



Summary of the reports from the study visits

I. Ministries and justice system

The Support of Policy Makers, like staff from the Ministry of Law or Education is necessary to improve prison as a learning organization which enables a better re-integration in society:

- education and training in prison has to be a real priority
- the financial situation must be sufficient to develop sustainable training programs adapted to a multitude of offenders coming from diverse cultures.
- Enough qualified staff (teachers, social-workers, psychologists, etc) may ensure a professional and individual follow-up of each offender.

II. Prison structure

It is necessary to develop an overall concept for education in prison ("strategic plan"). The plan should describe common tasks and responsibilities for all staff members and facilitates the transparency between the internal prison institutions and external cooperation partners. It should also support participation aspects of inmates. The plan should be evaluated as a routine.

This strategic plan has to describe an infrastructure that allows inmates to learn. Participation is a key-factor for learning environments and for motivating staff and inmates and should thus be implemented as an overall method inside prison.

Prison staff can use this strategic plan and the structure inside the prison to evaluate their daily work regularly. This may set a quality standard.

Needed elements of structure should be:

- a professional leadership culture in prison
- a transparent communication and fair regulations inside prison
- job rotation in prison institutions, ex. have some civil servants that work both inside and outside of prison.

III. Admission to prison

For creating prison as a learning environment

- there should be a clear and transparent policy for competence and skills validation and a systematic approach towards developing individual learning/working pathways in prison
- the admission and diagnostic process early after imprisonment should validate prior learning

a. Assessment and sentence plan



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- detection of educational needs should be a formal element in the assessment of every new prisoner (as part of a general sentence plan),
- Validation of prior learning and the development of a sentence plan should be based on the resources of inmates and not the deficits
- Even if a systematic introduction of VPL (validation of prior learning) in prison is not a realistic objective within the near future, related instruments and models – either already available or to be newly developed – may be piloted.
- A sentence plan should describe clear individual goals and a strategy concerning the transition from the inside to the outside

IV. Imprisonment structure

a. Competences of staff

It is important to have prison staffs who work as Learning Assistant Facilitator for inmates, and who support their (step by step) success, who inspire their reflection and show them their possibilities for development.

- Prison staff members need to be involved in the prison processes. They have to be informed about projects and courses in prison
- Interaction between social workers and prison officers should be enhanced
- It should be arranged regular training or discussions for the staff about their role in prison and role changing situations.
 - Specific training and coaching should be available to prison staff to motivate in demanding situations or difficult inmates
 - They should be qualified in a resource based attitude towards the inmates; in professional education counselling; in questions of the job-market and the regional education system; in questions of building relationships as a pre-condition to enable a learning environment; in networking; in leading groups; in moral development; in developing competences
- Professional staff should have good communication skills which are regularly trained, in e.g. negotiation, self-reflection, arguing, giving professional feed-back, confronting.
- Specially trained teachers for adult education and for education with special needs.
- Prison guards' should be 'prison guides' who understand that they do pedagogical work.
- E.g. practical training periods (Prison social workers work for two weeks at the probation office; a workshop teacher works with the social workers etc) in- and outside the prison

b. Implementation of the plans

- The educational offer has to facilitate the daily life outside prison and enhance the reintegration in society
- Basic skills in prison can be developed through work combined with education.



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- An educational offer may be based on a basic offer of education and possibility of individual learning pathways
- working experiences must be documented and thereby be visible in the inmates portfolio
- Individual mentoring of inmates by staff or senior inmates
- professional education and vocational counseling for inmates

c. Instruments/methods

Instruments and methods in prison which are needed for a learning development culture towards re-integration:

- All the programs (housing, learning, working, leisure time, etc.) offered in prison should be evaluated concerning their learning and training aspects for social, educational and vocational development
- Individual portfolios for inmates that can be adapted to the learning process.
- A creative perspective of cooperation and use for intrinsic motivation of inmates by asking for their dreams, visions and perspectives.
- Short term learning in prison with quick win situation should be available in addition to long term learning atmosphere with the aspect of successful integration in mind.
- Instruments, like portfolio working, group discussions, (self) reflecting methods, notebook or diary, etc.
- A meeting place for motivation, an education fair in prison were all external and internal education offers present themselves with their offers.

d. Cooperation

- The active participation in cooperation and networking should be made obligatory for prison staff members
- Staff should be enabled to understand the whole process from imprisonment and sentence planning to transition and reintegration
- Cooperation inside the prison as a starting point
- Clear allocation of responsibilities (anybody needs to be responsible for the whole process)
- Data exchange (considering data protection law → e.g. relevant information should be passed from social worker to probation officer)
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V. Release- Transition

- The release plan has to be structured and include detailed pathway possibilities after release and is evaluated during imprisonment
- The inmate should be involved in his/her release plan process
- The prison and prison staff builds (structured, stable) cooperation's with outside companies or institutions to be informed about the



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- requirements from outside (labour market etc.) and to facilitate individual steps for inmates after imprisonment (strategic networking)
- a transition manager as a key-person for the inmate, each inmate should be supported by him as well as the support of inmates' motivational networks of peers and family.
- Importance of the prisoner her/himself should be highlighted and self responsibility strengthened
- The prisoner should be an actor on his own process towards re-integration
- One important issue needing development is the guidance of a prisoner to continue his / her studies after the prison.
- There should be a corresponding learning pathway outside
- Constant cooperation with the staff in prison and the probation service.

VI. Networks in terms of aftercare with external institutions

Of importance is an official network for inmates' affairs, with cooperation agreements or official contracts. This is not depending on only individual enthusiasm. These networks with the outside community should work on different levels with a strategic plan and/or a legal framework. The network partners should have common visions and agree on values and goals/norms.

- external institutions play little part in the implementation of the sentence, they should be key actors in the process (job centres, professional training institutions, local institutions in charge of minors, state and local social welfare) coordinated by the prison commission
- therefore it is necessary to have a long agreed teamwork
- we lack a good network of partners outside prison who can facilitate the transition from prison to liberty. We should broaden our network of partners on the labour market to facilitate the prisoners quest for a job
- besides the institutional network (formal) f.g. transition management informal network (professional /local level) is necessary as well. Both are connected to each other
- needed networks that support lifelong learning processes for all actors like inmates, prison staff, and people from outside workings with offenders
- regional networks that fit the needs of the local area.
- an adequate information and data transfer between the network partners
- a binding relationship, actors from outside need to familiarize themselves with prison reality.
- an 'open prison day's' in the closed prison as a network 'marketing' instrument
- we have to get experience how to assist and coach the offender to build up 'good' and 'non-criminal' social networks after release

An official network needs a good coordination and contains diverse partners:

- Ministry of Justice, of Education, of Social Affairs and Labour
- Labour Office
- Welfare Offices



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- Probation Services
- Schools
- NGO's
- Prison staff
- Other decision makers
- Local business