



## SUMMARY

# WORKSHOP ON PRISON EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING & WORK

**6-7 May 2026**  
**LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA**



## PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

- Keynote inputs from Sweden, Cyprus, England & Wales and Slovenia
- Interactive workshop phases: challenges → solutions → shared action
- Exhibition of prison-made products & flash presentations Panel discussion on collaboration and partnerships (Norway, Portugal and Hungary)

## PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

- ~70 participants from 22 European countries
- Gender distribution: ~60% women / ~40% men
- Broad mix of roles: senior management, policy makers, practitioners, educators and researchers
- Strong representation from **prison services**, alongside **academia**, **NGOs** and **partner organisations**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Workshop hosted in collaboration with **the Prison Administration of the Republic of Slovenia** and in partnership with **European Prison Education Association**
- Opened by **Denis Perše** (Director General, Slovenia), **Ioana Morar** (Vice-President, EuroPris), **Gustav Tallving** (Executive Director, EuroPris), **Thomas Wüthrich** (Chair, EPEA)
- Input from Ljubljana Public Education Centre – Cene Štupar (**Jure Jamšek**)
- Prison visit to the new Ljubljana prison (Dobrunje)



## PRISON EDUCATION (WORKSTREAM DISCUSSION)

- Core challenge discussed: **lack of continuity due to transfers, short sentences and fragmented learning pathways**
- Strong push towards **individualised education models** (self-paced learning, no fixed classes, tailored progression)
- Recognition and progression gaps: difficulties in maintaining accreditation and tracking learning across institutions
- Increasing reliance on **digital tools and secure platforms** to maintain access, continuity and interaction
- **Persistent issue of low engagement**, especially among learners with negative prior education experiences

### Keynote Input (Sweden – Lena Broo):

- System designed around continuity: **same teacher follows the learner even when transferred**, enabled through distance learning infrastructure
- **Nationwide structure with Learning Centres in every prison + central coordination**, allowing access to a broad course offer regardless of location
- Model combines **in-person support with digital delivery**, ensuring both flexibility and pedagogical guidance



## VOCATIONAL TRAINING (WORKSTREAM DISCUSSION)

- Core issue raised: **disconnect between training provision and actual labour market demand** → training often not leading to employment
- Lack of **clear post-release pathways** creates a gap between training completion and job entry
- Need to **shift from supply-driven programmes to demand-driven models** (starting from real vacancies, not available courses)
- Limited **employer involvement in design and delivery** identified as a structural weakness
- Challenges around **candidate selection, readiness, and matching individuals to realistic job opportunities**

### Keynote input (Cyprus – Iakovos Stylianou):

- **PRISMA model**: training starts from employer demand, with skills mapping and selection of candidates aligned to real jobs
- **Employers directly involved inside prison**, delivering training based on real job tasks and requirements
- **No-gap transition model**: employment begins immediately after release → training effectively becomes part of recruitment





## PRISON WORK (WORKSTREAM DISCUSSION)

- Key shift discussed: from **“keeping people busy”** → **structured work linked to skills development and employability**
- Ongoing issue of **relevance**: not all prison work reflects current labour market needs
- Weak integration between work, vocational training and education pathways limits progression
- Need for better **tracking of skills, behaviours and progress** developed through work activities
- Engagement challenge: how to **motivate participation and demonstrate value of work activities**

### Keynote input (England & Wales – Jason Swettenham):

- Prison industries repositioned as a **system-wide tool for employment preparation**, not just production
- Broad sector base (e.g. textiles, woodwork, recycling, engineering) used to build transferable skills aligned with labour market needs
- Introduction of **progress tracking** (skills, behaviour, targets) and on-demand learning within workshops to support development
- Strategic focus on **improving post-release employment outcomes**, with clear system targets

### Additional Documents:

- [Addressing Decency Concerns in HM Prisons: A New Toilet Seat Design](#)
- [Addressing Safety Concerns in HM Prisons: A New Safer Kettle Design](#)

## TARGETED APPROACHES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

### Foreign National Prisoners

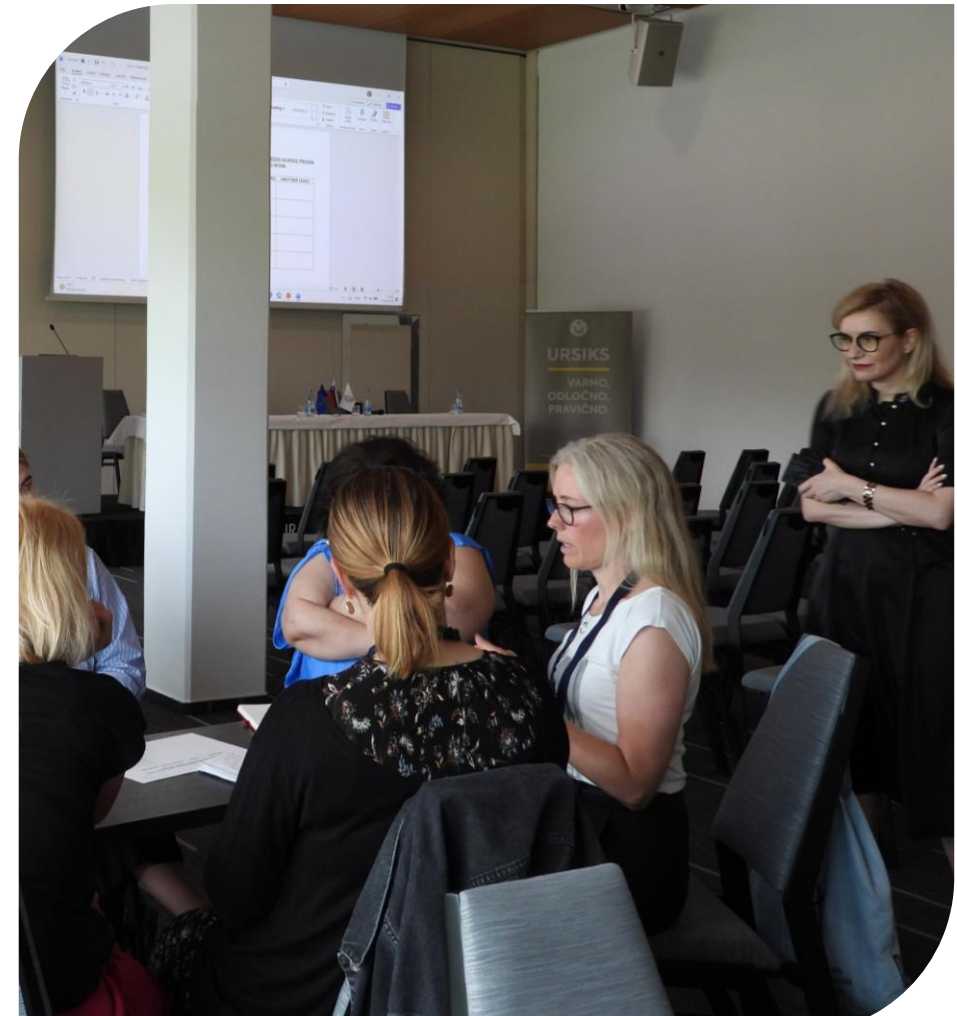
- **Language first:** access depends on language skills → expand multilingual content & translation tools
- Use **non-verbal / practical activities** (workshops, sport) to enable early participation
- Strengthen **cultural competence of staff + peer support structures**

### Neurodivergent Prisoners

- Focus on **removing barriers, not motivation** → create safe, low stimulus environments
- Require **individualised, flexible delivery** (pace, formats, adapted programmes)
- Need for **early screening + specialised staff and spaces** (quiet rooms, 1:1 support)

### Women Prisoners

- Apply **trauma-informed and gender-responsive approaches** as a baseline
- Expand **access to diverse, certified training pathways**
- Provide **targeted support linked to family, childcare and reintegration**



OCP 2025 Conference



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [CM/Rec\(2026\)5 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on education in prison](#)
- [Prison work: A guide to regulated and rehabilitative-based approaches – informed by lived experience \(published by Penal Reform International, 2006\)](#)
- [Addressing Decency Concerns in HM Prisons: A New Toilet Seat Design](#)
- [Addressing Safety Concerns in HM Prisons: A New Safer Kettle Design](#)



## ABOUT EUROPRIS

The European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services (EuroPris) is a membership association founded in 2011. The initiative to establish EuroPris was taken during the Swedish EU Presidency in 2009 and was brought forward by the European countries of the International Roundtable for Correctional Excellence.

Membership is open to those European national Prison and Correctional Administrations who are able and willing to support the agreed aims and objectives of EuroPris. Public institutions or organisations in the Council of Europe region, which provide prison or correctional services on a legal or statutory basis can become members of EuroPris.

EuroPris brings together practitioners in the prisons' arena with the specific intention of promoting ethical and rights-based imprisonment, exchanging information and providing expert assistance to support this agenda. The organisation exists to improve cooperation among European Prison and Correctional Services, to improve the lives of prisoners and their families, enhancing public safety and security; reducing re-offending; and advancing professionalism in the prisons' field.



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