



# **SKILLS FOR FREEDOM**

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## **INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1**

**Common European Framework of the  
skills developed through arts and theatre,  
for prisoners**

### **EXECUTIVE REPORT**

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## GLOBAL REPORT SUMMARY

### Introduction

This Report concerns the Global Report developed on conclusion of **the Project SKILLS FOR FREEDOM – the INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1**. The whole project has been realized within the **Common European Framework of the skills developed through arts and theatre for prisoners**. The following Executive Report was elaborated with the view to analyzing the information provided by the partners and offering some final conclusions regarding the Project.

The objective of the Project was to obtain the information with reference to the skills that the persons serving the sentence of imprisonment in the countries participating in the Project represented. The skills that were of particular interest to the partnership concerned the wide ranging art. Moreover, the researchers focused on the formal and non-formal ways of education available to the prisoners within the premises of the custodial institutions as well as the legal entities responsible for this issue.

The persons involved in the developing of the Report included the partners from the following countries: Italy, Turkey, Cyprus, Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Belgium and Spain, of whom each contributed substantially to the final version of the Global Report.

The Global Report consists of five parts and each of them was duly developed by the country participating in the Project, respectively.

Part I which focused on the research methods employed in the Report, was prepared by the Polish partner. Part II was delivered by each partner and contained the information on the existing models operating in their countries as well as other countries which served as exemplary models. Part III which summarized the reports delivered by the partners was developed by the Polish partner. Part IV dealt with the field-based observation made by every partner country, while Part V was a comprehensive summary of the provided results prepared by the Polish partner. The last section, Part VI, also prepared by a Polish partner, contained an analysis and definition of the Framework of Skills as well as the final conclusion of the Report.

The Global Report is available in English, which makes the presented content clear and easily accessible for anyone interested in the researched problem. Yet, owing to the fact that its full version is considerably extensive which might dissuade some readers from reading the whole work, the Executive Report offers an abridged copy, yet at the same time being a quintessence of the subject matter. However, for those who wish to access the full version of the Global Report, it can be found at [http://www.cb.szczecin.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SKILLS-FOR-FREEDOM-GLOBAL-REPORT-FOR-THE-IO\\_1\\_FINAL-VERSION\\_11.09.2016.pdf](http://www.cb.szczecin.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SKILLS-FOR-FREEDOM-GLOBAL-REPORT-FOR-THE-IO_1_FINAL-VERSION_11.09.2016.pdf). The Executive Report will be translated into the national languages of all the partners, which is significant as it might give some

recommendations to the national institutions responsible for the delivery of the education into the penal institutions and enabling the prisoners to learn the necessary soft and hard skills which will alleviate their return to society.

## **PART I Research methods in the Skills for Freedom Project**

The Introduction offered an insight into the question which was the main issue of the Project, namely the ways and possibilities of examining the skills, particularly those relating to a wide spectrum of art that prisoners in partner countries already possessed. It also reflected on various measures enabling the convicts to acquire the new ones. The new skills were broadened by a range of the ones that related strictly to education, which gave the prisoners new perspectives and chances for better future.

What is important about this section is the fact that it emphasized the significance of recognizing the skills already possessed by the convicts before applying any form of teaching, regardless of the nature of the skills, as well as their intellectual level, interests and cognitive needs. This approach is well-grounded as there are many factors that influence the convicts' prospects in getting appropriate skills and knowledge that will significantly affect their future perspectives.

The factors that are instrumental in impacting the ex-prisoners' life include their former experience in learning and their educational background. The skills and the knowledge they have during their term of imprisonment have to be taken into consideration when planning the course and the scope of the research. Apart from these aspects, the information about the earlier relations with the circles which are commonly regarded as pathological, embracing criminals, alcoholics, drug addicts or people with a tendency to commit crimes, has to be thoroughly reflected on, as it will be vital in conducting the research. Moreover, as the author states, the number of the convicts included in the survey and the type of the penal institution, be it closed or open- type prison, have to be carefully considered by the partners involved in the study.

Bearing all these aspects in mind, it was possible to decide on the type of the conducted studies and choose appropriate methods, techniques and research tools which were the most adequate for the research. The measures chosen to collect all the necessary data were the following: a survey, with two types of questionnaires – for the teachers and operators in prisons and the prisoners themselves - searching the secondary sources and the statistical methods.

Although the form of the questionnaires conducted by all the partners on their target groups was uniform, it was assumed that the results and what goes with it, the conclusions, would be dissimilar, owing to the different conditions under which the research was carried out.

Both questionnaires provided in the Global Report were very detailed and as such made it possible for the researchers to run the survey in such a way so as to obtain the most

accurate and reliable answers from the respondents. This made the Report very profound and at the same time delivering a picture of the condition and state of the prisons in the partner countries, as well as the options and possibilities offered to prisoners and ex-prisoners with reference to education and acquiring new skills, which would facilitate their rehabilitation and return to normal life.

## **PART II Reports from the partners of the Project**

This part of the Report is concerned with the accounts provided by each partner of the Project. This is a very extensive section as it deals not only with the materials regarding the current situation in the penitentiary institutions of the partner countries, but it also concerns the data relating to the chosen examples from other countries.

The section is based on the data collected by the researchers from all sorts of materials obtained from the official documents which provided an extensive, comprehensive and updated picture of the situation in the penitentiary system in the partner countries.

The individual reports were developed following an arranged scheme which took the form presented below:

- **A.1.** Studying the existing models.
- **A1.1.** Research on the projects and similar experiences enhanced in EU countries with distance comparison of such models with extra EU and North American experiences.
- **A1.2.** Research on the systems of validation and certification for the target skills. Analysing the adaptability of such systems to inmates.
- **A.1.3.** Study on the reintegration system for prisoners and on the application of such models.

### **A.1 Studying the existing models**

Each of the partners provided the information on the existing models of the penitentiary system functioning in their country with reference to the type of such institutions, the number of offenders serving the sentence of imprisonment, the applied corrective measures, the possibility of gaining education at various levels, forms of its validation and certification.

Since the detailed reports were included in the Global Report, a short account of the delivered data is the following.

- **Italy** - as results from the provided data the prisoners generally appreciate the workshops and training conducted in prisons - which can be formal or non-formal learning - as valuable and giving them a chance for self-development;
- **Bulgaria** – the researchers noted that depending on the offender’s sentence, an individual plan for social and correctional activities is tailored to the prisoner’s needs and annually revised. The purpose of these activities is the rehabilitation as well as acquiring skills and knowledge which would assist the inmates in leading a legal and law-abiding life after their return to society.
- **Turkey** - despite the legal regulations which are designed to meet the basic educational requirements of convicts and ex-convicts the low participation in training makes the projects less effective than expected;
- **Belgium & Estonia** - Both countries were presented together with reference to the number of prisoners who participated in the courses of formal and informal education and their completion before October 1, 2013. Moreover, the following issues were considered: the legal status of the certification in both countries; the type of the offered programmes; the penitentiary instruments to educationally motivate the prisoners; the relations with the educational centres outside; the possible negative effects of teaching on the functioning of the prison staff; the forms of teachers recruitment and their numbers in formal and informal learning; the forms of pedagogical mentoring; the training for the new teachers and the ones already working in prison as well as the institution responsible for the training.
- **Poland** – The purpose of running educational courses at the premises of prison and outside of it is to allow the prisoners’ rehabilitation and integration with the community. There are three types of prisons (closed, semi-open and open) and learning can be realized in branches of primary school, middle high school; vocational schools; high schools or vocational qualification courses. Apart from regular education, prisoners have access to cultural-educational forms (painting, graphics, theatre tutoring). Moreover, although there is no obligation to work, according to the Polish legal penitentiary system, prisoners can find employment both at prison and outside of it. What is most important for the prisoners who conclude their education, the granted certification does not indicate where education was completed.
- **Germany** - The aim of penitentiary system is to bring the offender back to the society. In some prison systems, vocational education is accompanied by work activities, in others vocational training is part of prison education service. In this way the course participants

connect the theory learned in the classroom with the practice in the workshops. They can also join artistic classes held both by the professional and the inexperienced artists. These classes are appreciated for their therapeutic value.

- **Cyprus** - the central prison of Nicosia offers educational programmes to prisoners (both formal and non-formal) as well as various sports and workshops on different arts. Convicts may also prepare for exams and obtain certification for their efforts. The gained competences will help them to reintegrate with the society.

### **A1.1 Research on projects and similar experiences enhanced in EU countries with distance comparison of such models with extra EU and North American experiences**

The additional information on the existing models observed in the penitentiary system entailed the following countries:

- The United States of America
- Canada
- Belgium, Spain and Turkey
- Mongolia
- Germany and Lithuania
- Romania

Despite the fact that the realization of educational programmes in the mentioned countries differs substantially, owing to diverse conditions and possibilities, the ultimate goal is to make it possible for the convicts to use the opportunities provided by the penal institutions and enroll in formal or non-formal education and on its completion successfully reintegrate into the society.

### **A1.2 Research on the systems of validation and certification for the target skills. Analysing the adaptability of such systems to inmates**

**Italy** - The process for the certification of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts is composed of three phases: identification, validation through II party assessment and certification (III party assessment). The certification acquired in non-formal context has been recently introduced in Italy and it is still under construction. On conclusion of this

process, when the regional systems will be regularly working, the prisoner can receive the certification released by the authorised bodies, and what goes with it, the qualifications. Formal education path are provided, but they are rarely related to artistic activities.

**Bulgaria** – Prisoners have a possibility of education (primary, secondary, higher) and getting qualifications - motivation is the key feature. They can participate in creative and cultural activities. Those who already have professional qualifications may continue learning other skills and take advantage of the opportunities for re-training.

**Turkey** – As may be concluded from the report, prisoners may take the courses in vocational adult education, such as computer, foreign languages, cookery, babysitting, photography, art courses (dancing, instruments playing, theatre or pottery), basic education courses or the distant training ones. The granted certification bears no difference between the one offered to convicts and non-convicts and the obtained skills are recognized on the job market both in Turkey and other countries where Europass is used. Still, due to the fact that Turkey is not a member of the EU, the inmates cannot work in those countries

**Belgium** – According to the researchers, the biggest challenge for the centres of adult education involved in correctional programmes are the low completion rates resulting from inmate transfers between prisons or work assignments that force or allow them to withdraw from the program. Still, the courses and programs end with specific certificates or degrees. These certificates and degrees, as well as institute transcripts, are identical to those offered outside of prison and recognized by the government.

**Poland** – Prisoners have access to numerous kinds of training courses or tutoring aimed at increasing qualifications. However, the educational offer is less optimistic. Workshops, crafts are very popular with the convicts, though not all of them participate in the classes. Drama is the most popular. The validity of the obtained certificate is the same as of the one obtained outside of prison, it is commonly accepted. Yet, owing to their criminal record, the inmates have problems finding a job.

**Mongolia** – According to the report, prisoners receive education at all levels. The skills obtained through artistic activities, especially painting are instrumental in their rehabilitation process.

**Cyprus** – Prisoners have access to technical school (no primary school and gymnasium), they can also take up distance learning to obtain a bachelor degree or any other equivalent diploma.

**Greece** – Prisoners are offered all kinds of educational opportunities. They can also enroll in the Second Chance Schools in the county if there is no such school in prison. Lifelong Learning Centres (L.L.C.) offer basic education to all prisoners.



### **A.1.3 Study on the reintegration system for prisoners and on the application of such models**

This part of the Report is concerned with the ways how the penitentiary systems in partner countries put into practice the idea of prisoners' integration through various educational courses and other art related activities.

**Italy** – Prisoners may benefit from primary, secondary education courses, vocational training courses, University courses, language courses and sporting activities. Moreover, art related workshops where inmates can develop their artistic skills, including various forms of writing or acting have become a very useful instrument in the social reintegration within the prison community.

**Bulgaria** – Since the main target in the work of penitentiary employees in Bulgaria is prevention and resocialization, a wide spectrum of educational, professional training programmes and artistic courses is offered to inmates. The researchers conclude that prisoners benefit from such activities as they gain the skills which will be helpful in their after-prison life. What is difficult to assess, though, is the rate of reintegration as it is not measured. The value of these courses is acknowledged, yet owing to the lack of funding in the Bulgarian penitentiary system, the sums spent on them are not adequate.

**Turkey** – Vocational and technical courses are organized with the purpose of self-development of the convict, the needs of the market and providing employment. Educational and training activities in prison are divided into three branches, such as literacy courses, formal education (open education secondary school, open education high school and open education university with distant training) and Formal Higher Education. Certificates are provided on completion of the courses. According to the report, prison education results in reduced recidivism quite substantially and increased employment prospects.

**Belgium, Spain & Turkey** – Following the comparison of the penitentiary systems of these countries, one may draw the following conclusions. Prison education generates positive effects resulting from the fact that it widens learning opportunities by offering more choices to inmates; it challenges traditional education systems by introducing more innovative programmes and methods. Finally, it helps to prepare the inmates for life after prison.

The researchers, however, notice the negative aspects as well such as, the problems associated with non-official, unregulated adult education providers (often franchise institutions and branch campuses) who remain outside official national quality assurance regimes and are not subject to internal or external audit/monitoring processes. Also inmates' protection problems are the consequence of the lack of adequate information available to the candidate. They conclude that owing to a different nature of penitentiary systems in particular countries, the form of the courses is flexible and adapted to the needs of each nation.

**Poland** – Education and other forms of general activity are carried out by Prison Service and other entities cooperating in the reintegration and rehabilitation of convicts. Education is conducted at all levels, that is, primary, middle high school, high school, supplementary technical and post-secondary education. What is more, prisoners can take an opportunity of learning in the outside of prison institutions. This approach to facilitating their rehabilitation process and increasing their chances for employment is additionally enhanced by the prisoners' participation in voluntary or artistic activities. Although the scale of such projects is not significant, yet, their number has increased in recent years. What has to be emphasized is the fact that both the active participation and the passive one, acting as an audience, plays an important role in shaping the pro-social attitudes in inmates' behaviour.

**Germany & Lithuania** – As results from the Report regarding the situation in German prisons the beneficial aspects of working with the educational and artistic spheres have been appreciated both by the prisoners and the educators/artists. Participation in the activities allowed the inmates to learn the skills necessary in normal life but also had a significant therapeutic effect. Still, there were some critical comments coming from the people involved in working with the inmates. In Germany it was pointed out that due to the lack of sufficient capacity of the staff to realize artistic projects, they are not a common occurrence in prisons. The same point was raised with reference to Lithuania.

**Cyprus** – Prisoners have access to educational activities performed by teachers assigned by the Ministry of Education, or sometimes by private and state universities or NGOs. Their education which is realized in the formal and non-formal way is carried out at the prison premises. During such classes which also include the areas connected with art (theatre, music, arts and crafts, dance and others) participants learn the skills necessary in coping with other people, not only in prison but mostly when they get back to normal life. It is, however difficult to measure the reintegration degree as there are no probation services and there is no support for the released prisoner.

**Greece** – Prisoners are offered various opportunities, especially in developing useful skills necessary in future life after prison. What is more, some of them get a possibility of studying outside of prison which is an additional asset in learning the socially desired skills.

### **PART III A2 Field-based observation of the different partners' contexts. Surveys of the partners**

#### **A.2.1 Research and collection of the data from the locally selected participants. Questionnaires for prisoners and operators**

**Italy** –The research was conducted among 36 inmates. A significant number of respondents had an opportunity to take up studying in prison (63,89%), learning a new job (47,22%) and

getting new skills (55,56%). As the questionnaire revealed, the participation in the courses allowed the prisoners to acquire the desired skills, such as behaviour in a team work, cooperation (52,78%) and better expression of feelings and mood (27,78%). What is more, a large number (80,56%) voiced willingness to learn new skills (job-oriented skills, craftsmanship, artistic skills) and participate in skills projects (86,11%).

**The operators'** questionnaires revealed that the prisoners have an ability to take up education (93,94%), learn new jobs (78,79%), acquire new skills (81,82%), be active in the field of art (84,85%). However many of them were skeptical as to their chances of finding a job after prison with the learned skills (63,64%), a small group was positive (27,27%). According to the operators, the activities such as theatre performances (87,88%), lectures (87,88%), drawing, painting (78,79%) were most popular with the prisoners.

**Germany** – The research involved 30 prisoners (5 prisons) in various age groups, both in the open and closed penitentiary institutions. The respondents were generally positive about the opportunities granted to them in terms of taking up education (80%), learning a new job (80%), acquiring new skills (83%), the positive influence of the new skills on their prison life (73,3%). A significant number (70%) of the respondents expressed willingness to learn some new skills and participate in skills projects (90%).

**Operators' questionnaires** generated similar results on the issues regarding taking up education (86,6%), learning a new job (56,7%), getting new artistic skills (80%), feeling positive about finding a job after prison (93,4%) and wishing to participate in skills projects (90%), however as many as 60% found it difficult to define whether the social skills and new competences gained through artistic activities will be very helpful outside of prison.

**Bulgaria** – The survey was voluntary and conducted among 59 prisoners (44 men) in a closed type prison. The findings obtained from the respondents varied significantly from those yielded by the operators' questionnaires. The observations made by the operators working the inmates (35) with reference to inmates' possibilities to take up education, learn a new job, get new skills within the artistic area were much higher than those made by the prisoners.

**Turkey** – The questionnaire was delivered to 30 prisoners (3 prisons), most of whom were male offenders (93%). Similarly to the results obtained in Bulgarian prisons, the Turkish inmates were more critical about their educational possibilities and the usefulness of the skills obtained than it could be seen in operators' questionnaires (30) who valued their opportunities much higher.

**Belgium** – The survey embraced the largest number of prisoners -86 (3 prisons), all of them being men. The answers obtained from the respondents regarding their educational possibilities and the gained skills were largely positive. So was their opinion on how the new skills might improve the quality of their lives in prison. The operators' (17 specialists working in prisons) responses were equally positive.

**Cyprus** – 30 prisoners who participated in the survey estimated their educational possibilities as well as learning a new job and acquiring new skills within artistic area quite high. They were positive about their new skills improving their daily life in prison and the social skills, such as the ability to cooperate and work in a team were seen as desirable. The operators (5) were very positive about the inmates' educational chances, disagreeing only in one case, when 4 of them were convinced that the new skills would not improve the prisoners' situation in and out of prison. What is interesting though is the fact that all the interviewed inmates expressed willingness in participating in the skills project.

**Poland** – The survey was conducted in a high-security prison among 35 inmates. The prisoners' attitude towards educational possibilities was generally positive, however the questions concerning getting new skills in the artistic area or the ones helping them to work in a team and cooperate, yielded low results. Nor were the prisoners very optimistic about those skills improving their daily life in prison. Consequently, only 28,567% expressed their interest in joining the skills projects. The findings presented by the operators (28) were quite different, as they concluded that prisoners' educational possibilities were very high. As regards the gained skills, again these were valued much higher than in the inmates' opinion.

#### **PART IV Survey results – a comprehensive summary.**

The conducted research embraced 306 prisoners and 178 operators and resulted in some conclusions as to the existence of certain factors affecting the process of learning new skills by the inmates.

- **Prison population by place of detention** - Italy (36), Germany (30), Bulgaria (59), Turkey (30), Belgium (86), Poland (35), Cyprus (30).
- **Prisoners' gender** - women 32(10,24%), men 273 (89,21%).
- **Prisoners' age** - 18-30 (107/34,24%); 31-50 (151/ 48,32%); 50> (48/15,36%).
- **Prisoners' country of origin** – Bulgarians were the most numerous (67)
- **Types of prisons** - closed (279 prisoners/91,17%); open – 27 (8,82%)
- **Prisoners' education** - Turkey and Bulgaria have the lowest numbers of prisoners taking up education.
- **Educational opportunities in prisons** –Turkey, Bulgaria and Poland did not value their educational opportunities too high as opposed to the other partner countries.
- **Prisoners' marital status** - married (101/32%), single/divorced (203/64,96%); no data (2/0,64%).
- **Skills achieved through artistic education** - learning to behave in a team work, cooperation – 117 responses; strengthening one's self-esteem – 70.
- **The existing artistic skills** - 184 respondents replied positively (yes); 111 (no); no data for 11 respondents.
- **Inmates' artistic skills and their public recognition** - Cyprus (social skills); Poland (practical skills training); Belgium (musical skills); Turkey (practical skills training);

Bulgaria (all kinds of new skills); Germany (raising the level of existing skills of any kind); Italy (practical professional skills and the social ones).

## **PART V A3 Framework of skills – analysis and definition**

### **A3.1 Analysis of the previously collected data**

All reports provided the information on the educational programmes realized in partner countries under the conditions of imprisonment and adapted to the existing situation. The latter includes not only the institutionalized entities (open, semi-open or closed prison), but also the social aspects relating to inmates' age, marital status, level of education. The findings provided by the operators who have the knowledge of working with prisoners coincided with the responses of the prisoners. The operators emphasized the importance of art in teaching the inmates the skills which would make their rehabilitation easier. The prisoners, however found the social skills to be most desirable, where the skill of cooperation, observing social rules and the ability to control emotions was most often cited.

### **A3.2 Analysis of the soft and hard skills in theatre related jobs**

It is these skills that the inmates indicated as the most desirable in their future lives. Since the whole Project oscillated around the skills connected with art, the table shown in the Report demonstrates various hard (professional) and soft (social) skills vital in the jobs related to the theatre. Each job requires specific qualifications gained through all forms of education that are also demonstrated in the table. However, when it comes to the soft skills, they turn out to be universal, as every kind of job requires some skills that enable the worker to do his job successfully.

#### **A3.2.1 Comparison of soft skills in various jobs.**

The table presented different jobs, yet the same skills were required to perform these jobs successfully. Some skills figure prominently among the necessary work attributes (critical thinking – the ability to analyse the problem; interpersonal skill – vital in communicating with prospective boss/client; team building –working with people, sharing duties, making joint decisions; effective time management – absolutely vital when faced with time pressure; creative thinking, sensitivity to detail, responsibility, motivation and patience– helping to achieve success; constructive criticism and finally the knowledge of foreign languages (useful especially when dealing with foreign clients, looking for a job abroad, getting some information in the language).

### **A3.2.2 Formal vs. non-formal education.**

From all the reports delivered by the partners we may draw a conclusion that the type of education depends on the conditions that prisoners are subjected to. Depending on the prison regulations, the convicts' type and length of sentence, getting qualifications and skills may be sometimes harder, especially when the nature of the workshop requires participation outside of the prison. The penitentiary institutions may provide the inmates with access to the Internet, which offers online and distant training (tutorials, webinars) still this is closely connected with the particular regulations and not all institutions, especially the strict security ones, are prepared to do that.

### **Conclusions**

The Global Report was compiled as a joint effort of all the countries that participated in the *Skills for Freedom* educational project. As it was stated at the beginning of this summary the aim of the Report was to collect the information on the educational possibilities of the persons serving a sentence of imprisonment in the countries that embarked on this Project. Although the Report constitutes only part of the work performed in the whole Project, the detailed and meticulously prepared materials allowed a deep analysis of the situation in each country.

Since the issue of education, and what is connected with it, namely getting a job, was not the only and main element of the Project but also acquiring new skills related to a wide spectrum of artistic activities, some final remarks can be formulated. The material collected by the researchers made it possible to state that the social skills which were so often cited by the questionnaire respondents as vital and necessary in life can be obtained through artistic performances and other art related activities.

Many respondents found the acquired soft skills to be significant and instrumental in improving the inmates' quality of life in all kinds of jobs, not only the ones related to the theatre. Hence the formal and non-formal education is believed to have a positive impact on the intellectual and emotional development of an individual, which in turn affects one's functioning in prison and consequently improves the process of rehabilitation and reintegration. Educational opportunities, highly evaluated by the researchers, and combined with the skills that the inmates already possessed, were also seen as substantially enhancing the reintegration process.

Finally, it has to be emphasized that all the questionnaires used in the survey as well as the data gathered by the partners in the course of the research, provide ample information on how the standards adopted by penal institutions in all the countries participating in the Project comply with the EU requirements.