. In Spain a company is contracted to manage contents and trainers for courses developed online having a pre-established format.

Generally, there does not seem to be a great interest in pursuing a trainer's career in the training institutes, due to multiple reasons. There are few long-time contracts available, and the salary might decrease. The difficulties in recruiting trainers have an impact on the requirements put on applicants and trainers.

- Contracts
 - Except for France, training centres seem to rely on short time contracts and hourly trainers from the field and occasional external trainers.
 - When external trainers are used, they train in first aid, psychology, criminology, law
- Trainer qualifications:
 - Teacher qualification or higher educational degrees are generally not required. University degree or other diplomas is not of importance. Experience from the field is a frequently mentioned criteria, and the ability to teach.
 - Trainers working in the profession of course have valuable insights in current issues and trends. However, Part-time trainers from the field cannot be expected to develop their professional training skills, if there are no resources allocated for that purpose.
 - In practice, the training of prison officers lies in the hands of trainers, who lack many of the competencies required in vocational training and adult education.
 - Many informants mentioned full time trainers are required to work as prison officers for a certain amount of time also while training. This is organized in different ways; with time limited either full-time contracts or rules for taking time off training to work in prisons with certain intervals.

3.6.1 Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- Set minimum requirements for training staff regarding formal pedagogical qualification.
- A strong recommendation for enhancing the quality of training is to hire enough trainers and support them in having pedagogical training.



- Paying a higher salary for prison officers who take part in the trainer course, and later working as trainer staff, could motivate more people to apply for training positions
- As many trainees have low level of education from before the needs for special needs teachers should be mapped. Special needs teachers contribute to making the studies a good experience and supporting trainees with low academic skills towards completing their studies and pursuing a successful career.

Table: Training staff						
	Belgium	France	Germany	Italy	Portugal	Spain
Number of training staff	Some 20 permanent trainers.	The training institute employs 264 persons. - about half of this, 130 persons, are training staff. - of these some 120 are full time employees are dedicated for training missions.	Full time employees: 18 persons. Of these, 7 are full-time teachers.	Each regional 8 directories have 2 people to organise the trainings.	DGRSP training division employs 8 persons. (5 permanent and 3 temporary employed in 3 years periods.)	11 professionals working in the Training Department. No full-time trainers.
Part time trainers	More than 100	No information	90-100	Some 100	Number of other unspecified, according to annually changing needs.	Some 950 guest lecturers and part-time lecturers per year.
Formal pedagogical qualification required for trainers.	No	Yes.	Only in some areas of training	No	Only for external trainers.	No
Supporting for the professional development of trainers	Individual and on demand	Specific unit for professional development for the staff. Transition training (pedagogical) offered for Prison officers. Side training for external education is covered when related to their work (costs covered)	Secondary training offered to all officers, annual course on training techniques. The training institute finances conferences and courses (+ other expenses) taken outside the training centre.	Trainers have plenty of opportunities to take additional courses (incl. university courses) Working hours can be used for studies (150hours/year) Prison officers with high school diploma can study higher	Trainers' training is included in the annual training plan. Normally no investment in their training by the Training centre.	Training of trainers courses offered.



				education studies throughout their career		
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3.7 Curricula

“Professionals have to give a good example, nonviolence, good behaviour. If you spend a lot of time in violent environments, you need nonviolent examples and role models in prison. Healthy relationships is the main goal in the curricula”

- Portugal

- Curricula design and development

The curricula design and development process included hearing trainers, working life and other stakeholders in various ways and extents. The most proactive role seemed to come from the German trainers, where training centre staff actively follow politics and current phenomena in society to foresee upcoming training needs.

There were some differences in how changes in the curricula were made, from a lot of freedom for training centres to adapt their course to more complicated procedures involving confirmation by directorates etc.

- Contents of the curricula

As the duration of the trainings vary, also the content in the curricula varies. There are some basic topics included in all trainings, security work, professional ethics, law, criminology. A few curricula included rehabilitation programs linked to mental health, substance abuse and intimate relationship violence (Spain). The Belgian curricula also included electricity and food safety. The Portuguese training centre distinguishes itself by the strong emphasis on professional code of conduct, relationship building and prison officers serving as safe and positive role models.

Co-operation with universities was generally scarce. Some training centres cooperated with universities mainly by university staff training in the training centres. Portugal reported their staff being able to continue for an university degree. Regarding research, and different kinds of assessments there was less cooperation. However, all training centres in the study found cooperation with universities desirable.



- Professional skills linked to diversity

The interview guide did not include specific questions on diversity of the staff or convicts. However, there are some noteworthy issues arising from the material. First of all, language skills are necessary. The world has always been global, and even more so today, and that is a reality also in the prisons. From the German informant we learned directed recruitment campaigns to get officers with diverse language skills and ethnic background have been successful. Now approx. 10-15% of the officers have foreign background (former Soviet Union, Turkish). The German informants also have given education on LGBT and inclusivity.

Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- Language skills are of great importance. To improve language skills among the staff we suggest
 - Adding language skills to requirements when recruiting
 - Compulsory language studies during the initial training
 - Paying extra for language skills monthly or paying bonuses for completed language courses
 - Requiring trainees with diverse backgrounds regarding language and culture or ethnicity
- Increase cooperation with universities and other educational institutes
 - Peer support for trainers in developing the training
 - Cooperation regarding developing the pedagogical development of training and e-learning and quality assessment on training
 - Offering higher education paths for both trainers and ordinary prison officers.
- Possible platforms for all the participants, to express their views on educational courses that would be beneficial or needed
 - Partners and workers' unions could also be able to give recommendations and view the comments of the trainees and POs when editing the curricula. This could be training centre specific.
 - Intensified international cooperation using already existing networks and forms of organization



Illustration: Campus Library in Laurea UAS



3.8 Future plans – e-learning and increasing training capacity

When asked about plans for the future, three issues clearly emerged: e-learning, securing trainers, and increasing the capacity of training.

- E-learning
 - The training centres, like all educational institutions, had to rethink training during the pandemic.
 - Except for France, the trainers of the training institutes had to handle the transformation of face-to-face training to e-learning without specialised staff.
- Other plans mentioned were
 - Stable group of trainers to enable teaching, developing, keeping up with new needs and phenomena, to keep contact with other training organisations and networks in Europe.
 - To utilize European professional networks,
 - Create an Academy for training an increase the level of education.
 - In-service learning, utilizing e-learning to reach those who have not been reached before and for lifelong education
 - To have better technical support for e- learning for both trainers and trainees
 - Develop training plans and curricula- For example strengthen interlinking between courses. Instead of separate courses create a holistic approach.
 -

3.8.1 Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- E-learning
 - Training institutes need support in development of e-learning, by specialized staff in both, pedagogy, and technological solutions
 - Increase trainees' and senior staff's access to
 - learning opportunities on paid working hours
 - and equipment needed for e-learning
- Securing trainers



- Funding
- Add vacancies increasing number of trainers
- Increase training opportunities for trainers
- Increase the capacity of training
 - Increase e-learning opportunities
 - Increase on site-learning



3.9 Recruitment of trainees and future career

“Recruitment systems are to be developed, in order to get good people and train them.

Training does not make people good.”

Portugal

A topic not covered in the interview guide, but still mentioned in each interview, was the challenges on recruiting trainees and the shortage of staff, both prison officers and training staff.

- Prison officer profession has a bad, or at least a not attractive reputation, in the eyes of the public.
- Work culture has to be improved. Negative work culture and attitudes of senior prison officers are recognized in all countries, including Finland and Estonia. Almost all informants in this study report negative attitudes towards changes in the work description and developments among senior officers. There was expressed fears of the clashes in the attitudes between more modern minded new trainees and officers, which could discourage new officers from staying in the profession.

Remarks/recommendations/conclusions

- Increase application rates
 - Create secure employment. Knowing that one can have employment secured for the next 10 years should be a huge motivational factor, especially in countries that have a high unemployment rate.
 - Additionally, paying a salary also to the trainees, like at least France and Italy do, would be a factor, which could motivate more people to study and then work in the prison. Being paid since the start could attract people to study, as it shows the commitment also from the government, possibly increasing the feeling of importance.
 - Make prison officer profession a career profession. Open possibilities for further education, further responsibilities and career development.



- The working environment in a prison can be viewed as dangerous and risky, hence improvements in the safety of prisons, could also improve the attractiveness of the profession as a whole. To keep good staff at work taking care of their wellbeing offering psychological counselling by phone free (Italy) and health related services could increase the trust in the employer taking care of their staff doing this demanding work.
- Serious rebranding of the profession. This can of course not be done without the reality of the professionals matching the brand. Directed recruitment campaigns to population or professional groups found to be suitable for this kind of work can prove to be fruitful, also campaigns destigmatizing prison work and stressing the modern values and objectives of prison services.
- There are already lots of potential attractive factors in prison and probation professions to highlight in order to attract new staff:
 - Meaningful, important work for both individuals and communities
 - Professionalization also means career opportunities and intellectual opportunities
 - Human rights, ethics
- Prison officer trainers should be paid extra for the training work they do, either hourly, or monthly, depending on the working hours spent in training



Illustration: Recruitment ad for the Finnish Training Institute for Prison and Probation Services. The ad says “Stone hard education. Even life long career paths! Study to become a prison officer now!”

Illustration: Recruitment video for the Finnish Training Institute for Prison and Probation Services. In the video stable working conditions, career opportunities and meaningfulness of the work is stressed.

[Elinkautisia urapolkuja - vanginvartija Mikon uratarina](#)





4. Summary and conclusion

This report has been written within the Twinning-project TR 16 IPA JH 05 19 in which the goal has been to develop the prison staff training in Turkey in line with the EU standards.

All in all, even though the countries diverge in all the investigated areas (organizational framework, physical training environments and facilities, assessment practices and curricula designing) they have many common features.

The prison staff training in all the countries is more or less integrated to the administrative domain of the Ministry of Justice as part of the penal system. This makes it easier to coordinate the educational and training needs with the professional expectations and requirements within the penal field between different stakeholders. Decisions and agreements regarding the needs assessment, educational and curricula designing and planning has been made within a similar organizational process involving all the essential training partners within the penal field.

The duration of the basic level prison staff training varies between eight months to 1, 5 years. The structure of the training is nevertheless quite similar including short theoretical components and longer practical training periods. The goal that the issues rose during the practical periods will be reflected and discussed during the theoretical education and vice versa utilizing the mentorship system.

The training philosophy in all the countries is connected to human values. Rehabilitation and social integration as well as affecting the behaviour change towards the life style without offending are important principles in all the training together with safety and security topics. To protect society against the harms of the offending behaviour are also regarded as important principles. The focus in all the countries is in dynamic security and this is reflected in all the training as an essential principle.

Even though training is focused in rehabilitation, it is not reflected so much in the curricula. Traditional subjects like law, security, and psychology are included in curricula together with teamwork and communication skills. The cooperation with the external educational institution like universities and different kinds of specific vocational training institutions is not systematic and



continuous. The core training staff consists of rather few trainers recruited from the practice. External trainers have been used to teach specific subjects like law and psychology.

The status of the prison staff basic training within the general educational system remains rather unclear. If the training centres cannot offer further study baths within the penal field like in France (see ENAP study programs) it is difficult to combine the prison staff training with other of education, e.g. universities. The contents of the prison staff basic training are seldom recognized for example at the university level or at some other type of vocational training. Therefore, it is difficult to integrate the prior courses e.g. in psychology within the prison staff basic training with studies in psychology at the university.

The training in all the countries is arranged at separate training centres or academies. Few of them can offer all the facilities needed for a complete campus-style education including shooting ranges, simulators for security training, complete criminological and penological libraries and computer education. ENAP in Agen, France, is the only exception offering voluminous library (access to e-literary and scientific journals, traditional course books in criminology and penology).

The training systems in all the six countries face similar challenges while developing their training contents and methodologies. It is difficult to reach all the human approach and rehabilitation as well as integration goals through the training and education. The gap between the expected learning goals set up by the management and the practical working life can sometimes be too large depending on the lack of both human and material resources. To find the right balance between the theoretical and practical training to meet the professional goals are regarded important in all the countries. Efforts have also been made to develop e-learning both methodologically and materially for example by offering better technological equipment have been done.



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