

LIFELONG LEARNING - EQUIPPING EX-OFFENDERS FOR EMPLOYMENT

The partnership is working towards organising coherent training delivery to (ex)-prisoners in the detention system in the French speaking part of Belgium, involving a variety of partners at regional and local level. The low level of education which many (ex)-prisoners have is often an obstacle to their reintegration into society. The need to provide them with training whilst in prison and increase their possibilities of finding a job when they leave is vital.

Until now, there has been no organised supply of training to prisoners. It is usually the case that ex-prisoners are unsupported when they leave prison, and their chances of finding a job can be slim. Besides the fact that they often have a low level of education, and employers are reluctant to employ an ex-offender and so they face an enormous amount of discrimination in the labour market.

There is a need to provide prisoners with basic education and training and to raise awareness amongst employers about employing ex-prisoners. The DP is addressing the need to review existing legislation and to address obstacles to employment for ex-prisoners. On a wider level, the DP wishes ultimately to integrate the results into the policy of the Ministry of Justice.

Delivering training to ex-offenders requires specific skills, therefore trainers form a distinctive target group within this DP. Equally, individuals providing social support are also a target group as they guide the ex-prisoners through their reintegration in society.

A key strength of the work is that the education and training delivered to prisoners is validated, as the courses are provided by an official educational body. An important innovation supporting this is the use of ICT and more specifically simulation of the internet, as this new technology instrument has yet to be widely used by prisoners.

The main outcome is offering the possibility of education and training to prisoners. The activities being undertaken by this DP can be grouped into the following sub-projects:

1. Assessing the competencies of (ex)-prisoners using standardised tools.
2. Training the trainers with respect to education given to prisoners.
3. Raising awareness of employers as regards employing ex-offenders.
4. Facilitating the reintegration of ex-prisoners.
5. Involving ICT in the process.

The DP members will utilise their extensive official network of adult education, training, and public employment services to disseminate relevant information and to influence practices in several areas concerning education and training and reintegration of ex-prisoners into society.

DP information

Member State: Belgium

DP Identifier: Befr-21

Link to [EQUAL database description](#)

All comments and information should be emailed to empl-equal-etg3@ec.europa.eu