The Emergence of the European Prison Education Association, EPEA

"Education provides a greater understanding of society and the world, and not least a change in attitude." Prisoner, Halden Prison, Norway

Torfinn Langelid, Kaj Raundrup, Svenolov Svensson & Kevin Warner

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November 2021

About the Contributors

Torfinn Langelid (Norway) was a teacher in two prisons for 10 years. He was Co-ordinator of Education in prison in Norway 1993 – 2011. He took the initiative to form FOKO, the national branch of EPEA in 1995 and was Secretary in FOKO (1996 – 2011). He was Membership Secretary of the EPEA Steering Committee (1997 – 2007). He was a member of the Nordic network for Prison education for many years. Torfinn was project director of the group which wrote the report *Å lære bak murene* (2003), published in English in 2005 and 2009 as *Nordic Prison Education - A Lifelong Learning Perspective.* He was also member of the Organising Committees for Nordic, EPEA and Directors/Co-ordinators conferences. He has written the history of education in prison in Norway (2015 Cappelen Damm). In addition, he has written many articles concerning education in prison.

Kaj Raundrup (Denmark) worked as a prison teacher/headmaster for 14 years (1973-1987). From 1987 to 2009 he worked in the headquarter of Prison Service as Educational Manager. From 2001 – 2009 he was Co-ordinator of Education in Prison in Denmark. During the same period, he was also responsible for prison libraries and leisure time activities for the prisoners. He was involved in the implementation of the Cognitive Skills Program in the early 1990s. He was EPEA secretary (1993 – 1997) and a Liaison Person from Denmark in the EPEA. He was member of the Nordic network for prison education for many years and a member of the project group which wrote the report *Å lære bak murene* (2003), published in English as *Nordic Prison Education - A Lifelong Learning Perspective.* Kaj was also member of Organising Committees for Nordic and EPEA conferences and initiates the series of Directors/Co-ordinators Conferences along with Henning Jørgensen (Director of Prison Education in Denmark).

Svenolov Svensson (Sweden) He was deputy Chairperson of the EPEA (1995-1996) and Chairperson (1996-1998) Svenolov was also Regional Representative on the Steering Committee (2001 – 2003) and involved in co-ordinating the education in the Swedish prison system (1978 – 1993). After that he worked at central and regional level implementing different evidence-based treatment programmes until 2015. He was member of the Nordic network for prison education for many years and a member of the project group which wrote the report *Å lære bak murene* (2003), published in English as *Nordic Prison Education - A Lifelong Learning Perspective.* Svenolov was member of Organising Committees for Nordic, EPEA and Directors/Co-ordinators conferences.

Kevin Warner (Ireland), has worked as a teacher in schools and in adult education in Ireland and England in the 1970s. He was National Co-ordinator of Prison Education in Ireland from 1979 to 2009, during which time he chaired the Council of Europe Select Committee that produced *Education in Prison* (1990) and was founding Chairperson of the European Prison

Education Association (1991-1996). He was a Fulbright Scholar at the Centre for the Study of Correctional Education in San Bernardino, California (1995) and an international representative on the Board of the Correctional Education Association (CEA) (1998-2002). He received a PhD in 2009 for research into Nordic penal policy which focused especially on prison regimes. He now teaches part-time in two Irish universities (UCC and NUI Maynooth). His writing on both prison education and penal reform can be found on www.pepre.ie.

Foreword

The authors of this book - Torfinn Langelid, Kaj Raundrup, Svenolov Svensson and Kevin Warner - were amongst the pioneers who laid the foundations for, and contributed to the development of, the European Prison Education Association (EPEA). As the title of the book suggests, the EPEA did not begin as such; it emerged from a group of prison educators who recognized the need to create a professional organisation to promote education in prison throughout Europe. With the EPEA in its fourth decade, it is a timely book.

The authors identify two key documents that inspired the creation of the EPEA: the *European Prison Rules* (1987) and *Education in Prison* (1990). As they state: "Both of these Council of Europe publications arose from a sense of urgency among prison administrators in Europe to drive forward fresh thinking and improve practice within penal systems". It is no surprise that the chair of the committee that drew up the report, *Education in Prison*, Dr Kevin Warner, became the first chair of the EPEA, and one of the authors of this book.

The seventeen recommendations and the accompanying text in *Education in Prison* make it clear that prisoners have a right to education. Chapter 4 of *The Emergence of the European Prison Education Association* considers *Education in Prison* in detail and outlines how it drew on progressive penological policies and pedagogical expertise. *Education in Prison* recommended a wide interpretation of education, with "classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and library facilities". Based on an adult education approach, education in prison "shall aim to develop the whole person bearing in mind his or her social, economic and cultural context". Further, it recommended that the prison authorities should facilitate the provision of education, and finally, lack of resources should not be used as a reason to remove funding for education in prison (Council of Europe 1990: 4-5). Reflecting the rich contribution of Nordic penal policy and pedagogical practice within the EPEA, *Education in Prison* draws on the policy of 'normalisation' as "two overall complementary themes predominate":

> firstly, the education of prisoners must, in its philosophy, methods and content, be brought as close as possible to the best adult education in the society outside; secondly, education should be constantly seeking ways to link prisoners with the outside community and to enable both groups to interact with each other as fully and as constructively as possible. (Council of Europe 1990: 8-9)

The practice of education (both inside and outside prison) is not static. New developments and innovations necessitate novel approaches. The authors recognise how those involved in education in prison have attempted to respond to these changes. At the fourth conference of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education held in Malta in 2000, *Education in Prison* was re-evaluated. In 2019, the EuroPris Expert Group reviewed each of

the Council of Europe's 17 recommendations from 30 years previously. The report drawn up by Jim King, the current Secretary of the EPEA, concluded with a new recommendation, which recognised the importance of international co-operation, including the contribution of organisations such as the European Prison Education Association. "Prison authorities and Education services should seek to proactively work with international agencies and organisations seeking to improve and expand access to education and training opportunities for prisoners" (EuroPris 2019: 26).

The policy and practice will and should develop. However, the principles of pedagogy remain the same. Solidarity and support within the classroom, staffroom, conference room and wider society are principles that endure. The authors of *The Emergence of the European Prison Education Association* conclude:

> We feel the EPEA has a major role to play in inspiring and encouraging educators working in prisons, and enabling them to feel part of a wider movement which is trying to play its part in helping those men and women who are kept in prison develop their potential and live more fulfilling lives. EPEA members can support each other in playing their small part in making criminal justice systems more humane, and envisaging a better and more inclusive society.

This book outlines some of the discussions, and the challenges of establishing a nascent organisation. Overcoming them has enhanced the development of the organisation, and made its progress more rewarding for future leaders of the EPEA. Today, due in no small measure to the efforts of the authors of this book and educators working in prison, it is a thriving organisation representing educators in over 30 countries throughout Europe and beyond. Although the provision of education in prison remains a challenge, the EPEA has established itself as one of the key international NGOs focused on education in prison. Over thirty years after its emergence, the EPEA continues to be relevant, indeed necessary, to ensure that prison education is considered in policy discussions and penological practice in the various jurisdictions across Europe.

The authors of *The Emergence of the European Prison Education Association* understand the importance of writing the EPEA's history. Not only have they helped write the story of the EPEA thus far, they have made a substantial contribution to its development. With this book, they remind us of the essential work of the European Prison Education Association, as it continues to provide solidarity and support to educators and learners on their pedagogical journey.

Dr Cormac Behan, SFHEA
Chair, European Prison Education Association
Dublin, 2021

Chapter 1

The story of the EPEA- Introduction

The European Prison Education Association (EPEA) is an independent non-governmental organisation founded to support the enhancement of learning opportunities for men and women who are held in prison. Today it is the primary voice in Europe for the promotion of education within prisons, supporting teachers and other educators who provide learning in many types of custodial settings. A primary objective of the EPEA is to support the professional development of prison educators through European co-operation, and it advocates values and principles closely associated with the Council of Europe. This outlook emphasises the following, for example: that prisons are detrimental to people and should be used only as a last resort; that people who are held in prison should be treated humanely, recognising their citizenship and human rights; that all men and women who are in prison have a right to education; and that adult education approaches offer the best opportunities for people to grow and develop, including within prisons.

It is over 30 years since the first steps were taken to establish the EPEA. In that period, Europe and many aspects of life in general have changed greatly. However, the practice of imprisoning people continues relatively unchanged. Indeed, the policy of using prison as a response to defined wrongdoing has escalated in many countries. Those involved with the EPEA have been consistent in the belief that, if prisons continue to exist, the very least that a society can do is to ensure that all those incarcerated are offered the opportunity to access a comprehensive developmental and restorative form of education.

A humane and human rights-based outlook underpinned the founding of the EPEA and its growth over three decades. This book is the story of that thinking and that growth. The account is mainly set in the period up to 2010, but occasionally it refers to what happened beyond that point, whenever that seems appropriate. The book is authored by four ‘old guys’ who were centrally involved in the early and middle stages of that history, but who have been greatly helped by others whose engagement is much more recent. The story does concentrate to a considerable extent on ‘the thinking’ behind the EPEA, the principles and philosophy which led to its birth and development. So, some of what follows is often more thematic than chronological, but the narrative does also to a large extent describe matters in sequence from the early days to recent times.

Chapter 2, ‘Early developments in international cooperation around education in prison’, looks at the period prior to 1989, which is the date from which the EPEA began to be formed. Before the EPEA’s ambition to link prison educators across Europe together in a mutually supportive association, there were other initiatives through which people cooperated across national boundaries, often taken by those in countries close to each other. Notable among such early international gatherings were conferences and seminars organised among Nordic countries in the 1970s and 1980s, and by the English Home Office at the same time.

There was an even earlier development in Germany: in 1958, 19 German prison teachers met at Butzbach to explore the formation of an association, and so Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft or BAG was formed and in time drew in others from neighbouring countries.

In the 1980s, Council of Europe initiatives were of critical importance in asserting that education should have a very strong role within prisons, especially in the ground-breaking European Prison Rules which were adopted by the member countries of the Council in 1987. In this decade also, European prison administrators set up a 'Select Committee' to examine education in prison and this group reported in 1989. The penal policy and educational thinking which is strongly embedded in both of these Recommendations can be clearly seen in two important international seminars held in 1984, in Cyprus and England respectively, and each of these events had close associations with the Council of Europe.

Given the Council of Europe's very central role in the emergence of the EPEA, it is therefore appropriate that its core principles around human rights and human dignity, and the shaping of a particular concept of education in prison from these ideas, should be explored in some detail. This is done in Chapter 3. The title of this book refers to the 'emergence' of the EPEA, recognising the fact that it is more appropriate to point to a period of years when the association first took shape, rather than to any exact point in time. However, a conference in Oxford in September 1989 was the occasion when a number of people came together to set things in motion. Significantly, it was also the year when there were major changes throughout Central and Eastern Europe, arising from the fall of Communism, and these changes would have great impact on the shape the EPEA would take over the following years, as well as on much else in European life.

One of the central aims of the EPEA is to promote education in prison in accordance with the Council of Europe Recommendation, R (89) 12, adopted in October 1989. This Recommendation and its associated report, *Education in Prison*, were published in 1990.[1] It is appropriate, therefore, to look at how this document came about, and at its adult education philosophy and its main content. These matters are explored in Chapter 4, which also looks at a review of that report carried out in Malta in 2000 and a more intensive re-evaluation carried out at the behest of EuroPris in 2019[2]. The latter review reaffirmed but built on the core thinking, both educational and penological, of the Council of Europe report on education in prison.

Education in Prison had noted how, despite differences in culture, educational systems and prison systems, "prison educators from different countries can often share more with each other than with educators in other fields from their own countries"[3]. Recognising such common ground, the Select Committee that drew up the report advocated "vehicles for the exchange of ideas and information between prison educators from different countries, both administrators and practitioners"[4]. It was to provide such a vehicle for practitioners in particular that the EPEA was established. From the beginning, the emerging association saw

[1] Council of Europe, *Education in Prison* (Strasbourg, 1990).
[2] *Review of European Prison Education Policy and Council of Europe Recommendation (89) 12 on Education in Prison*. See https://www.europris.org/file/report-review-of-european-prison-education-policy-and-council-of-europe-recommendation-89-12-on-education-in-prison/ accessed 12/06/2020.
[3] *Education in Prison, op. cit.*, p.16.
[4] *ibid*, p.16.

its core purpose being, through European cooperation, the promotion of the professional development of educators working on the ground within prisons and other penal settings. Such 'practitioners' were the priority group from the outset, unlike other bodies or organisations which focus much more on the concerns of administrators or others in leadership roles. Although the latter were always very involved in the EPEA - and, indeed, in the establishment of the organisation in the first place - Pam Bedford's prioritisation of teachers and others 'in daily contact with prisoners' was a dominant intention from the beginning. Pam Bedford was a prison teacher herself and very much the primary initiator of the EPEA.

The great challenge, then, was how to find ways to bring such people 'on the ground' together in a mutually supporting way. So, the titles of both Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 are built on the phrase 'reaching out and making connections'. Chapter 5 describes how this thinking, and the concern to have prison educators themselves actively involved, shaped the constitution and structures of the EPEA. The focus on the need to have active involvement by many members, and lively interaction between such members, gave rise to several features. These included: the way elections to the Steering Committee, which is the engine of the EPEA, were arranged; the regional structures that were put in place; the creation of a position of Membership Secretary; and especially the key role of Liaison Persons, as this role was originally conceived.

Chapter 6 describes how 'reaching out and making connections' was the motivation behind the 'tools for communication' that became a central feature of the EPEA. The first *EPEA Newsletter* was issued in March 1991 and was initially distributed in a very *ad hoc* fashion yet driven with considerable enthusiasm. The Newsletter continues to this day although its format and even its title have varied over the years. It was supplemented in time and for periods by other publications such as the *EPEA Bulletin* and the *EPEA News*, while five issues of the *EPEA Directory* were published in the first decade of this century. At the turn of the century, the EPEA website was initiated, and its role grew in importance over the years as digital communication increased. Chapter 6 also discusses the crucial role of Liaison Persons in facilitating connections between members and regrets their diminished role in recent times and the parallel lessening of involvement from many countries.

While the Council of Europe's values and principles provided the bedrock of the EPEA, the European Union has also made an enormous contribution to its development. Chapter 7 traces the EPEA's involvement with both institutions under the heading 'shared European values'. While the influence of the Council of Europe's philosophy on the emergence of the EPEA is dealt with in Chapter 3, Chapter 7 documents more the practical cooperation that arose when the EPEA was granted first consultative and then participative status with the Council of Europe. This engagement was crucial when the European Prison Rules were revised in 2007.

The greater part of Chapter 7, however, is devoted to detailing the support given to the EPEA and education in prison generally by the European Union (EU) from 2000 onwards. This extensive support came especially through Grundtvig adult education partnerships, each of which involved bodies engaged in education in prison from several countries, so that these partnerships became crucial vehicles for the EPEA's core mission of promoting 'professional development through European cooperation'. Important support for education in prison came

from other EU programmes and projects also, including some either coordinated by the EPEA itself or by networks closely linked to the EPEA. EU funding which enabled many prison educators attend EPEA conferences was especially important. A key person who facilitated this extensive support for education in prison was Alan Smith, who was coordinator of the Grundtvig Programme at the European Commission for most of the period from its inception in 2000 to his retirement in 2011. This chapter draws extensively on Alan Smith's detailed documentation of the EU's engagement with education in prison in this period.

If the second aim of the EPEA is "to support and assist the professional development of those involved in education in prison through European co-operation", then one of the key ways in which this can be done is through the main EPEA conferences which take place every two years. Some conferences, which were really part of the EPEA's pre-history but are now numbered in retrospect as 'EPEA Conferences', such as Cyprus and Wiston House in 1984 and Oxford in 1989, are described in Chapter 2. So, Chapters 8 and 9 describe subsequent conferences in chronological order. Chapter 8 reports on 1991 to 1997, while Chapter 9 describes the conferences that took place from 1999 to 2009.

These chapters dwell considerably on the themes and issues spoken about at these events. They also seek to convey something of the atmospheres of the gatherings and give a sense of what prison educators might have gained from them. Although there are many consistent patterns between one conference and the next one two years later, each conference also had its own distinctive features and offered some sense of the locality in which it was held and the policies of the host country or region. Chapter 9 concludes with our reflections on what we see as some changes of direction in how EPEA Conferences are organised in the past decade.

The conferences discussed in Chapters 8 and 9 have always been the centrepieces of the EPEA's efforts to promote professional development among European prison educators. From 1989, these major EPEA conferences were organised every two years in 'odd years', a pattern that continued until 2019. They had a very broad focus and included those involved in many aspects of education, those 'on the ground' as well as those in administration. However, the EPEA was involved in another series of much smaller conferences that took place in 'even years' from 1994, when the first one took place in Poland, to 2010. These were very much niche events, focused on the concerns of those administering education in prisons at national level, and eight took place in this period. These meetings, generally referred to as European Conferences of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education, are described in Chapter 10.

The initiative for the first four of these gatherings was taken by Henning Jørgensen and Kaj Raundrup from Denmark, and these focused on the implementation of the Council of Europe recommendations on education in prison. The next four such conferences in the new decade were more *ad hoc* events, organised mainly by local hosts as well as the EPEA itself, the final one being in Lucerne in 2010. While these later conferences were lively and well attended, it seemed that after 2010 the initiative had run its course and there was not sufficient need or demand for further gatherings of directors, co-ordinators, and the like.

Chapter 11, the final chapter, is called 'The Vision of the EPEA – and its essential future role'. While that vision was at times implicit rather than explicitly set out in the early days, there was still a shared sense of its purposes, priorities and values at the beginning. Then, in the second half of the 1990s, the Steering Committee adopted 'Vision 2006', setting

out a vision of what the EPEA might look like in ten years and the means by which the association could get there. From this Vision, Strategies and Action Plans were formulated. These exercises were highly participative, involving all the Steering Committee, and Liaison Persons from all countries linked to the EPEA. The Liaison Persons discussed these documents at meetings in Paris and Sofia. Another Vision was drafted in 2015, called 'Vision 2025', and we as authors express some reservations about both the content of that document and the process by which it was compiled.

We conclude our final chapter with a section called 'Penal Climate Change and the Need for the EPEA', which in many ways reiterates the main thinking and themes of this book. Most importantly, in the face of much less hospitable 'penal climates' in many places in recent years, we argue that the EPEA has a role to play today that is more vital than ever, especially where there is increased demonisation in public discourse of those in prison, a disregarding of their rights (including the right to education) and a general increase in punitiveness and neo-liberal thinking. We hark back to the leadership of European prison systems in the 1970s and 1980s and call for a reassertion of their values and vision, and the consequent valuing of education for its own sake in prison. Such education needs to be accessible to all men and women who are held in prison in Europe. More than ever, we feel, the EPEA is needed to uphold this outlook and enable prison educators throughout Europe to support each other.

Chapter 2

Early developments in international co-operation around education in prison

INTRODUCTION

This chapter and the following one will try to identify the main forces and influences which led to the emergence of the European Prison Education Association (EPEA), as well as the people and events crucial to its birth. A significant element of shared thinking, what one might even term a shared philosophy - around adult education, penal policy and human rights – is an important part of the early history of the EPEA. Such thinking is very closely associated with the Council of Europe, and so these two chapters will explore in some detail the values and principles inherent in that European body. Chapter 2 will look at early developments, in the 1970s and 1980s in particular, in international co-operation around education in prison, and speak of some key progressive individuals in this field and among the administrators of prison systems in Europe. Chapter 3 will focus on how momentum built from these earlier interactions for the creation of an organisation that would link and support educators in prisons across Europe. In 1989, a number of factors came together at a conference in Oxford, England, and the idea of the EPEA began to be formulated.

Yet, it is possible to identify several points in the late 1980s and early 1990s as the time when the European Prison Education Association began. While there had been a certain amount of interaction between prison educators across national boundaries previously, it was at a conference in Oxford in September 1989 that a small group resolved to set up an organisation to promote the education of people in prison in Europe. Their idea was that such learning should be along the lines proposed in *Education in Prison*, the Council of Europe Recommendation and report which has just been completed. Following hesitant steps over the next two years, a more organised structure was put in place and the main aims were formalised at a conference in Bergen, Netherlands, in 1991.

However, it was not until a further two years, at a conference in Sigtuna, Sweden, in June 1993, that a constitution for the EPEA was formally adopted. The Sigtuna conference, called 'Beyond the Walls', was jointly organised by four Nordic countries but declared itself to be "the 4th EPEA European International Conference on Prison Education". In fact, this was the first time that any conference was identified with the EPEA as such. Designating it the *fourth* such conference contributed to a certain level of confusion surrounding the numbering of EPEA conferences, a matter that will be explored later. The first conference to be directly organised by the EPEA itself was actually the one which took place after two further years, in October 1995, in Blagdon, England. Given the title 'Bending Back the Bars', this was deemed to be the '5th International EPEA Conference'! Clearly, then, while we can point to particular milestones, and especially to the formal launching at Sigtuna in 1993, the EPEA resembles somewhat a movement which emerged over time.

However, a better understanding of the forces that that led to the conception of the EPEA in 1989 and to its development in the years that followed will be helped by an

examination of some significant developments in the years before 1989. This chapter will explore, therefore, international engagement around education in prison in the previous decades. It will look at seminars and conferences on this subject that drew people together across national borders, but will focus, in particular, on the thinking that emerged from these events.

EARLY DEVELOPMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

As historians in the field make clear, some form of education in prison can be found in much earlier times in many countries, even if provision does not always follow a continuous line in every place. Some even trace this field as far back as the workhouse in Amsterdam that was founded in 1596[5], while others focus on what may be more recognisable forms of education in prisons in more recent centuries. In particular, Thom Gehring and William Muth trace strong historical links between prison reform and education in prison in the 19th and early 20th centuries.[6]

Growth in education in prison was particularly strong in Europe in the later years of the 20th Century. The most usual approach was for the regular education authorities in a country to become the main providers within a prison system, although providing education from outside of the prison system did not become the main pattern until this century in some places, such as Denmark and Northern Ireland; and a mixed system exists to this day in Germany, consisting of both externally-employed and internally-employed teachers. Torfinn Langelid[7] details the process by which the main education authorities in Norway became the primary providers of education in prisons, reflecting a perception of people in prison as citizens entitled to the same services as those in the outside community. Looking at the wider European context, he notes:

> When education in prison is defined as a right for prisoners and as part of the services offered by the welfare state, education becomes a goal in itself. Otherwise, education in prison becomes a means of reducing recidivism. (Langelid, p.241)

The manner in which education for people in prison changed and developed in Denmark in the second half of the 20th Century is probably fairly typical of many European countries. Education there grew from being an occasional and marginal activity, focused largely on basic education, to having comprehensive professionally-organised programmes in most prisons and a central role within prison regimes. In Denmark in the 1950s and 1960s, all prisoners under the age of 30 were required to participate in remedial classes, which generally took place outside working hours.

However, in 1973, a Danish Ministry of Justice commission on educational activity for prisoners noted how education in prisons had not kept pace with major developments in the education of both children and adults in the wider society. This commission proposed that

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[5] See Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (eds.), *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society* (Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.49-77.

[6] See Thom Gehring and William Muth, 'The Prison Reform/Correctional Education Link: Part 1, 1840-1900' in *Journal of Correctional Education*, December 1985; and 'The Prison Reform/Correctional Education Link: Part 2, 1913-1940 and Conclusion' in *Journal of Correctional Education,* March 1986. See also Thorsten Sellin (1944) *Pioneering in Penology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

[7] Torfinn Langelid, The Development of Education in Norwegian Prisons, in P. Scharff Smith and T. Ugelvik (eds.), *Scandinavian Penal History, Culture and Prison Practice.* (London: Palgrave, 2017).

education on a par with the outside be offered to all in prison, that it takes place during the day and on a year-round basis. These proposals laid the foundations for the elimination of compulsory education and for education to be on equal terms with other prison activities. In 1974, what became known as the 'Skadhauge plan' advocated that prison education should be integrated into the state educational system, primarily by prisoners being granted day release from open prisons so that they could participate in the educational opportunities available in the community. A second key proposal was that a corresponding educational system would be established in closed prisons. The use of outside educational facilities to this extent by people in prison is rather particular to Denmark, given the preponderance of open prisons in its system. However, placing education in a central position in the prison regime, and integrating it with the external education system, became common patterns in Europe in this period.

As many have discovered, offering education to people in prison gives rise to some unique features and complexities.[8] It is therefore to be expected that educators in such unusual, and often challenging, settings would try to link up and draw support from each other, initially in their own localities and countries, but also in due course across national boundaries. Writing in the very first *EPEA Newsletter* (March 1991), the editor, Pam Bedford, recognised this common experience as something that drew people together at the Oxford conference:

> …those involved in prison education in different countries had much in common in their specialist, and often isolated, field and they welcomed the opportunity to share experience and develop ideas together. The similarities of the challenges (and problems) far outweighed the considerable differences of cultural, educational and political background.[9]

Interactions between educators involved in prisons in different countries or prison systems[10] appear to have occurred initially on an *ad hoc* and localised basis. Those in the Nordic countries engaged with each other from time to time as they do in many fields. The first Nordic conference on education in prison (involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) took place in Kungälv, Sweden, in 1977. This was followed by a gathering in Finland in 1982, Denmark in 1984 and Norway in 1989, and generally thereafter every two years. The initiative for these Nordic conferences came from a Finnish prison teacher, Sinikka Metsätähti. She had worked as a teacher in the central prison in Helsinki and, while she found this work made a valuable contribution, her experience was of a lack of support from prison authorities. So, when she obtained a new job with the Nordic Folk Academy in Kungälv, she used this position to promote Nordic cooperation in the field of education in prison.

This series of Nordic conferences continued up to 2016, with the one in that year taking place in Iceland. Initially, these conferences ran for five days, but became shorter events at a later stage. Some of the conferences were supported financially by the Nordic Council of Ministers and involved people from Nordic countries mainly, but occasionally welcomed speakers or guests from other countries. The first such conference in Kungälv had 34 participants and included teachers, prisoners, governors and policy makers. The prisoners

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[8] This aspect is explored, for example, in a book edited by Dr Randall Wright, *In the Borderlands: Shaping a Professional Teaching Identity in Prisons and Alternative Settings* (Centre for the Study of Correctional Education, California State University, 2008).

[9] EPEA-NEWSLETTER, Volume 1, Number 1, March 1991, p.2.

[10] From the beginning, the practice in the EPEA has been to work on the basis of countries with distinct prison systems. Thus, for example, there are three separate Prison Services within the UK, in England and Wales, in Northern Ireland and in Scotland. By contrast, prisons in Germany have been seen as part of one federal system, although there are considerable variations between the different German states or Bundesländer.

who attended were representatives from prisoners' own organisations. Themes in this series of conferences included aspects of the curriculum, adult education approaches, post-release follow-up, collaboration between workshops and education, research and – at a later point – engagement with the EPEA.[11] By the 1990s and 2000s, these Nordic conferences became bigger events, often having more than 100 in attendance. In these decades also, leaders such as Svenolov Svensson and Torfinn Langelid regularly used the events to create awareness of the EPEA and to promote participation in the organisation. Each of these men was an officer of the EPEA for a number of years, being Chairperson and Membership Secretary respectively.

Beginning also in the 1970s, several initiatives by the 'Home Office' (i.e. the Ministry of Justice) in England and Wales drew together their own senior prison education staff, but often also administrators and educators from neighbouring countries. For example, an 'international seminar' on education in prison was organised in the University of Reading in September 1978, which about 20 people attended, including representatives of Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Scotland and West Germany, as well as from the hosts in England and Wales. It was chaired by Kenneth Neale, a senior figure in the Home Office, and among those attending where two who would later play a significant part in the development of the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison* (1990), Henning Jørgensen of Denmark and Robert Suvaal of The Netherlands. As well as sharing information about issues such as "the legal status of education in their penal services", a rather loose agenda also included "consideration of the proposition that education is employment, on a par with work or labour" and "consideration of the continuation of education and training outside prison after release".

The integration of work and vocational education with more general education was likewise a major concern in the Nordic conferences that developed from the 1970s, and may well indicate a concern of wider significance in Europe. A Nordic meeting of senior prison administrators and senior prison education personnel from each country, focused specifically on collaboration between workshops and wider education provision, took place in Sweden in 1978 and continued annually thereafter for about 30 years. Reconciling and getting the most from these two sectors within prison regimes is clearly a perennial issue in penal policy and practice. Thinking on these matters fed into the elaboration of 'treatment regimes' in the 1987 European Prison Rules; and there is a whole chapter on the issue in *Education in Prison* – Chapter 3 is titled 'The Place of Education in the Prison Regime'.

The one-day international seminar in Reading, England, in 1978 preceded the regular 'Education Officers' Conference', a three-day event involving over 160 delegates, most of whom were Education Officers (i.e. Head Teachers) in English or Welsh prisons. However, in that particular year the conference also included several people with similar roles in each of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland, as well as those who represented the continental European countries at the earlier international seminar. This larger conference heard speakers from each of the visiting countries and a closing address by Alan Baxendale, then Chief Education Officer in the Prison Department of the Home Office, entitled 'A Hundred Years and More of Prison Education'.[12] In the following decade, the Home Office Prison Department continued to invite international guests to offer outside perspectives in events directed mainly at their own education staff, such as the week-long Wye College Summer Schools in Kent on 'Teaching and Learning in a Closed Environment', which ran for a number of years. The 1987 summer school in Wye heard inputs from Svenolov Svensson of

[11] See Langelid, T. (2015). *BOT OG BETRING? Fengselsundervisninga si historie i Noreg,* pp. 299 - 327. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

[12] Papers from each of these 1978 gatherings in Reading is placed in the EPEA Archive, which is held in the Regional State Archive, Bergen, Norway.

Sweden and Sean Wynne of Ireland, both of whom would later play prominent roles in the EPEA, as Chairperson and Secretary respectively.

In the decades just after the Second World War, the situation in regard to education in prisons in Germany was not unlike that already described in Denmark prior to 1973 and, indeed, not unlike many other European countries. Generally, if education was provided at all in a German prison in these years, it tended to be an under-resourced and a marginal activity within the regime. Such educational provision as there was often concentrated on youth and could be mandatory for them. In these early years, a teacher in a prison might not even know of the existence of others in similar roles elsewhere and would be unlikely to have had much contact with them. Contact between teachers in different German states would have been even more unusual, as each of the states, or Bundesländer, has its own fairly autonomous prison system.

The early state of things in Germany is well illustrated by Herbert Hilkenbach, who began to teach in a youth prison in 1957; his vivid description of this pioneering work gives a clear sense of early prison education being marginal to the regime and very much subject to the authorities' obsession with control.[13] Years later, Herbert Hilkenbach wrote about how he had to give six hours of lessons each Saturday to up to 40 young prisoners. The classroom was a large communal cell where prisoners slept on a temporary basis: every Saturday it was cleared out and prisoners came in for their lessons, each with a three-legged stool carried from his own cell. The young men used these stools to write on while kneeling before them, using pencils rather than pens – the authorities would not allow pens for fear that they would be used to make tattoos. Pencils and paper were gathered up after lessons; the only other teaching materials were outdated maps.

While such a pattern was fairly similar to that in other countries up to the 1970s, there was an early distinctive development in Germany. In 1958, 19 colleagues, including Herbert Hilkenbach, met in Butzbach to discuss the possibility of forming a 'Federal Association of Teachers in Law Enforcement [in prisons]'. In time, this association grew into a well-developed organisation of prison educators working in different Bundesländer, and also involves educators in Austria. Called Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft (BAG), the organisation dates from an even earlier time to the international engagements around education in prison which were initiated by Nordic countries and the English Home Office and which were mentioned above. BAG grew over the decades and issued publications in the field. At the time of its 40th anniversary in 1998, it had 250 members. That year, Herbert Hilkenbach made a presentation at a conference in Ludwigshafen to mark this anniversary.[14] He spoke of developments over the previous 40 years, including his time as Chairperson of BAG from 1970 to 1994.

The first Chairperson of BAG, who held the post from 1958 to 1970, was Alfons Besenfelder. After Herbert Hilkenbach had taken over this role, Alfons Besenfelder had contact with Austrian justice officials which led to Austrian prison teachers becoming involved in BAG conferences, first as guests and later as members. In time, Austrian members organised BAG conferences. Over the years, these BAG conferences included occasional participants from other countries, the first such contact being with Luxembourg in 1963, and there was subsequent involvement from the Netherlands, France and Denmark.

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[13] From: Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Lehrer im Justizvollzug (Hg.): Justizvollzug & Pädagogik, Pfaffenweiler 1999, 2. Aufl. Herbolzheim 2001, p. 17 - 24

[14] Ibid, pp. 17-24

Flemming Skadhauge of Denmark – referred to earlier in relation to the 'Skadhauge Plan' – spoke to at least two BAG conferences in the 1970s.

In 1993, a German-speaking conference entitled 'Education in Prison – Cross Border' was held in Vienna, with participants from Austria, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia. Herbert Hilkenbach wrote of it that it was "an unforgettable meeting for every participant". While there was German engagement with the EPEA from as early as 1991, through both Liaison Persons and conference participants, BAG did not become involved and join the EPEA as a branch until the turn of the century, an initiative taken by Peter Bierschwale, the Chairperson of BAG from 1997-2002.

The early gatherings described above that took place in England, Nordic countries, Germany and Austria were important international exchanges, yet the international aspects were largely ad hoc or occasional events. However, in 1984, two seminars of those with some involvement in education in prisons in different countries were held that were to prove more ambitious and wide-ranging: the first in Nicosia, Cyprus, in May 1984; and the second in Wiston House in England, in July 1984. Each of these 1984 conferences would play an important part in the formation of the EPEA.

The Nicosia event was "organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Ministry of Justice of Cyprus" in the Philoxenia Hotel from 15 to 18 May. Contributions were made in English and French, with simultaneous translation, and the seminar was envisaged as a contribution to the work of the Council of Europe's Select Committee on Education in Prison, which had just been established by the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) of the Council of Europe, but which had yet to meet. Along with over 20 Cypriot participants, there were representatives from 15 other 'Western European' countries, thus drawing on the majority of Council of Europe countries at that time. There were prepared papers by delegates from Cyprus, England, Italy, Norway, Portugal and Switzerland in themed sessions titled 'Education inside the Prison', 'Education of Inmates outside the Prison' and 'Education as a means for Treatment[15] and Rehabilitation'.[16]

Engagement with the outside community by those in prison appeared to be a strong element of penal policy in Cyprus. Addressing the seminar on the opening day, the Cyprus Justice Minister Phoebus Clerides said, according to a local press report, that "Cyprus had introduced a series of measures to improve the prisoners' life such as home leave, day leave, frequent visits by friends and relatives, art exhibitions, games with outside teams, working outside prison and education. He said one in every three prisoners works in the town", while living in one of four hostels.[17] Clearly, one can see in Cypriot practice at this time strong implementation of the concept of 'resocialisation' of those held in prison. Just a few years later, that idea would be a dominant theme in the *European Prison Rules* (1987) and elsewhere in Council of Europe penal policy, including in *Education in Prison* (1990) where "interaction with the community" is a recurring phrase.

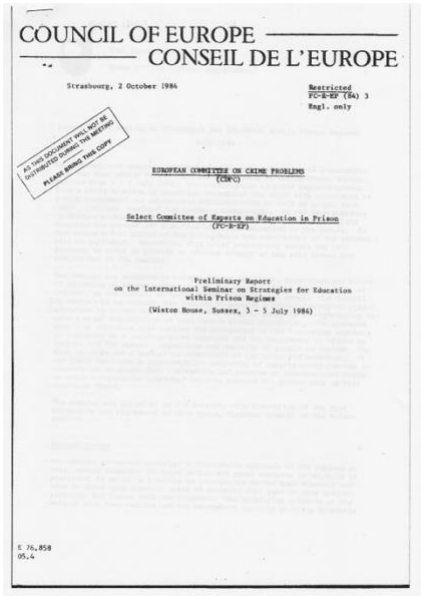
[15] The term 'treatment' as used by the Council of Europe in this period had a particularly wide meaning and will be discussed later.

[16] Other countries represented in Cyprus were Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Spain and Sweden.

[17] From *Cyprus Mail*, 16 May 1984.

'THE FIRST EPEA CONFERENCE': WISTON HOUSE

Less than two months after the Cyprus gathering, another 'international seminar' on education in prison took place in England, with some overlap in participants from Cyprus. It was held on 3 to 5 July 1984, at Wiston House in Steyning, close to Brighton, and was also seen as contributing to the Council of Europe's "major international study" of education in prison, which was due to commence work a few months later[18]. This conference had a similar shape to the earlier one in Cyprus, in that a majority (19) of those present came from England and Wales, many of them from one of the two host organisations, the Home Office Prison Department and the Open University. 12 other jurisdictions were represented, including three participants from Canada, two from Denmark and one from each of the following: Austria, France, Hong Kong, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Sweden. Much later, this 1984 gathering in Wiston House would, *retrospectively*, be identified as 'the First EPEA Conference'.


COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 2 October 1984

Restricted
PC-R-EP (84) 3
Engl. only

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON CRIME PROBLEMS
(CDPC)

Select Committee of Experts on Education in Prison
(PC-R-EP)

Preliminary Report
on the International Seminar on Strategies for Education within Prison Regimes
(Wiston House, Sussex, 3 - 5 July 1984)

The theme of the three-day event was 'Strategies for Education within Prison Regimes: Comparative Approaches'. Those participating were, as the subsequent conference report put it, people "with experience in prison management and educational administration as well as people from legal, judicial, research and academic backgrounds".[19] The gathering heard papers that were later published in that report, including ones from Kenneth Neale and Alan Baxendale (Chief Education Office for prisons in England and Wales) of the host country; others from international contributors Jean-Francois Monnereau (of the Justice Ministry in France) and Hans Henrik Brydensholt (a previous Director General of the Danish Prison and Probation Service); and papers from two Canadian academics who have written extensively about education in prison, Stephen Duguid and Lucien Morin.

As with the international seminar in Reading in 1978, Kenneth Neale was clearly the driving force behind this gathering also. As well as having a leading role in the prison system in England and Wales through his work in the Home Office, he played a key part in shaping Council of Europe policy as Chairman of the European Committee for Cooperation in Penal Affairs and through his involvement in the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC). He played a central role in the development of the *European Prison Rules* (1987) in the mid-1980s.[20] At the same time as those Rules were being revised, the CDPC set up a Select Committee which worked from 1984 to 1989 to produce the Recommendation and report, *Education in Prison* (1990). It is clear that the initiatives for both of these Council of Europe policy documents came from people such as Kenneth Neale on the CDPC, and the philosophies underpinning both publications are similar. Many others, of course, were centrally involved in shaping the 1987 *European Prison Rules;* Hans Tulkens from The

[18] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie (Eds.), *Strategies for Education within Prison Regimes: Comparative Approaches* (The Open University and Home Office Prison Department, 1984), p.3.
[19] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *ibid.*, p.i.
[20] Council of Europe*, European Prison Rules* (Strasbourg, 1987)

Netherlands and William Rentzmann of Denmark, for example, appear to have played particularly significant parts.[21]

Both of these Council of Europe publications arose from a sense of urgency among prison administrators in Europe to drive forward fresh thinking and improve practice within penal systems. There is clear complementarity between the philosophies in these two Recommendations: between the thinking on prison regimes central to the *European Prison Rules*, encapsulated in the phrase 'treatment regimes', and the adult education approach inherent in *Education in Prisons*. Kenneth Neale played a major part in shaping the former, and setting in motion the Select Committee which developed the latter. One can see his thinking on both areas in his opening remarks setting out the theme of the Wiston House seminar: "rehabilitation… as the central objective of treatment had had a long run… the emphasis had turned to priming regimes for more effective preparation for release so that prisoners were better equipped to find acceptance and a stable role in society"[22]. He goes on to say:

> That was an important signal for education in finding a valid role in the treatment regimes of systems now adjusting to the demands of the 'reality' concept in the deployment of prison resources to *minimising negative factors of imprisonment and to optimise those elements that contribute to resocialisation* (emphasis added).[23]

That, said Kenneth Neale, was the "philosophical anchorage" of the Wiston House conference (and, one might say, of the above Council of Europe documents). The title given to the seminar is significant and reflects the two key complementary areas Kenneth Neale and his Council of Europe colleagues were focusing on at this time: 'Strategies for Education within Prison Regimes'. One can see in Neale's outline of the two main purposes of prison (minimising negative factors, helping towards resocialisation) the philosophy that would be detailed a few years later in the European Prison Rules. This thinking is reflected in the term 'treatment objectives', which Neale uses several times in the seminar report, but which is detailed more fully some years later in the European Prison Rules, where it is a central concept.[24] In describing the prison context, Neale emphasises the view that prison policy is an essential part of social policy, but also notes "the chronic state of crisis in most prison systems", linking this to "individual *and institutional* instability" (emphasis added)[25].

The importance of education in such a prison context was described by Neale in his introductory paper setting out the theme of the Wiston House seminar. Just as realistic thinking about prison must focus on matters other than 'rehabilitation', he is likewise clear that education in prison is not primarily a matter of 'addressing offender behaviour'. He speaks of education's "universality and relevance to life and personal development", so that it can thus "be developed to optimum advantage in promoting positive and sensible treatment

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[21] See, for example, Tulken's article, 'The Concept of Treatment in the European Prison Rules' in the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin*, No 11 (June 1988), and Rentzmann's article, 'Cornerstones in a modern treatment philosophy: normalisation, openness and responsibility' in No 16 (June 1992) of the same publication. A revised version of Rentzmann's article was published, under the title 'Prison Philosophy and Prison Education', in the *Journal of Correctional Education*, Vol. 47, Issue 2, June 1996.

[22] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *op. cit*., p.1.

[23] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *ibid.,* p.2.

[24] See Hans Tulken's article, 'The Concept of Treatment in the European Prison Rules' in the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin*, No 11 (June 1988). Rules 64 and 65 of the European Prison Rules (1987) define 'treatment objectives' and are given in full in Chapter 3.

[25] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *ibid.,* p.1.

objectives in contemporary regimes"[26]. As well as offering "enrichment" to regimes, education also enriches "the personal experience and capacity of people in custody"[27] – and the use of the term 'people' rather than 'offenders' is significant[28].

These remarks, and others in Neale's contributions at Wiston House, clearly foreshadow core principles that can be found in Council of Europe Recommendations later in the decade: for example, the increased status of education within prison regimes, the 'wide concept of education' and the purposes of education in prison. Neale's thinking corresponds closely with the triple role given to education in *Education in Prison*:

> Firstly, prison is of its nature abnormal, and destructive of the personality in a number of ways. Education has, among other elements in the prison system, the capacity to render this situation less abnormal, to limit somewhat the damage done to men and women through imprisonment. Secondly, there is an argument based on justice: a high proportion of prisoners have had very limited and negative past educational experience, so that, on the basis of equality of opportunity, they are now entitled to special support to allow their educational disadvantage to be addressed. A third argument that may be put forward is the rehabilitative one: education has the capacity to encourage and help those who try to turn away from crime.[29]

All these perspectives on education, and related ideas like regarding education as *a right* to which *all* who are held in prison are entitled as *members of society,* are present, at least in embryonic form in the Wiston House report, as they are in the *European Prison Rules* (1987).

After the EPEA emerged as an organisation in the 1990s, a peculiar system of numbering conferences developed which looked back at this Wiston House seminar as being the '*First* EPEA conference'. Those who gathered in that stately house in the pleasant Sussex countryside knew nothing of the organisation that would later grow, although there were proposals at the event for more international exchanges on education in prison that were not followed up at the time.[30] However, it may be seen as fitting to designate this event as the first conference in retrospect, given the wisdom of many of the contributions, and especially the visionary thinking of Kenneth Neale, who opened proceedings with these words:

> At the conference we shall be concerned… with the objectives of identifying the role of prison education in sustaining people during custody and preparing prisoners for their release into the insecurity of life in the community… It is an essential constituent of liberal education… that it should seek to interrogate the environment in which it takes place with challenging and positive questions including those that concern the content and purpose of education itself… it is through education in an ample

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[26] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *ibid.,* p.1 and p.98.

[27] Interestingly, the report of a committee of inquiry into Ireland's penal system around this time set out a very similar view of the role of education in prisons. It stated: "Affording opportunities to prisoners for increased self-improvement, self-esteem and self-reliance are achievable objectives, and make more sense than the unrealistic goal of a reform to be accomplished in three months or three years. For this reason education in prison should have something to offer everyone…" (*Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Penal System*, p. 96. The Stationery Office, Dublin, 1984).

[28] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *op. cit*., p.i.

[29] Council of Europe, *Education in Prison,* (Strasbourg, 1990), p.15.

[30] "Proposals for future action" outlined at the conclusion of the Wiston House conference included "an international centre to coordinate information" about prison education, the "organisation of a network of correspondents across the world" (this was prior to the digital age!), the development of research programmes and "the promotion of an International Journal of Prison Education" (p.100).

> connotation that society strived to civilise human experience. Prisons are of their nature coercive; education is, or should be, inherently liberating. That is the conjunction and key to our tasks.[31]

Although a senior administrator in a large prison system, it is striking that Neale's thinking emphasised the role of education in prison as being what may be called 'education for its own sake' (or, as Torfinn Langelid put it above, "a goal in itself"), and not primarily as an aid to penal objectives such as 'rehabilitation', 'reducing reoffending' or 'reducing recidivism'.[32] Its role, as Neale saw it, is "sustaining people in custody" and preparing them for "release into the insecurity of life in the community". And it is notable that he envisages, not a narrow-focused form of education, but something much wider and deeper: "education in an ample connotation" that should be "inherently liberating".

In his philosophical paper to the conference, Lucien Morin from Université Lavel in Quebec made similar assertions. In a statement that would challenge the dominant thinking in Canada and elsewhere in later decades, when offence-reducing objectives were assigned to education in prison, Morin says:

> So, then, what can education in prison mean? The same thing it should mean everywhere else: human development. For education as human development implies, first, the acceptance of the other as a total being-becoming person and, second, that values and fundamental questions of meaning are at the core of any educational project.

Morin goes on to state:

> Human development is not only difficult to measure but cannot be measured as one measures, say, the seconds of a time clock or the efficiency of industrial or business productivity. At the fundamental level of education at which we are talking, human growth belongs to the 'growee' to appreciate. Of course, education is different where it deals with children where the giver, the educator, is all important, than it is with adults where sharing is the word to be retained and where evaluation is probably yet more personal and subjective. But in all cases, the issue at stake is respect for the person – not skills, not jobs, not status. Important as these are, they all come in second place.[33]

So, even in 1984, well before the Council of Europe Recommendation on education in prison was adopted or the EPEA established, we see a particular concept of education and the distinctiveness of adult educational methods emphasised. Such thinking would later be central to *Education in Prison* and to the formation of the EPEA.

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[31] Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *op. cit*., p.3.

[32] It is notable that at a much earlier point, in the USA in 1931, another senior prison administrator, Austin MacCormick, Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and widely regarded as the founder of the Correctional Education Association (CEA), put forward a very similar perspective. He urged that the prisoner be considered "as primarily an adult in need of education and only secondarily as a criminal in need of reform". Austin MacCormick, *The Education of Adult Prisoners: A Survey and a Program* (New York: The National Society of Penal Information, 1931), p.9.

[33] Lucien Morin, 'An Educational Prison "Model": A Canadian Perspective', in Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *op. cit.,* pp.89-90.

The other Canadian contributor to the Wiston House conference, Stephen Duguid, restated in his paper Neale's focus on "the role of education in the 'personal growth' of the individual" and said: "this notion of growth, maturation or development has been central to Canadian thinking about prison education". Stressing the need to create "an educational environment in the prison" and "turning our prisons into learning communities", Duguid envisioned education offering the same kind of development to those in prison as Humanities courses offer to those in university on the outside. His perspective was built on the delivery of such teaching both within and outside prisons in British Columbia, Canada. "An education for citizenship in this broad sense", he says, "would stress not only ways to merge with the norm, but also ways to obtain a critical, even oppositional or deviant life in society rather than outside it"[34].[35]

One of the other keynote presentations to this conference was by H. H. Brydensholt, a former Director General of the Danish Prison and Probation Service. His paper complemented such thinking on citizenship and went beyond it, and reflected penal policy thinking generally in the Nordic countries in the 1970s and 1980s. Seeing the prison system as an element of the welfare state, Brydensholt recognised Danish prisoners as "a deprived group", with a level of education "significantly lower than that of the average population". Elaborating on "a new concept for prison education" introduced in Denmark in 1975, he says:

> As it is a moral obligation of a welfare state to try to remedy the disadvantages of the weaker members of society there was an acknowledged duty to seek to improve the educational status of prisoners. That a person had committed a crime for which he was serving a sentence should make no difference to this obligation.

Since, in Denmark, Brydensholt says, "most prison sentences are served in open institutions (without walls)", this offers those in prison "opportunities to participate in normal education outside the prison". Yet, even in closed prisons, "there should be educational opportunities matched as closely as possible to those to be found in outside society". [36]

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[34] Stephen Duguid, 'Prison Education in Canada: A Review of Research and Practice', in Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *ibid.,* pp.69-71. There would be a sharp departure in Canada from such an approach, and a focus instead on 'criminogenic factors', in the early 1990s. See Stephen Duguid, 1997, 'Cognitive Dissidents Bite the Dust – the Demise of University Education in Canada's Prisons', in *Journal of Correctional Education*, vol.48, issue 2, pp. 56-68.

[35] Several years later, the Council of Europe report on education in prison would make a similar point: "there are aspects of the prisoner's culture which the adult educator must respect, or at least accept. These aspects may include a critical view of authority, anger at social injustice, solidarity with each other in the face of adversity, etc." (p.27)

[36] Hans Henrik Brydensholt, 'A Danish Approach to Prison Education', in Kenneth Neale and Gerald Normie, *op.cit.,* pp.23-25.

Chapter 3

Council of Europe Values and the Emergence of the EPEA

INTRODUCTION

Having explored in the previous chapter some early examples of international co-operation between those involved in providing education in prisons, this chapter will focus on three of the elements which contributed directly to the establishment of the EPEA, and which also gave the organisation its particular character and orientation. It will look at: (a) the influence of the Council of Europe as an institution; (b) the strong need and desire felt by many working in education in prison to engage and co-operate with those similarly involved in other countries; and (c) the dramatic changes that came about in Europe in 1989 and the years after that, with the fall of the Berlin Wall. All three of these elements were present to some degree in the conference held in Wadham College in Oxford in 1989 – a conference which in later years would become known as the 'Second EPEA Conference'.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: A FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN DIGNITY

If it is appropriate to look back to the 1980s and before that to identify meetings and thinking that would help shape the development of education in prison and the EPEA, it is also important to note the vision and events which, at a much earlier stage, led to the emergence of the Council of Europe, an institution that was a major influence on the kind of organisation the EPEA would become. In some places these days, there is little known about the Council of Europe and it can be confused with the European Union (somewhat understandably as all 27 members of the EU are part of the Council of Europe's membership of 47). Not only is the Council of Europe the larger body, but it is also an older one, having been founded in 1949.[37] Essentially, the Council of Europe was a positive and visionary response by countries to the horrors of the Second World War, and to the emergence of totalitarian states, genocide and other grave human rights violations that were such a feature of that period and the years leading up to the war.

[37] The ten original members of the Council of Europe were Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. By 1950, Germany, Greece, Iceland and Turkey had joined. For most of the 1980s there were 21 members, but membership increased greatly during the 1990s.

The main aims of the Council of Europe are:

- to work for closer European unity
- to protect democracy, human rights and human dignity
- to improve living conditions, such as through safeguarding the environment

When the Council of Europe committees referred to in the last chapter were meeting in the 1980s, there were 21 member states, basically forming an arc around Western and Central Europe, from Iceland and Norway to Turkey and Cyprus. In the changes that took place in 1989 and the following years, the Council of Europe became a bridge between virtually all other countries in Europe, as well as a promoter and protector of human rights and democracy. Today, the Council of Europe has 47 members.

Although overshadowed nowadays by the European Union (EU), at least in Western Europe, the Council of Europe extends today across all of Europe, particularly since Russia joined in 1996. Perhaps the Council of Europe's best known feature is the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which came into force in 1953.[38] Some confusion with the EU is understandable when one considers that each has a base in Strasbourg, and each identifies with such symbols as the European flag, which is blue in colour with a circle of twelve yellow stars reflecting harmony. While the role of the EU in supporting the development of the EPEA at a later stage is also important (and will be explored in Chapter 7), the values and principles of the Council of Europe were fundamental to the establishment of the EPEA.

The principles of democracy, human rights and human dignity, in particular, shaped the thinking and the policies that the Council of Europe developed around areas such as Legal Affairs and Education. The section of the Council of Europe dealing with Legal Affairs was particularly active in developing co-operation and recommendations in relation to penal policy, most notably in shaping the European Prison Rules (EPR) in 1987 and their revision in 2006 and 2020; these were seen as the application of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners to European circumstances. As the Belgian criminologist Sonia Snacken[39] points out, European human rights instruments operated via the Council of Europe lead to "a reductionist penal policy", which she states is

> …based on a consistent scepticism towards the possible advantages of incarceration, the refusal to accept prison overcrowding, no expansion of prison capacity, and development of both 'front-door' policies to reduce the input of prisoners into the system and 'back-door' polices to limit their length of stay in prison.

She concludes that human rights, including the use of prison 'as a last resort', "are a fundamental part of European legal and political culture". Examples of this policy can be found in Council of Europe Recommendations such as that on prison overcrowding (1999) and on the treatment of long-term prisoners (2003).

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[38] Council of Europe, *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2010).

[39] Sonia Snacken, A Reductionist Penal Policy and European Human Rights Standards, in *European Journal of Criminal Policy Research*, 2006, Vol. 12, issue 2, pp 143-164.

Another academic, Dirk van Zyl Smit[40], also sees human rights as underpinning the urge to 'humanise' imprisonment in Europe. For example, in relation to long-term prisoners, he notes that the "principled position" of the Council of Europe is that "a regime allows them to live a normal life as far as possible and to be given responsibilities within prison that will *enable them to continue to develop their own personalities*" (emphasis added). These human rights and humanitarian principles clearly echo the thinking of European prison leaders, in the 1980s in particular, as was described in the previous chapter. This outlook is also the context in which the Council of Europe sought to develop another Recommendation, that on the education of those held in prison.

While the European Prison Rules were being formulated in the Legal Affairs section of the Council of Europe in the 1980s, the section dealing with Education and Culture developed policies in relation to adult education, such as its 1981 Recommendation on adult education policy and a report it published, in 1987, called *Adult Education and Community Development*. In many ways, the document issued by the Council of Europe in 1990, *Education in Prison*, represented a marrying of ideas from these two parts of the Council. This report[41] consists of 17 core recommendations, followed by an elaboration of, and commentary on, these key principles.

Education in Prison will be explored more fully in Chapter 4. Here, however, we note its close complementarity to the European Prison Rules, as well as to Council of Europe penal policy generally. As might be expected given its initiation in the Legal Affairs section by the senior penal policy committee, the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC), this 1989 Recommendation on education in prison is very much in tune with the European Prison Rules, both in general penal policy thinking and in many detailed aspects. Its key starting point is "that the right to education is fundamental" (p.7). It goes on to say that "education in prison helps to humanise prisons and to improve the conditions of detention" (p.7). Following such statements in the preamble, the core recommendations follow, the fifth of which states: "Education shall have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners should not lose out financially or otherwise by taking part in education" (p.8). The idea that education and work should have such equality might have seemed radical, had not the CDPC asserted the same principle two years previously in the European Prison Rules.[42] In the European Prison Rules (1987), that Rule followed on from the detailing of the overarching 'treatment objectives' that regimes should follow: in particular doing whatever would help "to minimise the detrimental effects of imprisonment", and attempting to help "develop skills and aptitudes" that might improve the prospect of resettlement or resocialisation (Rule 65, p.20).

[40] Dirk van Zyl Smit, Humanising Imprisonment: A European project? in *European Journal of Criminal Policy Research*, 2006, Vol. 12, issue 2, pp 107-120.

[41] Although generally referred to as a 'report', technically *Education in Prison* is, as stated on its cover, "Recommendation No. R (89) 12 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 13 October 1989 and explanatory memorandum".

[42] Rule 78 of the EPR (1987) stated: "Education should be regarded as a regime activity that attracts the same status and basic remuneration within the regime as work, provided that it takes place in normal working hours and is part of an authorised individual treatment programme" (p.23).

It is not just the rules in relation to work and education that came under the heading 'Treatment objectives and regimes' in Part 4 of the European Prison Rules (1987) (Rules 64-89, pp.19-25), but also 'Physical education, exercise, sport and recreation' and 'Pre-release preparation'. These key touchstones for how prisons were to be run are set out in Rules 64 and 65:

> 64. Imprisonment is by the deprivation of liberty a punishment in itself. The conditions of imprisonment and the prison regimes shall not, therefore, except as incidental to justifiable segregation or the maintenance of discipline, aggravate the suffering inherent in this.
>
> 65. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the regimes of the institutions are designed and managed so as:
>
> a. to ensure that the conditions of life are compatible with human dignity and acceptable standards in the community;
> b. to minimise the detrimental effects of imprisonment and the differences between prison life and life at liberty which tend to diminish the self-respect or sense of personal responsibility of prisoners;
> c. to sustain and strengthen those links with relatives and the outside community that will promote the best interests of prisoners and their families;
> d. to provide opportunities for prisoners to develop skills and aptitudes that will improve their prospects of successful resettlement after release.

One can see here an elaboration of the two central ideas Kenneth Neale, along with others, had spoken of earlier: minimising the harmful effects of prison, and 'resocialisation'. It is notable that three of the four stipulations for regimes in Rule 65 above (a, b and c) are what might be called defensive, they aim at minimising the harm caused by prison. Unlike later 'Prison works' thinking, or naïve presumptions that prison can generally improve ('rehabilitate') people, this thinking recognises the reality of the damage that prisons, in the great majority of cases, does to people, and seeks to minimise that. Only the fourth aspect of Rule 65, item (d), may be seen as an entirely positive intervention, in that it speaks of facilitating the development of people so as to help with their resettlement. It is also noteworthy that this fourth point refers to "improving prospects", rather than achieving certain outcomes. Clearly, the external circumstances in society have a significant bearing on what happens also; it cannot all come down to individual choice, or even to what the prison system does.

A year after the European Prison Rules were formulated, Hans Tulkens of The Netherlands referred to this concept of 'treatment' as reflecting goals that were not too abstract or idealistic, "but attainable objectives". He said the treatment objectives in the EPR could be summed up as saying:

> If you go on using imprisonment, you have at least to try to make it as harmless and as positive as possible for the prisoners. Therefore, listen to them, take account of their opinions, make them co-operate and assume responsibilities; on the other hand, do not

be over-ambitious as to what can be achieved or what can be promised, but offer prisoners consequently realistic and attainable opportunities, chances, activities, methods and help which meet their needs and stimulate their interests.[43]

A number of key penal policy principles, held by the senior European prison administrators mentioned in the previous chapter (and indeed also by the Canadian academics cited), are crucial to an understanding of both the establishment of the Council of Europe Select Committee on education in prison and the report it subsequently produced. These inter-connected principles include the following concepts:

- people in prisons are citizens, members of society; and since many have suffered severe deprivations, society owes them particular obligations;
- prison must seek to 'minimise the detrimental effects of imprisonment' and to facilitate the 'resocialisation' or reintegration of those imprisoned;
- since the punishment is the loss of freedom, prison regimes should be brought as close as possible to normal life outside;
- in that context, education in prison should be at least on a par with that offered outside, and possibly offer even more because of the need to address past deprivation and facilitate resocialisation;
- all in prison have a right to education aimed at 'the full development of the human personality';
- the curriculum offered in prison should be as wide as possible, aimed at deep human growth or development and offered primarily 'for its own sake'.

'THE SECOND EPEA CONFERENCE': WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD

The conference that took place in Wadham College, Oxford, on 25 to 28 September 1989 should be seen in the context of such thinking on imprisonment. It was a far bigger one than either of the two which took place in 1984. It was called 'The Second International Conference on Prison Education', the event clearly seen by the organisers as a follow-on to the Wiston House seminar in 1984 (once again ignoring the Cyprus conference earlier that same year). It was organised by "the Open University in association with the Home Office and the Correctional Education Association", with Gerald Normie of the Open University being Chairman of the Organising Committee. It thereby involved the two bodies behind the Wiston House event, with the North American organisation, the Correctional Education Association (CEA), adding an additional dimension on this occasion.

While the two seminars in 1984 were fairly limited in the numbers involved, there were many more participants in Oxford, with about 80 taking part. A great number came via the CEA: seven from Canada and 26 from the USA. There were also other participants from outside Europe, with one representative from each of Australia, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. There were 30 from the UK, including Scotland and Northern Ireland. Surprisingly, given that this gathering is now regarded as the '2nd EPEA conference', the

[43] Hans Tulkens, 'The Concept of Treatment in the European Prison Rules' in the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin*, No 11 (June 1988), p.7.

involvement of Europeans beyond the UK was relatively small, although there were participants from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Ireland (2), Netherlands (4), Norway and Portugal. A number who had been at Wiston House in 1984 also attended the Oxford conference, as did a few who had been in Nicosia. Five of the Council of Europe's Select Committee on education in prison were present, together with a Norwegian member of the CDPC.

A welcome new dimension at the Oxford conference was the involvement, from both sides of the Atlantic, of many teachers and others who worked 'on the ground' and who were in daily contact with men and women held in prison. Unlike the gathering at Wiston House five years previously, no actual report of this conference was produced. However, the CEA's *Yearbook of Correctional Education 1990,* edited and produced the following year by Stephen Duguid of Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, stands as a remarkable record of contributions at Oxford.[44] Over 300 pages of that 400-page text are given over to papers delivered at Wadham College and then developed for the *Yearbook*. Stephen Duguid's publication, therefore, represents an important milestone in the internationalising of education in prison and a rich source of information on prison education across the globe.

The CEA is a North American organisation that supports educators working in prisons (or 'correctional' institutions) and similar settings and dates from the 1930s. At the time of the Oxford conference, it produced a quarterly journal, the *Journal of Correctional Education*, and an annual Yearbook. The CEA supported the Oxford conference and its members made many significant contributions over the four days. Yet, perhaps one of the CEA's most significant impacts was in making Europeans aware of the possibilities of having an organisation for those working in the field. Describing the EPEA's origins some years later, Kevin Warner, at a time when he was Chairperson of the EPEA, noted how at Oxford, "The CEA presented us with a real live model of professional support and development. It was certainly one of the ingredients that brought about the birth of the EPEA."[45] Indeed, the trigger which set things moving at Oxford was when Pam Bedford, a prison teacher in England, took the initiative to suggest to Gayle Gassner, then President of the CEA , that the CEA might have a European section. Gayle Gassner´s response was to suggest Europeans might consider having their own organisation, and that the CEA would facilitate that in any way it could. And so, a small group got together at Oxford to explore that possibility.

The need for contact among prison educators across national boundaries had already been identified in *Education in Prison*:

> Those working in the special field of prison education have a great deal in common with each other across national boundaries. Indeed, prison educators from different countries can often share more with each other than with educators in other fields from their own countries. (p.16)

Some years later, writing in the 1995 EPEA Conference Report, Kevin Warner explained how things developed in 1989:

[44] Stephen Duguid (Ed.), *Yearbook of Correctional Education 1990* (Burnaby, BC, Canada: Institute of Humanities, Simon Fraser University).

[45] See *Report from 'Bending Back the Bars', European Prison Education Associations 5th International Conference, 1-4 October 1995, FEDA, Blagdon, England*, pp.144-146.

Front left Pam Bedford, Henning Jørgensen and Gayle Gassner, back left Kevin Warner and Asbjørn Langås

So, at Oxford, the need and the model came together. In my mind, the spark that set things going was when Pam Bedford, a prison education officer from England, determined not to let the conference finish without something being put in motion. She suggested, over coffee, to Gayle Gassner, then President of the CEA, that there should be some linkage between Europe and the CEA. Under an ancient copper beech tree[46], this idea was explored by a group of five: Pam, Gayle, Henning Jørgensen of Denmark, Asbjørn Langås of Norway and me. It was soon realised by all, and perhaps most clearly by Gayle, that a separate European organisation was needed. The EPEA began to emerge. A larger, hurried meeting in a garden, again with coffee cups in hand, gave enthusiastic backing to the project.[47]

Before the Oxford conference concluded, an *ad hoc* group was given the task of moving the idea forward. This group consisted of the five members of the Council of Europe Select Committee who were present: Peter Ziebart from Austria, Ian Benson from England, Henning Jørgensen, Robert Suvaal from The Netherlands and Kevin Warner, together with Asbjørn Langås from the CDPC. On behalf of this group, Henning Jørgensen wrote in January 1990 to every prison administration in Council of Europe countries, seeking the nomination of two liaison persons from each country. One of these liaison persons had to be an educator "in daily contact with prisoners" – there was, even at this early stage, a wish to involve, not just administrators, but teachers and others working 'on the ground'. The letter stated:

> Assuming sufficient interest is shown, the *ad hoc* organising group will be in touch with liaison people again shortly with a view to establishing a list of those prison educators wishing to be kept informed of developments. Possible early developments will be the establishment of a simple newsletter, the formation of a network for visits between prison educators in different countries and the drafting of articles of association. Hopefully, conferences and seminars will become possibilities in the not-too-distant future.

16 countries responded by nominating liaison persons.[48]

Later, in September of that year, Henning Jørgensen sent out another letter on behalf of the *ad hoc* group, this time addressed to "educators working in prisons in Europe" via the liaison persons who had been nominated following the January letter. This letter stated:

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[46] The old copper beech tree in the garden of Wadham College has since died and been removed. It may be said, however, that the organisation conceived under its branches has taken root and flourished.

[47] *Report from 'Bending Back the Bars', European Prison Education Associations 5th International Conference, 1-4 October 1995, FEDA, Blagdon, England*, p.144.

[48] The sixteen countries to nominate liaison persons were: Denmark, England & Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

> We are now moving to the next stage of development, seeking to build through these links a list of prison educators throughout Europe who wish to be included in the EPEA 'network'. We hope this network will grow in time into a fully-fledged and dynamic organisation. But, just now, our task is to compile a list of as many interested prison educators as possible who can be kept informed of (and, as soon as possible, involved in) developments.

Liaison persons were requested to circulate this letter to those working in the education of people in prison in their country, inviting them to fill in a form and return it via their liaison person to the EPEA. The letter noted:

> At present, there is no charge for involvement in the EPEA network. Later, when a proper structure is established for the association, with formal membership, etc., it is envisaged that a small membership fee will be charged. But for now you can be part of it all for FREE!

Henning Jørgensen's second letter promised the first EPEA Newsletter would be sent in early 1991 to all who responded to this invitation. In this way, a European network of educators in prison, which would soon grow into full membership, was established.

Kevin Warner describes what happened next:

> Progress was slow for two years or so, hampered by language and distance barriers - and perhaps by too much reliance on those of us in administration! Yet there was never any doubt about the strong interest in the idea. Pam Bedford established the Newsletter and kept driving us forward.
>
> Development was more consistent after the conference in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991, where the liaison persons present agreed the… aims for the EPEA… At Bergen also, the *ad hoc* group gave way to a Steering Committee consisting of the liaison persons from seven countries.[49]

The first Newsletter of the EPEA was issued in March 1991, sent out from HM Prison Standford Hill, in Kent, where Pam Bedford worked. It had items from Austria, England, Ireland, Netherlands and Spain, and greetings from the then President of the CEA, Mary Lou Browning. In those pre-digital days, the usual system for distributing the Newsletter was for a copy to be posted to each liaison person, who would then make photocopies for distribution within their country. Surprisingly, it worked quite well! Pam Bedford's initial Editorial spoke of the Oxford conference, the bonds prison educators can have across national boundaries and the wish of the EPEA to develop these.

'THE FIRST SWALLOW FROM A CHANGING EASTERN EUROPE'

Something else happened at Oxford, which looked as a small thing at the time, but which in retrospect foreshadowed developments of major significance in Europe. Pavel Hartl of Charles University, in Prague, Czechoslovakia, attended the conference and presented a paper in a workshop. While that may seem unremarkable now, in 1989 Europe was a very different

[49] *Report from 'Bending Back the Bars'*, op. cit., p.145.

place. Soviet domination of much of Eastern and Central Europe, and communist regimes in East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and countries to the east of these meant that Europe consisted of two places very much apart. There were huge differences in political, social and cultural life, and the 'Cold War' that had persisted since 1945 cemented this arrangement. Communication and interaction between the two parts of Europe was very limited; those from the 'West' and the 'East' met each other only in exceptional circumstances. In particular, those in the eastern countries scarcely ever had the opportunity to travel west.

At the Oxford conference, an unusually high number of presentations were made. Aside from many plenary events, there were 17 concurrent sessions, and within each of these there were usually two or three presenters. In attending these, participants had usually to make choices between four options. On the afternoon of the second day, there was a choice between four options also: three involved paper or workshop presentations from Australia, Canada, England and the USA. The other option, accessed by going up 'Staircase 5' to a Lecture Room offered:

> "Education Strategies in Group Work with Recidivists" - Pavel Hartl, Charles University, Prague.
> "Anger Control Training with Young Offenders" – Cynthia McDougall, HM Prison Wakefield.

Possibly to the dismay of the conference organisers and presenters in the other parallel workshops, it so happened that the great majority of those attending chose to go to this option, and the reason was obvious. To have the opportunity to meet and hear someone from the other side of the 'Iron Curtain' was then highly unusual, so huge numbers went to this workshop. Once seats were filled, people stood in great numbers along the sides and at the back.

Cynthia McDougall gave her paper first. Pavel Hartl clearly realised what was happening and when his turn to speak came he smiled and said: "My paper doesn't matter. The important thing is that I'm here. I am the first swallow from a changing Eastern Europe". He had a sense, which few if any of those listening to him had, that major changes were afoot in the Eastern countries. Before that year was over, the Berlin Wall had fallen, and regimes had changed in one country after another. Soon the Soviet Union broke up and the 'Cold War' was declared over. Travel became possible.

Pavel Hartl's awareness that change was about to happen proved prescient. The years that followed saw a political earthquake in Central and Eastern Europe. Every country in Europe, other than Belarus, would soon become a member of the Council of Europe, and several Eastern European and Baltic countries joined the European Union. Germany re-united and Czechoslovakia split in two. Yugoslavia broke into six states. The Soviet Union reduced to Russia, allowing many countries to go their own way. Clearly, all this had major implications for political, social and economic life across Europe.

The effects of these changes reached into every aspect of life. In the world of prison education (relatively tiny in this broader context) the implications were very evident also; what we conceived as Europe became a much greater, and in one sense a much more unified, entity. Just two years after the Oxford conference, at the '3rd EPEA' conference in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991, there were participants from Albania (2), Estonia, Hungary (2) and Poland. After a further two years, at the conference in Sigtuna, Sweden, in 1993, there were participants from Albania, Belarus (2), Estonia (5), Lithuania (2) and Poland. The 6th EPEA Conference took place in Budapest, Hungary, in 1997. From the early 1990s, there were Eastern European members on the EPEA Steering Committee. The first two EPEA 'Directors and Co-ordinator of Prison Education Conferences' took place in Poland in 1994 and Estonia

in 1996. Such developments would have been unimaginable to nearly all of those who attended the Oxford and earlier conferences, and generally to those in the 'West' up to the end of the 1980s. Yet, Europe in the 1990s became a culturally richer and much more exciting place.

MOMENTUM VIA VANCOUVER

Between what are now regarded as the 2nd and 3rd 'EPEA' conferences (Oxford in 1989 and Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991), an important gathering from a European point-of-view took place in Vancouver, Canada. The annual conference of the North American organisation, the Correctional Education Association (CEA), took place in that Canadian city in the summer of 1990, promoted and chaired by Stephen Duguid of Simon Fraser University. Stephen Duguid and colleagues ensured that that year's CEA conference had an international dimension to it unlike any before or since. It involved participants and contributors from 19 countries from around the world, including some from Africa, Asia and Australia as well as many Europeans. Clearly, Stephen Duguid used his attendance at Oxford a year earlier to recruit many of those who presented at the Vancouver conference.

Just as the Oxford conference drew over 30 participants from Canada and the USA, Vancouver was in many ways like a 'return match': at least 23 Europeans participated, most delivering papers, speaking on panels or being 'featured speakers'. Some European involvement then continued at CEA conferences in subsequent years, although never on the same scale. The CEA created a position on its Board for an "international representative (non-Canadian)", thee already being a Canadian position on it. That position continued into the first decade of the 21st Century, and all five Europeans who were elected to the CEA Board over that period had close links with the EPEA.[50] Interaction between the two organisations was reciprocal, with prison educators from the USA and Canada participating in, and contributing significantly to, every EPEA conference to date. One of the most concrete manifestations of this transatlantic engagement can be seen in the extensive range of articles that were written by Europeans for the CEA's *Journal of Correctional Education*, especially in the period between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s.

The richness of this transatlantic engagement can be seen also in the publication of the CEA's *Yearbooks* for 1990 and 1991. Both of these were published by Simon Fraser University and edited by Stephen Duguid. The 1990 publication, in particular, is almost a report on the Oxford conference. A considerable number of the 20 European contributions were from England, but there were also inputs from Austria, France, Ireland, Netherlands, Northern Ireland and Norway. In a similar manner, the 1991 *Yearbook* drew on papers delivered in Vancouver the previous year as well as the EPEA conference in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991. Along with authors from some of the countries just mentioned, the 1991 edition also published material from Czechoslovakia, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

International collaboration received a further boost at Vancouver where the International Forum for the Study of Education in Penal Systems (IFEPS) was launched. This was "a global network of prison educators linked to research centres based at universities"[51]. The network included academics working in the field from North America, Europe and Australia. For many years in the 1990s, it held meetings and issued *I.F.E.P.S. News*. Although

[50] The international representatives from Europe on the CEA Board were, successively, Pam Bedford, Robert Suvaal, Kevin Warner, Anita Wilson and Cormac Behan.

[51] See 'Editor's Introduction' in *Yearbook of Correctional Education 1991,* edited by Stephen Duguid (Burnaby, Institute of Humanities, Simon Fraser University).

the group's activity then petered out, much the same role may be seen to be fulfilled today by the *Journal of Prison Education and Re-entry* (JPER), which was launched in 2014, and by 'Research Forum' sessions organised by those now driving the JPER at most of the EPEA conferences in the 21st Century. One continuous link between IFEPS and the JPER is provided by Carolyn Eggleston and Thom Gehring of California State University San Bernardino. They were original members of IFEPS and both to this day are members of the Editorial Board of the JPER. Moreover, they both regularly participated in EPEA conferences, stretching from Oxford in 1989 to Dublin in 2019. [52]

Reflecting on the international interaction that had occurred through conferences and related events around this time, Stephen Duguid, in his 'Editor's Introduction' to the 1991 *Yearbook*, noted:

> …important differences in practice and in conception concerning education in prison. The two most clearly delineated schools of thought are the North American 'correctional education' approach and the Western European 'adult education' approach. The name of the former is linked in part to an interest in reformation and in part to its close ties with what in North America are generally called *correctional* systems and institutions. In Western Europe the 'corrections' label is virtually non-existent. *Prison* or *penal* is the operative descriptor, and the adult education paradigm is the dominant model.[53]

By the time the Vancouver conference took place in 1990, the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison*, had been published and it received considerable attention at that conference, with many in the USA and Canada being surprised by its adult education perspective. A more informal development at Vancouver was a meeting that gave fresh impetus to the efforts to establish the EPEA. Henning Jorgenson's first letter on behalf of the *ad hoc* group had been sent out in January of that year and had garnered positive responses from 16 countries in the form of nominations of liaison persons. However, little more had happened by that summer. So, as three of those centrally involved in the project were at the Vancouver conference (Pam Bedford, Robert Suvaal and Kevin Warner), a meeting of the three took place over breakfast one morning in Vancouver - once more at the instigation of Pam Bedford. These three resolved to refocus efforts, and this led to the second letter from Henning Jørgenson (referred to above) issuing in September 1990. This led in turn to the establishment of a more formal organisation, which was based on a committee of liaison persons, in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991.

[52] At that EPEA conference in Dublin in 2019, Carolyn Eggleston was made a life member of the EPEA, the only non-European to be afforded this honour.

[53] Stephen Duguid, 'Editor's Introduction', *Yearbook of Correctional Education 1991, op. cit*.

Chapter 4

The Council of Europe Recommendation on education in prison

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN PRISON: WHAT IT WAS ASKED TO DO

Both of the letters which were circulated by Henning Jørgensen on behalf of the *ad hoc* group in 1990, which set in motion steps that would lead to the formal establishment of the EPEA, referred to two key Council of Europe documents. Each of the letters stated that the EPEA would promote "prison education in accordance with the Council of Europe's Recommendation and Report on Prison Education (1989) and the European Prison Rules (1987)". In this way, a certain conception of education (i.e. an adult education approach) and a certain philosophy about the use of prison were embedded in the EPEA from the beginning. The European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) was the Council of Europe body which, in the 1980s, developed the European Prison Rules and also decided to establish a group to examine education in prison. Its thinking on prisons and the views of key individuals closely associated with the CDPC were explored in some detail in Chapter 2.

The European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) is a Council of Europe body representing the highest-ranking officials in criminal justice and penal systems in their countries, and often includes the Director Generals of prison systems.[54] In 1984, they established what was called a 'Select Committee of Experts on Education in Prison'. 'Select' denoted the fact that not all 21 of the countries then in the Council of Europe had representation on this committee, but rather just nine of them, selected by such countries volunteering to take part. The countries represented were: Austria, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The Select Committee met in Strasbourg for a three-day meeting on seven occasions between 1984 and 1989, and at particular meetings there were additional presentations from experts from Sweden and Portugal, as well as from UNESCO and the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport.

Some countries were represented on the Select Committee by one member throughout, while others alternated their representatives. The more regular members were: Peter Ziebart (Austria), Henning Jørgensen (Denmark), Alain Blanc (France), Kevin Warner (Ireland), Luigi Daga (Italy), Alain Wagner (Luxembourg), Robert Suvaal (The Netherlands), Mustafa Yucel (Turkey) and Ian Benson (United Kingdom).[55] At its first meeting, the Committee elected Kevin Warner as Chairperson. The 17 core recommendations produced by the Select Committee can be seen in the boxed section within this chapter. The full report, i.e. the formal Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers together with the 'explanatory memorandum', generally referred to as *Education in Prison*, is now available on the EPEA website in a range of languages.

[54] See https://www.coe.int/en/web/cdpc/european-committee-on-crime-problems

[55] The full list of participants and the meetings they attended are available on page 2 of *Education in Prison*.

It was fortunate that the Select Committee that produced the report some five years later[56] included some who brought to the task a legal or judicial perspective (and so contributed penal policy thinking especially, such as reiterating the ideas in the European Prison Rules) and some who had an education background, with experience in and understanding of adult education. Further, as well as drawing on the European Prison Rules and other penal policy Recommendations, the committee made use of Council of Europe and United Nations documents on adult education, including the 1987 report from the Council of Europe, *Adult Education and Community Development*, which is quoted extensively in Chapters 2 and 5 of *Education in Prison*.

While *Education in Prison* was very much a collaborative project, different members of the Select Committee contributed particularly to different aspects of the report. For example, Luigi Daga and Peter Ziebart brought much of the penal policy thinking inherent in the European Prison Rules, while Henning Jørgensen shared many of the penological insights that characterise the Nordic countries. Ian Benson brought to the group his experience and awareness of the adult education field, as did several others. Robert Suvaal had quite specialist knowledge of physical education and sport. Alain Blanc contributed strongly in relation to creative and cultural activities and Kevin Warner asserted the importance of libraries in prisons. In a working group that operated in both French and English, Alain Wagner's fluency in both languages and insight into a range of cultures frequently helped the committee grasp the nuances of situations in a way they might not otherwise have done. And it was Mustafa Yucel who understood and pressed the core idea of education as a human right, which is the bedrock of the report.

The CDPC gave terms of reference to the Select Committee as follows:

- Study of the system of education in prison in the member states of the Council of Europe, including:
  - education inside the prison establishment, including education by correspondence; library; vocational training (workshop, farming, etc.); cultural activities and sports;
  - education outside the prison establishment (secondary, university, vocational, etc.);
  - arrangements for encouraging prisoners to educate themselves in prison and to continue their education after release;
- Preparation of a recommendation accompanied by an explanatory memorandum, concerning education within the regimes of penal instructions.

A number of things are striking in relation to these terms of reference. Firstly, the CDPC clearly held what is later termed in *Education in Prison* "a wide concept of education" (p.13). This concept is reflected in the first recommendation of the education report: "All prisoners shall have access to education, which is envisaged as consisting of classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and library facilities" (pp.7-8). The revision of the European Prison Rules in 2006, as well giving a strong endorsement to the overall 1989 Recommendation,[57] retains this extensive idea of what educational provision in prison should involve: "Every prison shall

[56] Budget cuts at the Council of Europe meant there were some periods in which meetings could not take place.
[57] The 2006 revision of the European Prison Rules states in its preamble: "Endorsing once again the standards contained in the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which relate to specific aspects of penitentiary policy and practice and in particular No. R (89) 12 on education in prison…"

seek to provide all prisoners with access to educational programmes which are as comprehensive as possible and which meet their individual needs while taking account of their aspirations" (EPR, 2006, 28.1). Yet, perhaps the most complete and clear description of the desired breadth of education offered in prison has been given by the United Nations rapporteur, Vernor Munoz, in his 2009 report.[58] He asserted that education in prison

> should be aimed at the full development of the whole person requiring, among other things prisoner access to formal and informal education, literacy programmes, basic education, vocational training, creative, religious and cultural activities, physical education and sport, social education, higher education and library facilities.

The UN report reiterates: "All persons [in prison] should have the right to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the human personality". So, the United Nations echoes very closely Council of Europe´s thinking and policy.

Secondly, advocating a wide or comprehensive curriculum is seen as necessary, not just to address the needs of 'the whole person', but also for motivation, or as the terms of reference put it, "encouraging prisoners to educate themselves". This is important since different individuals are stimulated and motivated by different aspects of education, are interested in different things. Thirdly, the acknowledgement that there needs to be provision of a range of learning opportunities from basic to university level is essential; learning needs to be pitched at whatever level people are at, and this will vary greatly.

Finally, the thinking in these terms of reference clearly sees a continuum between education in prison and in the outside community. They suggest that it is desirable for some of those in prison to participate in education on the outside; and also that it should be possible for those involved in education in prisons to continue with it outside after release. An assumption here is that those in prison are citizens, and so have the same rights, and should have the same services, as others in the wider society. Much the same thinking underpins one of the 'Basic Principles' set out at the beginning of the European Prison Rules: "Co-operation with outside social services and as far as possible the involvement of civil society in prison life shall be encouraged" (EPR, 2006, 7). And so, when elaborating 'rules' for education, the same logic that is found in the terms of reference is evident in the European Prison Rules: "As far as practicable, the education of prisoners shall (a) be integrated with the educational and vocational training system of the country… and (b) take place under the auspices of external educational institutions" (EPR, 2006, 28.7).

Such a perspective also lies behind what has been called 'the import model', whereby services for people in prison are provided by the normal providers in society. The concept of 'the import model' is generally attributed to the Norwegian criminologist, Nils Christie, who saw it as reflecting the inclusion of people in prison within the welfare state[59]. Asbjørn Langås, a member of the CDPC (and of the *ad hoc* group that set in motion the EPEA) explains this thinking in relation to education:

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[58] Vernor Muñoz . 2009. *The right to education of persons in detention, report of the special rapporteur on the right to education* (United Nations: Human Rights Council), pp.7-9. Available at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/11session/A.HRC.11.8_en.pdf

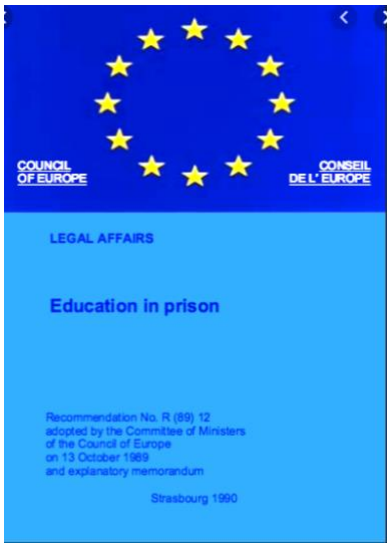
[59] Nils Christie (1970) Modeller for en fengselorganisajon (Models for organising the prison service), in R Østensen, *I stedet for fengsel (Instead of prison).* Oslo: Pax forlag.

> The treatment of inmates in prisons should underline the fact that the prisoner is still a member of society, and is not to be excluded from it. Therefore… any person detained or sentenced to imprisonment shall not lose his or her right to receive help, services and support from society. All citizens have an equal right to education, work, health services, and culture.[60]

It is clear from their terms of reference that the CDPC has in mind a form of education being offered to those in prison which included a very wide range of elements, involving both formal and informal education. That in turn gave authority to the Select Committee to envisage in their report a very extensive and comprehensive curriculum being offered in prisons. In *Education in Prison*, there are whole chapters given over to particular segments of education, such as vocational education, library services, physical education and sport, creative and cultural activities, social education – and each of these chapters corresponds to a particular recommendation at the beginning of the report. Moreover, this wide range is expected to be made available, *as of right, to all* who are in prison. It is notable today that in many prison systems, these high aspirations are not met. Education is often only available to some, 'targeted' only at particular groups of prisoners, seen as a discretionary privilege rather than a right, or regarded only as a subset of 'rehabilitation services'. Such approaches depart seriously from Council of Europe policy. Moreover, even when some education is provided for all, what is offered often falls short of the wide curriculum envisaged by the Council of Europe. For example, it may be limited too much to what should be just one part of overall provision, such as vocational training, basic education, secondary education or courses deemed to 'address offending behaviour'.[61]

THE AIMS OF THE EPEA: AN ADULT EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

When people gathered at the conference at Wadham College, Oxford, at the end of September 1989, the work of the Select Committee had been completed. Their Recommendation and 'explanatory memorandum' would not be formally adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for about another three weeks, on 13 October 1989 – the date the EPEA now sees as the international day of education in prison. A few more months went by before the Council of Europe published it in book form, in 1990. However, photocopies of the document were available at Oxford. Among those who read this report was Pam Bedford, a teacher in an English prison. When she took the initiative at the Oxford conference to suggest the formation of an organisation of prison educators, she also proposed that one of its purposes would be to promote education in prison in accordance with this Recommendation, which would become known generally as the report, *Education in Prison* (Council of Europe, 1990).



When the aims of the EPEA were later set out in writing, and in time incorporated into the constitution, this idea of education in prison remained to the fore: "To promote education

[60] Asbjørn Langås, 'The Sharing of Responsibility in the Rehabilitation of Prisoners: The Import Model', in Stephen Duguid (Ed) *The Yearbook of Correctional Education 1990* (Burnaby, Canada: Institute for the Humanities, Simon Fraser University), pp.153-157.

[61] Some of the ways in which the education offered in prisons may be limited are explored in 'Prison education across Europe: Policy, Practice, Politics' by Anne Costelloe and Kevin Warner, in *London Review of Education*, Volume 12, Number 2, July 2014.

in prison according to the Recommendation No. R (89) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to members of the Council of Europe (1989)".[62] It is notable that both letters sent by Henning Jørgensen in 1990 referred to promoting education in line with this report *and the European Prison Rules"* (emphasis added). Yet, this is not a significant difference because, as was made clear in the previous chapter, these two Council of Europe Recommendations are very much in harmony. The principles and penal policy outlook to be found in the European Prison Rules, especially the 'treatment objectives' as set out in the 1987 version, fully support the vision of education set out in *Education in Prison*.

For example, Hans Tulken's description of what prison regimes should attempt to do in following the European Prison Rules, given in the previous chapter, opens a very wide door for education in its fullest sense. He speaks of offering prisoners "realistic and attainable opportunities, chances, activities, methods and help which meet their needs and stimulate their interests".[63] This has echoes of Austin MacCormick's proposal in the USA over 50 years earlier, that people in prison should be offered "everything of benefit or of interest to them".[64]

Such thinking is also central to *Education in Prison*. This may be seen in the three 'justifications' for education in prison cited earlier, in Chapter 2 of this book. And it is particularly evident in Chapter 3 of the report, 'The place of education in the prison regime' (pp.21-24). The argument is made there that, if allowed to flourish as it should, education can also contribute significantly to the quality of the regime, in line with the treatment objectives set out in the European Prison Rules:

> Good education reflects back to the students their positive qualities and potential; it makes them feel more human, it links them with society outside the prison. In consequence, prison is made more bearable, its damaging effects on personality are limited, and the prisoners' health and safety are fostered because he or she has more mental and physical stimulation. All this helps the management of the prison, but it also calls for a response, a *quid pro quo*, from the regime. To flourish, prison education requires that its students be given a certain degree of freedom – physical space and scope for movement and interaction; psychological space, in which they can feel autonomous and make choices; and scope to express their thoughts and feelings. (p.22)

The report states that, while education for those in prison "can, as a welcome by-product, contribute to good order or a more positive atmosphere within a prison, *it must, ultimately, be provided to prisoners for its own sake*, drawing its meaning and direction from a philosophy of education" (emphasis added) (p.24).

That philosophy is from the field of adult education. The "two overall complementary themes" of *Education in Prison* are summarised in the opening chapter:

> firstly, the education of prisoners must, in its philosophy, methods and content, be brought as close as possible to the best adult education in the society outside; secondly, education should be constantly seeking ways to link prisoners with the outside community and to enable both groups to interact with each other as fully and as constructively as possible. (p.14)

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[62] This is now item 2 of the EPEA Constitution (see www.epea.org).

[63] Hans Tulkens, , 'The Concept of Treatment in the European Prison Rules' in the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin*, No 11 (June 1988), p.9.

[64] Austin MacCormick, 1931, *The Education of Adult Prisoners: A Survey and a Program* (New York, The National Society of Penal Information), p.9

In that, one again sees the marrying of key educational and penal policy concepts: the adult education approach on the one hand (those in prison, as citizens, have a right to education), and the 'resocialisation' principle on the other – people in prison are citizens, the imperative is to re-integrate them as soon as possible.

Where education is offered in prison, there have long been very different understandings of what its main purposes are, whether, as Langelid puts it above, it is "a goal in itself" or "a means to reducing recidivism". The latter is often an unquestioned assumption, reflected, for example, in the title of an English and Welsh policy document[65], *Reducing Reoffending through Skills and Employment*, or in the approach of other prison services which regard education as just a 'rehabilitation service'.

The idea that the main purpose of education in prison is to reduce recidivism has been the dominant thinking also in the USA for many decades now. Yet this has not always been the main outlook there or in Europe. The founder of the CEA, Austin MacCormick, asserted as far back as 1931: "We need to stress the normality rather than the abnormality of our prisoner-students, to apply standard educational practice to the problem rather than to try to develop a special educational technique designed for the criminal". In avoiding 'special techniques' for people in prison, he proposed instead that they be offered "adult education … in its European sense"[66]. And this is exactly what *Education in Prison*, along with other Council of Europe Recommendations, also proposes.

Such a perspective is not to ignore or neglect the possibility that, helped in large or small part by education, people may be able to turn their lives around and go on to integrate more constructively into society. However, it is to assert that educators, no less than medical staff for example, "must take their primary objectives from within their own profession" (p.19). Education is offered, first and foremost, "for its own sake" (p.24). That may well facilitate positive change in other areas of life at a later stage, as people find new interests or new talents within themselves, see new possibilities in their lives, and get to a more developed perspective on themselves, their lives and their society. They may, as *Education in Prison* puts it, be encouraged and helped to choose for themselves "to try to turn away from crime" (p.15), but that third objective listed in the report comes, it should be noted, after others: firstly, enabling people to survive the prison; and, secondly, developing or educating themselves in a general sense. [67] This approach, as we saw above, is strongly underpinned by Council of Europe penal policy generally.

Cormac Behan captures very well this distinction between narrower or broader concepts of rehabilitation or reform.[68] He draws on Edgardo Rotman's terms for two very different forms of rehabilitation: 'authoritarian' or 'anthropocentric', i.e. centred on the person. "'Authoritarian' rehabilitation", says Behan, "seeks to mould the prisoner into a pre-determined pattern of thought to ensure conformity", being almost a form of brain-washing. A person-centred (or as Behan calls it, 'liberty-centred') form of rehabilitation, on the other hand, has much in common with "an adult education approach which encourages critical thinking, reflection and personal awareness". This form of rehabilitation and adult education are one in that they each "seek to respect the independence of the individual, recognize them as agents in the process of change, understand the social and cultural factors of deviance, are

[65] England and Wales. Ministry of Education and Skills, 2005. (Norwich: The Stationery Office).

[66] Austin MacCormick, 1931, *The Education of Adult Prisoners: A Survey and a Program* (New York: The National Society of Penal Information), p.9.

[67] See 1.8 (p.15) of *Education in Prison*. The three 'justifications' for education cited there are quoted more extensively in Chapter 2 above.

[68] Cormac Behan, 'Learning to Escape: Prison Education, Rehabilitation and the Potential for Transformation', in *Journal of Prison Education and Re-entry*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 2014, pp.20-31.

cognizant of the impact of incarceration and do not seek conformity to a prescribed pattern of thought and behaviour".[69]

Such concepts of adult education and person-centred rehabilitation, which are very much in tune with Council of Europe thinking, reflect more positive change within people than simply ceasing to commit crime and suggest significant personal development. It is in this sense that adult education, whether in prisons or elsewhere, has been characterized as reflecting a wider and deeper concept of education than many other forms of schooling.[70] It aspires to facilitate deeper insight and change within the person, reflected in words frequently used in adult education literature, such as 'transformation', 'empowerment', 'consciousness-raising', etc.[71]

AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION IN PRISON

As noted already, *Education in Prison* represented a blending of ideas from two major sources: progressive penal policy, especially as set out by the Council of Europe, and the tradition of adult education. The report does convey a sense of the essence of adult education: it lists some of its distinctive methodology (in Chapter 5) and refers to Council of Europe and United Nations policy documents on adult and community education (in the Preamble and in Chapter 2). Section 5.2 describes "some special features" of adult education, such as "a high degree of participation by the students", connecting "much more than school education with the life experiences of the students" and "active ways of learning" (p.30). Citing an earlier Council of Europe document[72], the Select Committee described "the style of education it envisaged for prisoners" as "about taking part and experiencing, rather than listening in a passive way to the voice of the teacher" (p.30).

In 2000, some ten years after the publication of *Education in Prison*, a conference was held in Malta which sought to re-evaluate the report. Held in conjunction with the EPEA, this was the fourth conference of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education. Those attending came from 22 countries and included a few who had been part of the original Select Committee. In re-evaluating the original report, the conference attempted to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to judge whether its recommendations and analysis remained relevant or had become outdated. In the years since 1990, some issues have become more significant and, had the report been written later, would have featured much more prominently. Among these issues are the fact that Europe has become a more multi-cultural continent, and across the globe there is vastly more reliance on information technology. Both of these matters were, in fact, noted in Malta in 2000.

A report was drawn up after this Malta conference and later a summary of that report was published in the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin*.[73] One particular

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[69] Cormac Behan, *ibid*. Such a person-centred concept of rehabilitation resonates with much of what is termed 'desistance' in criminological literature, as described by authors such as Fergus McNeill, Shadd Maruna, Tony Ward and Stephen Farrell. Desistance is seen as a dynamic process rather than a once-off event, puts much emphasis on people's strengths as opposed to weaknesses, envisages a 'good life' for people rather than just a cessation of criminality and recognises the need for supportive structures within society.

[70] See Kevin Warner, 'Widening and Deepening the Education We Offer Those in Prison: Reflections from Irish and European Experience, in *Journal of Correctional Education*, 53(1), March 2002; and 'Against the Narrowing of Education', in *Journal of Correctional Education*, 58(2), June 2007.

[71] Note especially the writing of Jack Mezirow, Stephen Brookfield, Paulo Freire, etc.

[72] Council of Europe, 1987, *Adult education and community development* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe).

[73] Kevin Warner, 'Re-evaluating the Council of Europe work on *Education in Prison*: a report from the 4th European Conference for Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education', in *Penological Information Bulletin*, no.25, December 2003, pp.8-12.

observation from that conference is worth noting. Given that adult education is identified as one of the cornerstones of *Education in Prison*, "there should", the Malta report says, "have been more discussion of what it implies. In particular, the major issues debated among academics and practitioners in the adult education field could have been teased out and connected with the reality of prisoners and prisons".[74] Clearly, there is an inherent tension between the passivity which even relatively better penal institutions can induce and the freedom, agency and creativity adult education approaches call forth. Yet, promoting an adult education style of learning is at the heart of the challenge *Education in Prison* sets for authorities – and the report is backed in this by wider Council of Europe policy and the progressive approach of European penal leadership at the time the report was written.

While those at the Malta conference in 2000, like others before and since, saw much that was positive and helpful in the Council of Europe report, there are some weaknesses also which even those involved in the original wanted to acknowledge. The report was, of course, written by a committee and the old line about the camel being a horse designed by a committee is perhaps relevant here – one ends up with a lot of humps and bumps!

Recommendation No. R (89) 12 on Education in Prison

1. All prisoners shall have access to education, which is envisaged as consisting of classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and library facilities;
2. Education for prisoners should be like the education provided for similar age-groups in the outside world, and the range of learning opportunities for prisoners should be as wide as possible;
3. Education in prison shall aim to develop the whole person bearing in mind his or her social, economic and cultural context;
4. All those involved in the administration of the prison system and management of prison should facilitate and support education as much as possible;
5. Education should have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners should not lose out financially or otherwise by taken part of education;
6. Every effort should be made to encourage the prisoner to participate actively in all aspects of education;
7. Development programmes should be provided to ensure that prison educators adopt appropriate adult education methods;
8. Special attention should be given to those prisoners with particular difficulties and especially those with reading or writing problems;
9. Vocational education should aim at the wider development of the individual, as well as being sensitive to trends in the labour-market;
10. Prisoners should have direct access to a well-stocked library at least once a week;
11. Physical education and sports for prisoners should be emphasized and encouraged;
12. Creative and cultural activities should be given a significant role because these activities have particular potential to enable prisoners to develop and express themselves;

(continued ….)

[74] Kevin Warner, *ibid*.

13. Social education should include practical elements that enable the prisoner to manage daily life within the prison, with a view to facilitating his return to society;
14. Wherever possible, prisoners should be allowed to participate in education outside prison;
15. Where education has to take place within the prison, the outside community should be involved as fully as possible;
16. Measures should be taken to enable prisoners to continue their education after release;
17. The funds, equipment and teaching staff needed to enable prisoners to receive appropriate education should be made available.

To begin with, Recommendation 1[75], which lists the main areas of education that should be provided, could have been written more clearly: what, for example, are "classroom subjects"? The corresponding list in the UN rapporteur's report, which is quoted above, is much clearer and more comprehensive.

Recommendation 2 is awkwardly phrased. The intention was to convey the idea that there should be an adult education approach but perhaps that clarity was lost when it was rephrased to incorporate the teaching of juveniles. However, adult education methods are specifically referred to in Recommendation 7. It is possible that Recommendation 3, which speaks of "the whole person… [in] his or her social, economic or cultural context" could also have been phrased differently, but it is the exact phrase used in Council of Europe policy documents on adult education in the community, so the Select Committee felt it was important to have that correspondence. Recommendations 4 and 6 are arguably too vague.

Recommendation 5, by contrast, has a strength that seriously challenges many prison regimes in Europe. It makes what some might see as the radical assertion that there should be equality between work and education in prison regimes. It mirrors almost exactly what was in the European Prison Rules that came out in 1987, and this principle is reiterated in the 2006 and 2020 revisions of those rules. The leadership of prison systems and criminal administration in Europe took that position before the Select Committee did, seeing it as a logical follow-on from the concept of 'treatment objectives'.

Recommendations 8 to 13 highlight specific segments of the wide curriculum that are meant to be offered to all in prison. While some of these statements may be seen as somewhat general or even vague, each does correspond to a chapter (Chapters 6 to 11) in the main text where the thinking behind the principles is spelt out much more fully. The exception to this may be the rather limited discussion, for such an important issue, given to Adult Basic Education in Chapter 6 – a point noted in the Malta report.

Recommendations 14, 15 and 16 make practical suggestions related to the integration of the educational effort within prisons with that in the outside community. However, they also reflect strong penal policy concepts and mirror wider Council of Europe thinking in relation to imprisonment: that the person in prison is a citizen with rights and entitled to the support of the wider society, and that 'normalisation' should be sought as far as possible. These concepts are also reiterated in the full report, where the phrase 'interaction with the community' is repeated many times in different contexts. Recommendation 17 underpins the importance of allocating sufficient resources to the education of those in prison.

[75] The Recommendations are translated into 25 different languages, see https://www.epea.org/portfolio/council-of-europe-17-recommendations/

One of the most important concepts in *Education in Prison*, one that is the bedrock of the whole report, is the idea that people in prison, like those in the outside world, have a right to education, a right essential to their development as people and to the development of their communities. The Preamble begins:

> Considering that the right to education is fundamental;
> Considering the importance of education in the development of the individual and the community; (p.7)

What this right to education means is elaborated in the UNESCO declaration on adult education given in section 2.2 of the report.
The "right to learn" in an adult context is seen as:

- the right to read and write;
- the right to question and analyse;
- the right to imagine and create;
- the right to read about one's own world and to write history;
- the right to have access to educational resources;
- the right to develop individual and collective skills. (p.17)

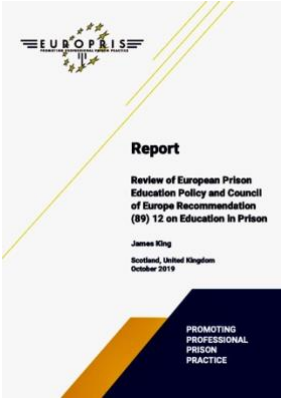
The report on the Malta conference set out an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of *Education in Prison*, as these were seen at the conference. Notably, it identified the human rights basis as a crucial strength of the report:

> Human rights have always been the bedrock of the Council of Europe. They underpin the thinking in the European Prison Rules, reflected, in particular, in the concept of the prisoner remaining a citizen, a full member of society. From this a whole penal policy flows. That philosophy is implicit as much as explicit in *Education in Prison*, but the education memorandum's complementarity with the European Prison Rules is comprehensive and crucial. Human rights also underpin the more explicit adult education approach of *Education in Prison* – the idea being that all citizens (and therefore all prisoners) are entitled, as of right, to access to education that enables them to develop fully as people.[76]

[76] Kevin Warner, in *Penological Information Bulletin*, 2003, *op. cit*.

THE 2019 EUROPRIS REPORT

The members of the Select Committee which wrote *Education in Prison* for the Council of Europe were conscious that the text they produced was not, as they put it in their introductory chapter, "a 'last word' or a complete guide to prison education" (p.17). They envisaged on-going development of thinking and practice in the field, but would have hoped for continued adherence to key principles, especially those relating to human rights, penal policy and adult education. So, the analysis carried out in Malta in 2000, which was described above, would have been in tune with this approach. Later, in Chapter 7, we will describe extensive involvement in the field of education in prison by the European Union from 2000 onwards, and it will be seen there that a very similar philosophy pertained for the most part, which was centred on 'lifelong learning' and social inclusion and reflected in Grundtvig projects.[77] Such an outlook can be found also in a report written in 2019 by James King of Scotland on behalf of EuroPris and which reviewed European prison education policy and the Council of Europe Recommendation agreed in 1989.



Europris is a network of national prison administrations across Europe, open to any country from the Council of Europe Region. It is funded by the membership fees of these countries and by the European Union. In 2020, 33 countries were members of EuroPris, including all but two of the 27 members of the EU, together with Albania, England and Wales, Georgia, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland, Switzerland and Turkey.[78] EuroPris defines its vision to be "improved public safety and security through improved detention standards and practice in Europe, through reduced re-offending and advanced professionalism in the correctional field". This is a much more control-focused perspective than found, for example, in the European Prison Rules or other Council of Europe policy documents. According to EuroPris, prison services benefit through a **"**supportive network which facilitates communication between national prison agencies and encourages collaboration and information sharing to address the many practical, unique (and often difficult) issues that we face in our daily professional work".[79]

In line with this ambition, EuroPris organises workshops and produces reports on matters such as forecasting "future demand for prison capacity", the mental health of prisoners, radicalisation, risk-needs assessment and the use of technology in prisons.[80] A EuroPris perspective on education in prison can be found on its website:

> European countries generally have a desire to deliver high-quality education in prison and recognize the importance of education as one of the instruments to reduce recidivism and prepare and equip prisoners for a better life after detention. If well-organised, education enhances an individual's opportunities in the labour market and contributes to their long-term social inclusion. Recently, several EU Member States have announced their intentions to reform prison education, or are in the process of

[77] See especially the 'Recommendations' devised by Alan Smith following the major 'Pathways to Inclusion' conference in Budapest in 2010 and the 'What we Stand For' statement produced by the VEPS Project, in Chapter 7 of this book.

[78] From https://www.europris.org/about/our-members/ accessed 12/06/2020. The two EU member states not members of EuroPris at this time were Greece and Poland.

[79] From https://www.europris.org/about/become-a-member/ accessed 12/06/2020.

[80] From https://www.europris.org/topics/forecasting/ accessed 12/06/2020.

> implementing prison reform, and are actively seeking information and best practice examples from colleagues across the continent.[81]

In 2017, EuroPris established an expert group to review prison education in Europe. As well as prison administrators, the group had a representative of the EPEA - Per Thrane (Denmark) initially, but he was shortly replaced by Anne Costelloe (Ireland) Others in the group, such as Ioana Morar of Romania and James King, had close associations with the EPEA. James King, Head of Education in the Scottish Prison Service, chaired the group and wrote its final report in 2019, which was titled *Review of European Prison Education Policy and Council of Europe Recommendation (89) 12 on Education in Prison*.[82]

The above quotation on education in prison from the EuroPris website might give rise to concerns about what appears to be a rather narrow or instrumental view of learning. There is a notable emphasis in the quotation on education as a means of reducing recidivism, and what looks like an overemphasis on training for the labour market, to the neglect of the deeper aims and wider curriculum that are central to the EPEA's *raison d'etre* . However, when the *Review* was finally produced by James King and colleagues, such fears could be laid to rest. Their report was faithful to the adult education and prison minimalism principles of the Council of Europe, the EPEA and, indeed, the philosophy underpinning the life-long learning policy of the European Union.

Much as had been done in Malta in 2000, but to a much more comprehensive extent, the *Review* revisited each of the 17 recommendations agreed by the Council of Europe in 1989, teased them out, reflected on them, and often expressed the thinking inherent in them in more precise, expansive or insightful language. This analysis is also grounded in penal policy thinking that is very much in tune with the *European Prison Rules* and other Council of Europe documents and fully recognizes the detrimental effects of imprisonment (in a way that is not at all evident in other EuroPris text) and of the role of education in its widest sense can play in counteracting that damage. The EuroPris Expert Group itself saw its report as a "reiteration of the strong principles underpinning" the 1989 report and as aiming to "enhance existing recommendations through highlighting best practice in educational approaches in particular areas". They gave examples of these 'particular areas' as the education of women or young people in prisons, or those with mental health or learning issues, and "harnessing the significant and ongoing advances in technology" in the cause of education in prison (p.6).

Most importantly, the *Review* is built on recognition of the human rights basis of education in prison and cites the United Nation's proclamation in the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners that "All prisoners shall have a right to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the human personality"[83]. It also draws attention to the reiterations of this right in Council of Europe and European Union declarations. However, the *Review* makes clear how, following a survey of current practice, the state of prison education often falls short in many countries, noting that "from the outset it was clear that many jurisdictions already have a significant distance to travel in embracing the principles set out in the 1989 document" (p.6). They remark that "this situation is further compounded by the multiple variations in what is considered to constitute education, the differences in criteria for accessing education and the lack of clarity in what is actually being sought or expected from prisoners' educational engagement" (p.6).

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[81] https://www.europris.org/topics/education-in-prison/ accessed 12/06/2020.

[82] See https://www.europris.org/file/report-review-of-european-prison-education-policy-and-council-of-europe-recommendation-89-12-on-education-in-prison/ accessed 12/06/2020.

[83] *ibid.,* p.5.

The *Review* goes on to criticise a general over-emphasis in European prison systems on "the remediation of low-level literacy/numeracy abilities and the development of low-level employment skills", to the neglect of "the provision of more general social sciences, arts and humanities opportunities" (p.7). In some countries, the *Review* states, access to education in custodial institutions "can be perceived as a privilege or solely for the purpose of delivering remedial interventions in contrast to being considered as a fundamental human right" (p.7). Clearly, then, what James King and others on the Expert Group envisaged as education in prison is a far wider, deeper and more rights-based activity than, for example, the concept of education proclaimed on the EuroPris website which was cited above.

Rather than echo the narrative of limiting education to basic skills, or a simplistic emphasis on work training as a means to reducing recidivism, the *Review* reasserts core principles found in *Education in Prison*. It stresses the need for education to be made available to all in prison, and the importance of an 'adult education approach'. It reasserts the idea that education must be directed towards the development of 'the whole person', and the consequent need to offer a wide curriculum to all in prison. Moreover, the *Review* makes clear and explicit, to a greater extent than the 1989 report does, the penal policy principles that underpin this approach to education, and backs up these principles with a rigorous elaboration of pertinent criminological literature.[84] In this way, the *Review's* analysis is set in a context which gives due recognition to matters such as 'the pains of imprisonment', including the severe psychological pains, which are often ignored or downplayed by Prison Services.

The EuroPris Expert Group's *Review* analyses and elaborates on each of the Council of Europe's 17 recommendations from 30 years previously, often expressing them more clearly and more forcefully than the original.[85] Thus, for example, the 'wide curriculum' proposed in *Education in Prison* is endorsed, but also added to in a number of ways in different parts of the text, including a strong emphasis on the teaching and use of information technology - which was very much a minority interest in 1989. The need to also provide "higher-level learning" (p.17) is rightly stated, the provision of which may have been implicit in the 1989 document, but which clearly needs to be asserted strongly in many countries today, given an often miserly attitude towards this opportunity by many prison authorities. Throughout the *Review*, there is a particularly strong and articulate assertion of the potential of the creative arts to support and develop people in prison, reinforced by good examples. Further, the *Review* envisages that the learning opportunities available to people in prison should include, for example, "contemporary developments… such as resilience, mindfulness, yoga and therapeutic arts that provide an interesting and stimulating range of subjects to improve well-being and mental health among prison-based learners" (p.13).

An extension of understanding of another kind is advocated in the *Review's* interpretation of recommendation 4. Whereas the original placed responsibility for facilitating and supporting education in prison on the shoulders of prison administrators, the new thinking asserts that other justice agencies and external education authorities have a responsibility in this regard also – an understanding of community engagement in the prison that is actually more in line with thinking in the *European Prison Rules*. The key Council of Europe stipulation that there should be equality in terms of payment and status within prison regimes between education and work, made clear in both the *European Prison Rules* and *Education in Prison*, is also strongly reasserted in the *Review*, even though the Review recognises that it tends to be 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance'.

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[84] The *Review* also provides an insightful overview of published literature on education in prison.

[85] The *Review* also suggests an 18th 'recommendation': "Prison authorities and education services should seek to proactively work with international agencies and organisations seeking to improve and expand access to education and training opportunities for prisoners" (p.26).

Chapter 5

Reaching out and making connections: the constitution and structures of the EPEA

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we describe how the early leadership of the EPEA attempted to build an organization that would be suited to the purpose of facilitating, through European co-operation, the professional development of educators working within prisons and other parts of penal systems. The great challenges were in making contact with such teachers and those in related disciplines who were promoting learning behind the walls of a myriad of prisons across Europe, and then linking these educators with each other in meaningful ways. It was with these objectives in mind that a particular type of constitution was written and adopted, and that particular structures were built in the organization. So, in this chapter we describe the EPEA's concept of membership, the Constitution of the EPEA, meetings of the Steering Committee, the thinking behind EPEA election procedures, regions and regional representatives, the tasks assigned to officers and the manual that was developed to help those organising conferences.

EMBEDDING PRINCIPLES IN THE CONSTITUTION

From the very beginning, when the first discussion about establishing an organisation for educators working in prison took place under the old copper beech tree, there was a good deal of clarity and wide consensus as to what the European Prison Education Association should be. Pam Bedford's prioritisation of teachers and other educators working 'on the ground' was one of those very early shared ideas. So, the rule that at least one of the two Liaison Persons from a country should be 'in daily contact with prisoners' was established from the beginning. Likewise, conferences, at least in the early decades and up until the one in Cyprus in 2009, made special efforts such as scholarship schemes to involve such teachers, librarians and other educators and put them centre stage.

As noted in the previous chapter, the vision of the Council of Europe, in relation to prison policy and adult education in particular, was at the heart of the organisation. The need to support and assist the professional development of educators in prisons, the need for research in the field, and the imperative of working with those who had other roles in the penal system were all part of early discussions. These ideas are reflected in the aims of the EPEA. There was also, from the beginning, an open and wide concept of who 'prison educators' were: not just teachers but vocational instructors, librarians, artists, physical trainers and many other roles – any work, in fact, that contributed to learning of any kind in a

penal setting, whether inside or outside prison, whether formal or informal, as can be seen by the wording in the Constitution:

EPEA Constitution

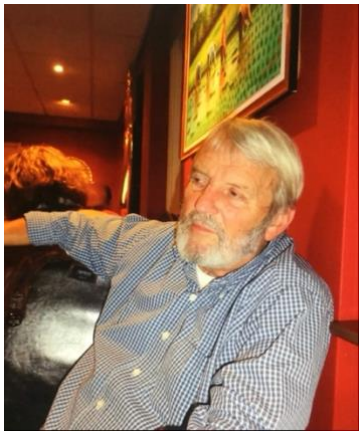
Aims (exerpt)

'Education in prison' is defined as formal, informal and non-formal education provided for all persons who are under the supervision of the judiciary, whether sentenced or awaiting trial, and whether serving a sentence in prison or in the community

'Persons involved' are defined as all those working in the field of education in prison and in related disciplines.

However, a challenge facing the founders was how to formally incorporate these ideas and principles into the constitution and structures of the EPEA. Discussion on these matters took place in Oxford and Vancouver and continued in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1991, where a Steering Committee was first established. At Bergen, several Steering Committee members were giving the task of drafting the EPEA's constitution. Robert Suvaal, Pam Bedford, Kevin Warner, Joy Clark of Northern Ireland and Anne Cameron of Scotland were especially engaged in this task between 1991 and 1993. Ideas as to what should go into the EPEA's basic document were drawn from the constitutions of similar bodies, such as NGOs, educational organisations and, following up on its role as a sort of mid-wife to the EPEA, components of the North American organisation, the CEA. Yet, the main shape of the constitution came about from efforts to incorporate some of the key ideas and principles shared by the founders.

One of those key ideas had to do with strategies those who set about building the EPEA tried to put in place to ensure the organisation remained a healthy one. They wanted to make sure that the organisation did not become dominated by a small clique, as often happens in organisations after some years, especially in voluntary ones. Robert Suvaal, in particular, was keen to guard against this possibility; he would point to other organisations which he felt had gone stale in this way over time and where the leadership remained in place for far too long. There was a wish among the founders to protect the EPEA by building into it, for example, assurances of reasonable turnover of leadership in an ongoing but never too radical a manner, i.e. in a way whereby not everyone changes at the same time. However, it was not until the Constitution was revised in 2007 that time-limits for membership of the Steering Committee were formally inserted in the Constitution, which then stipulated that no person could be on the Steering Committee for more than six years, or seven if they became Chairperson. Such thinking and practice are now widely seen as key elements of good governance in organisations of all kinds.[86]



Robert Suvaal, the Netherlands

Staggering the turnover of Steering Committee members, while also providing some continuity, was also envisaged by the original insertion into the constitution of a rule whereby the two Liaison Persons elected to the Steering Committee from a Region at the General Council meeting in a conference year took up their positions at different times. One did so immediately for a two year period, the other joined the following year, also for a two-year

[86] It is a source of deep regret to us as authors that this principle of good governance was abandoned by the EPEA after change to the time-limits rule in the Constitution was proposed by the Steering Committee in Vienna in 2017.

period.[87] For the same reason of ensuring reasonable turnover and continuity, elections to different officer posts take place in different years, or at least did so in the early years. Another way in which it was hoped to protect the organisation, and perhaps also to promote diversity - or at least a variety of personnel - was by having three different ways in which people could be brought on to the Steering Committee. Officers are elected by the popular vote of all members, while Liaison Persons become members of the Steering Committee via their particular Region. Originally, Regional Representatives were selected for the Steering Committee by the Liaison Persons of their own Region at General Council meetings, which are held every two years in conjunction with EPEA conferences. Later, the way Regional Representatives are elected changed, and elections take place now whenever vacancies arise. Finally, the Steering Committee itself can co-opt specialists as members of the committee, such as those given responsibility for particular projects, the website, etc.

'PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EUROPEAN CO-OPERATION'

While there was clarity among the founders of the EPEA as to what its purposes and core principles were, a key challenge in the early years (and possibly still to this day) was to work out the means by which the second aim of the EPEA could be achieved, i.e. "to support and assist the professional development of persons involved in prison education through European co-operation"[88]. The early 1990s were pre-digital times, so that the possibilities for communication we now have were not, in practice, then available to most people. While the Berlin Wall had fallen, and contacts between east and west in Europe had begun to develop rapidly, many practical barriers still hindered interaction across national boundaries. The Schengen area, which allows travel between countries without passports, did not come into effect, even in its original more restricted territory, until 1995. And, while the possibilities for travel and international interaction were common among those who worked, for example, in senior posts in government departments, these opportunities were not so easily available to those 'working on the ground' – yet, supporting such educators was to be the central focus of the EPEA.

Linking teachers and others working in education in penal settings with those similarly involved in other countries presented a significant challenge. A crucial issue facing the early leadership of the EPEA was to identify ways in which those who worked daily in classrooms, libraries, workshops, gyms and studios within prisons and such settings could be supported. It was always recognized that such educators often form strong bonds and give mutual encouragement when they do connect with each other, even across political, linguistic and cultural divides. As Pam Bedford had said, at a point when the EPEA was still in embryonic form, they have "much in common in their specialist, and often isolated, field" and welcome "the opportunity to share experience and develop ideas together".[89] The challenge was to make such links happen, especially across national boundaries.

Enabling such connections to take place was the overriding concern of those on the first Steering Committees as they set about developing the EPEA. And to this day, notwithstanding advances in electronic communication and other spheres, it remains a primary challenge. The wish to facilitate professional development through European co-operation lay behind initiatives of the EPEA such as the launch of the *EPEA Newsletter* (called the *EPEA Magazine* for a period) in 1991, the establishment of the *EPEA Bulletin*

[87] Obviously, this arrangement fell by the wayside in 2006 when the number of Regions increased from three to five and each Region was to have only one representative on the Steering Committee from that point onwards.
[88] From Aims of the EPEA, taken from *The European Prison Education Association* (Veritas Press, Zabbar, Malta, 2004), p.13.
[89] *EPEA Newsletter*, Volume 1, Number 1, March 1991, p.2.

which operated between 1995 and 2007, the setting up of the EPEA website around 2000 and the publication of the EPEA Directories and other material. All these initiatives were seen as a means to expand communication with and between members, and with others who had an interest in education in prison.

These core ideas of connecting those working in education in prisons and simultaneously reaching out across borders lay behind many of the strategies of the Steering Committee. The aspiration was to somehow make connections between those who otherwise were separated in many ways – for example, to connect, say, the lone teacher working in a small prison inside the Arctic Circle in Sweden, the vocational instructor in a large complex old prison in Madrid, the librarian in a Polish prison or the artist in Cyprus's sole prison in Nicosia. The determination to reach out and make connections underpinned the core structures of the EPEA, such as the regional structures, the election processes and – central to the EPEA's operation from the beginning – the major conference which takes place every two years.

Likewise, an effort to reach out and connect people working in the field lay behind the creation of the key officer post of 'Membership Secretary'. This post was established at the inception of the EPEA and continued until 2007. The other officer posts established at the beginning were the conventional ones of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, and these continue to this day. The role of the Membership Secretary was to actively involve as many people as possible in the organisation, by expanding membership and ensuring strong two-way communication between the membership and the leadership.[90] The central importance of making connections with, and between, members meant that the Membership Secretary was required to present an up-to-date list of members at every Steering Committee meeting and to regularly produce Directories of members' names, places of work and contact details. These Directories were circulated across the organisation with a view to encouraging interaction between such members, especially across national boundaries. These connections and exchanges tended to happen especially among educators in their own particular fields, such as art teachers, prison librarians, vocational instructors, physical educators, language teachers, Head Teachers and so forth.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE: THE ENGINE OF THE EPEA

If the EPEA conference which is held every two years is the focal point of the EPEA's activity and the primary means by which it supports professional development and interaction among educators in prisons, the engine which drives that is the EPEA's Steering Committee. Following the establishment of the Steering Committee at the EPEA conference in Bergen, The Netherlands, in May 1991, the first time the Steering Committee held a meeting in its own right was at the Further Education Staff College, at Coombe Lodge, in Blagdon, England, in April 1992. Thereafter the pattern was for it to meet at least twice a year as it focused on the objectives and tasks just described. Even after a constitution was adopted at Sigtuna in 1993 and arrangements were generally put on a more formal footing, the EPEA continued to operate informally in some ways, driven often by enthusiasm and the excitement of a new venture.

This informality can be seen in a somewhat *ad lib* approach to finances – or rather to a lack of finance, as was very much the case in early years. Surprising as it may seem today, it was some years before the EPEA had a bank account, and several more years before it had

[90] The need for such a role was clearly felt even after the position was abolished in 2007. In 2012, the Steering Committee assigned the role of 'membership manager' to Ioana Morar, one of its Regional Representatives, as described in the *EPEA Newsletter*, number 41, Spring 2012: "Ioana Morar from Romania is the membership manager of the EPEA. If there are any questions about membership, personal or organisational, please contact her via email".

monies of any significance. The EPEA operated in early years, and generally did so successfully, by drawing in large measure on 'benefits-in-kind'. In those days, employers, in both the justice and educational sectors, were frequently agreeable to funding any of their staff who held positions on the Steering Committee to attend meetings. At times, Prison Services or educational bodies facilitated and funded the actual holding of Steering Committee meetings in one of their premises or in some other location.

Another way in which such bodies helped the EPEA was in facilitating the distribution of the *EPEA Newsletter*. In the first few years, once a Newsletter was produced, it was put on a 'master copy' by Robert Suvaal in his office in the Ministry of Justice in The Netherlands and posted to the Liaison Persons in each country. Liaison Persons would then make photocopies in their colleges, prisons or Ministries and post a copy to each member within their country. This happened, of course, well before digital communication became common. The process generally worked well, although it did depend on the level of the EPEA's organisation within a particular country. From 1997, and for the next decade, Torfinn Langelid in his role of Membership Secretary, took on the task of 'distributor-in-chief' of the *EPEA Newsletter* that Robert Suvaal had originally carried out. Postage was then funded by the County Governor of Hordaland.

Such 'make do' arrangements were particularly helpful in the enabling of Steering Committee meetings to take place, as can be seen from Appendix 1, which lists the locations of Steering Committee meetings between 1991 and 2010. It is noticeable there that all early meetings, and several even into this century, relied on the generosity and hospitality of Prison Services, educational institutions or individual hosts in the locations where the meetings were held. Every two years, of course, a Steering Committee meeting took place during or just before an EPEA conference. The Further Education Staff College (later known as FEDA) at Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, England, made their facilities available for Steering Committee meetings on a number of occasions, as did the VHS Folk Highschool in Bergen, the Netherlands.[91] At other times, prison officer training centres were made available for meetings at weekends; this help was provided by the Prison Services in Scotland, Ireland and Denmark (twice). At other times, Prison Services sponsored the accommodation for Steering Committee meetings in guest houses or hotels, such as in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1996; in Strasbourg, France, in 1997; and in Kilkenny, Ireland, in 2002.

Steering Committee Meeting in Copenhagen 2005. Front left: Petros Damianos, Janine Duprey-Kennedy, Anne Costelloe, Valentina Petrova, Katinka Reijnders, Peter Ruzsonyi. Second row left: Dominic Henry, Alan Smith, Joe Giordmaina, Niek Willems, Torfinn Langelid, Per Trane and Gisle Grahl-Jacobsen

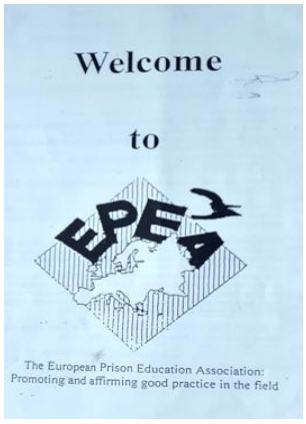
Some memorable meetings were made possible when individuals graciously accommodated Steering Committee meetings in their homes. This happened when two Swedish Liaison Persons, Agneta Bergendal and Anita Johannisson, and their neighbours hosted a meeting near Stockholm in 1993. The following year, a Steering Committee meeting was held at an open prison in Givenich, Luxembourg, and Steering

[91] Additionally, each of these educational establishments hosted a full EPEA conference. Bergen hosted the 3rd in 1991 and Blagdon the 5th in 1995.

Committee members stayed in the homes of prison staff nearby. Sometimes Steering Committee meetings were held in conjunction with other events, such as a one-day conference and Liaison Persons' meeting in Malta (1998), a meeting with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (2004), a meeting on European Union Grundtvig projects in Denmark (2005) and the annual conference of FOKO, the EPEA Branch in Norway (2008). Meetings were also held at other times in Gothenburg, Glasgow, Athens, Bergen (the Netherlands), Belfast, Bergen (Norway), Prague, Sofia, Oslo, and Paris.

REGIONS, LIAISON PERSONS AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

One of the ways in which the EPEA attempted to encourage people to become members, make that membership active and promote communication between the leadership and those members was through its regional structures. Such an arrangement had been envisaged when the constitution was being developed. The original wording stated that "a Regional Section consisting of at least 3 countries may be formed" and that "two members of the Steering Committee may be elected by each Regional Section, each to serve for two years (staggered to provide continuity)". The thinking was that, not only would this structure ensure involvement in the Steering Committee across a diverse and geographically extensive Europe, but that it might also encourage countries in close proximity to become involved with each other through the EPEA, and especially through the co-operation of their Liaison Persons. Each country linked to the EPEA has two Liaison Persons. The Liaison Person role is crucial to the successful operation of the EPEA, and the centrality of that role in the eyes of the EPEA leadership was reflected in the series of some 13 Special Liaison Person meetings which were held between 1998 and 2014 (see Appendix 2), and which will be discussed further in Chapter 6. Another way to take care of new members was the idea of a "Welcome Pack" with some of the information in English, French and German.



Welcome-pack to new EPEA members

Originally and through the 1990s, there were three Regional Sections – Northwest, Central and Mediterranean – although the countries within each region changed from time to time. At the time of the 6th EPEA Conference in Budapest in 1997, these three regions included countries as set out below:

North-West:	Denmark, England & Wales, Finland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland and Sweden.
Central:	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland.
Mediterranean:	France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain.

What is striking about this grouping is that no country from the former Soviet Block in Central and Eastern Europe, other than Hungary, is included. This reflects the manner in which people from those countries became involved with the EPEA. As was noted in Chapter 3, the presence of a speaker from Prague (the capital then of Czechoslovakia) at the Oxford conference in 1989 was seen as quite a novelty. In the following years, there was considerable engagement from 'Eastern Europeans' in the 3rd, 4th and 5th EPEA Conferences, while

'Directors' conferences took place in Poland in 1994 and Estonia in 1996. At the 1997 Budapest conference, there were participants from Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, as well as many from Hungary itself.

The explanation for the lack of involvement by these countries in the regional structures in the 1990s lies partly in the origins of the EPEA in Western Europe, and partly in the circumstances that prevailed in the Eastern countries at this time. As the societies and economies of the former Soviet Block countries went through radical changes, the EPEA Steering Committee decided that it was unrealistic to require membership fees in Western currency and so offered arrangements such as reduced membership fees to prison educators in those countries, or offered schemes whereby, for example, members might get three years membership for one year's payment. That arrangement changed at a later point, but it meant that in the 1990s those in Eastern Europe had what amounted, in effect, to associate membership, although that was not how it was classified.

With the turn of the century, matters had developed whereby Eastern and Central European countries were now included in the original tripartite regional structure. By 2003, the grouping was as follows:

North-West:	Belarus, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, England Wales.
Central:	Moldavia, Poland, Ukraine, Slovenia, Romania, Georgia, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Hungary, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia.
Mediterranean:	Bosnia, Macedonia, Serbia, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Malta, Greece, Albania, Croatia, Cyprus and Turkey.

While, in 1997, 20 countries were listed in the regional structure, by 2003 that number had more than doubled to 42, presumably reflecting considerable expansion in engagement with the EPEA.

However, what was also developing in the new century was a rather cumbersome arrangement with countries too far apart being grouped together. In 2003, Svenolov Svensson and Torfinn Langelid were given the task by the Steering Committee of analyzing the three-region system and bringing forward proposals for an arrangement that would better suit the original purposes of encouraging active regions and improving two-way communication with members. The constitution stipulated that there should be no more than six regions, each with at least three countries. A meeting in Malta in 2003 clarified the role of the Regional Representative and clearly envisaged it as a very active one, involving familiarity with the EPEA constitution, promoting and representing the EPEA in their respective regions, organizing regional meetings in co-operation with the other Liaison Persons or Contact Persons, giving feedback from these colleagues to the Steering Committee and generally informing the membership in the region of developments in the EPEA across Europe.

The Langelid-Svensson proposals were discussed at a number of Steering Committee meetings and finally adopted at a meeting in Paris in 2006. There were to be five Regions, each of which would now have just one representative on the Steering Committee. These new arrangements pertained for several years but have since been varied again.

North: Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Belarus.

West: Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England & Wales, Portugal and Spain.

Central-West: France, Germany, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia.

Central-East: Poland, Hungary, Moldova, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Georgia and Bulgaria.

South: Italy, Malta, Greece, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia.

DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO OTHER STRUCTURES

As one might expect in any organization, as the EPEA developed and also as some circumstances changed other structures also changed. As mentioned earlier, the Membership Secretary post, which had a specific outreach role to members, was terminated in 2007. Also in the mid-2000s, new roles were created on the Steering Committee and individuals were co-opted to fill them. Among these were the positions of Webmaster and Project Officer, reflecting respectively the growing importance of electronic communication and European Union funding.

The officer positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer remained as central pillars of the EPEA. As in other organisations, the Chairperson has an overall responsibility for the development of the EPEA in accordance with the constitution and the organisation's aims, objectives and action-plans. To a large extent the Chairperson is the 'face' of the organisation to those within and beyond the EPEA. The Secretary's role is a key coordinating one, likewise in accordance with the aims and policies of the EPEA, and he or she is in position for a three year term. The Treasurer obviously manages the finances of the EPEA, and also does so for a three year term. In the 2003, the Chairperson's term was increased from two to three years. The Chairperson's three-year term is preceded by one year as Deputy Chairperson – the aim being to ensure both continuity and some transition.

The Steering Committee clarified the roles of all officers – which at that time included Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary - in written job descriptions in 1998. It also set out guidelines for other important structures and means of communication at various times. For example, in the late 1990s, guidelines for the *EPEA Newsletter* were established, with the idea that these would be followed as the editing and production moved between different people and countries.

A crucial piece of work carried out by the Steering Committee in 1997 was to produce a set of guidelines for the major EPEA conference that takes place every two years. These conferences are central to the raison d'etre of the EPEA, the forums for presentations and discussion related to education in prison, and especially for networking among those working

in the field. In a sense, as the history outlined in earlier chapters makes clear, what we now regard as EPEA conferences actually pre-date the EPEA itself as an organisation. This set of guidelines defined the target groups for the conferences as: practitioners engaged in different forms of education within prisons, administrators and policymakers. The guidelines envisaged one third of the delegates being from each target group. The conference guidelines related to organizational matters such as planning, the programme of the conference, finance and the necessity of producing a report after the conference. Impressive and substantial reports were produced after all EPEA conferences from 1991 to 2011, and these generally make available the plenary talks from the conferences, and give details of other themes, the participants, workshops and other aspects of the programmes, including EPEA developments.[92] In more recent times, the practice of documenting these key EPEA events has fallen away.

[92] All these conference reports can now be accessed in the state archive in Bergen. Many of them are also available on the EPEA website.

Chapter 6

Reaching out and making connections: tools for communication

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 described how a core purpose of the EPEA - linking prison educators across Europe together in a mutually-supportive way - led to a particular type of constitution and shaped certain key structures within the organisation. This chapter follows on from the previous one and describes efforts that were made to put that core purpose into effect by establishing channels of communication with and between members.

Publications that were variously called *EPEA Newsletter*, *EPEA Magazine*, *EPEA Bulletin* and *EPEA News* were central to this communication effort at different times over the past three decades. With the turn of the century, the EPEA website became another means of communication, complementing, and at times incorporating, these publications. One of the most significant initiatives in this policy of engaging with members was the holding of special meetings of Liaison and Contact Persons. These meetings took place frequently for well over a decade, from 1998 to 2014, and contributed a vital dynamic to the organisation. Another key initiative around the same time was the publication of EPEA Directories, five of which were produced between 2000 and 2005. One of the key purposes of these Directories was to facilitate prison educators in any part of Europe in making contact with those in similar roles in other countries.

EPEA NEWSLETTER, EPEA MAGAZINE

In Chapter 3, we told how the first *EPEA Newsletter* was launched in March 1991: how Pam Bedford compiled and edited it in HM Prison Standford Hill in Kent, England, drawing in articles from several European countries. Once put together in England, a 'master' copy was sent to Robert Suvaal and he organised its printing and distribution from the Ministry of Justice in The Hague. This procedure was followed for the first and then for many subsequent newsletters. To look at a copy of that first newsletter today is to be struck by its 'home-made' quality: just 22 typed and photocopied pages bound together without a single photograph or illustration. Yet, with its publication, the EPEA announced itself to the world, or at least to the world of prisons and specialist education in Europe. In particular, it attempted to communicate with as many prison educators across Europe as possible.


EPEA-NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 1

March 1991

Newsletter of the European Prison Education Association i.s.n.

Editor:

Pam Bedford

HM Prison Standford Hill
Church Road
Eastchurch
Sheerness
Kent ME12 4AA
UNITED KINGDOM

The first few newsletters were edited by Pam Bedford. Then, when she went to work in a prison in Colorado for a year, Catherine Coakley, an art and creative writing teacher in Cork Prison, in Ireland, took on that task. She began her editorial for issue number 5 (Winter 1992/1993) with the words:

> "Pam Bedford is snowbound in Colorado and settled into her exchange programme. So, I have taken over as editor… while she is away".

Catherine edited three issues and Pam resumed as editor on her return to England.

These early newsletters were upbeat and positive in outlook and focused substantially on the work of teaching a great variety of subjects in very different prisons across many European countries, with occasional accounts from North America or Australia. As time went on, drawings and even photographs began to appear in the *EPEA Newsletter*. It needs to be remembered that the time when the EPEA began was essentially prior to any widespread use of electronic communication, so that the printed word was the logical means by which prison educators could communicate with each other. (A boxed section later in this chapter, describing the tentative introduction of computers to an educational setting in the early-1990s, gives some sense of their novelty at that time.) The newsletters also regularly carried notifications of, and reports on, conferences relevant to education in prison, and told of developments in the field in particular countries. They also provided news of what was happening in the efforts to establish the EPEA on a firmer footing and, from *EPEA Newsletter 5* which was issued in December 1992, gave regular reports on Steering Committee meetings.

In the very first *EPEA Newsletter* (March 1991), issued two months before the '3rd EPEA' conference in Bergen, the Netherlands, Pam Bedford told of these efforts to get the EPEA up and running, and she expressed the hope that "newsletters will serve as a focus of interest and debate, that a network for visits between prison educators in different countries will be developed, and that Articles of Association [i.e. a constitution] will be drafted".[93] For some 11 years and through 23 issues, the *EPEA Newsletter* did fulfil the role Pam Bedford envisaged of being "a focus of interest and debate" among European prison educators, and did so to such an extent that the title 'newsletter' did not really do justice to the level of interest and lively discussion it generated. It is perhaps because such a name so understated the quality of the publication that the title was changed in 2004 to *EPEA Magazine*, although it became a newsletter again some years later.

In the EPEA's first 20 years, its main publication, whether called Newsletter or Magazine, can be said to fall broadly into four phases in the way it was produced. Initially, one person, either Pam Bedford or Catherine Coakley, put the Newsletter together; this was the case up to issue number 9. A second phase applied to issues number 10 to 25, when, instead of there being one editor, different newsletters were put together by groups in particular countries. Then, commencing a third phase, two Norwegians, Jon Erik Rønning and Asbjørn Støverud, were responsible for the publication and they produced issues 26 to 31. This was followed by a forth phase in which there was once again one regular editor: in 2006, the responsibility moved to Greece, where Ioannis Papadimitriou became editor of the *EPEA Magazine*. He was the editor of the magazine for eight years, producing all the issues from number 32 (Autumn 2006) to number 45 (Winter 2014).

In order to support the editor or editors, a 'Board of Editors' was established in the spring of 2005 and continued for some years. The first Board comprised Anne Costelloe (Ireland), Per Thrane (Denmark), Marinela Sota (Albania) and Peter Ruzsonyi (Hungary). In more recent times, a practice developed whereby certain regions took responsibility for particular issues of the *EPEA Newsletter*. The newsletter became available on-line. From

[93] *EPEA Newsletter*, Volume 1, Number 1, March 1991, p.2.

January 2017[94], the on-line *EPEA Newsletter* was issued much more frequently, especially in 2017 when 12 issues were produced by Pris Tatipikalawan from the Netherlands.

The contributions in the first phase of the *EPEA Newsletter's* life came almost entirely from countries in 'Western' Europe, although there was occasional input from North America or Australia, and one report on a visit to a Nicaraguan prison. Yet, in that early period, the Newsletter impressively managed to draw involvement from almost every corner of that half of Europe, reflecting the lively engagement of these countries in the fledgling EPEA. Items appeared (frequently in many cases) from Austria, Denmark, England and Wales, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Spain and Sweden. Only one country from Eastern Europe, Estonia, was represented in that first phase of the Newsletter's publication. As was to be expected, the articles were predominantly about education in prison, including vocational education, art, drama, music, theater, physical education and sport, creative writing, life-skills, health-education, libraries, post-release support – and even one on kite-flying in a Danish prison! One article, in 1994, was about the introduction of a new invention called a computer into prison teaching (see boxed section).

Computers in Adult Education, by Brian Kelly
(An extract from an article in *EPEA Newsletter,* number 8, Spring 1994)

The first two computers were bought in 1989… IBM compatible machines with monochrome monitors. The motivation for buying them was probably a feeling that computers were the coming thing and that we should be offering computer courses to our students… At that time in the Training Unit two prisoners were very interested and knowledgeable about computers generally and they were influential in the purchasing decision. In fact, the technician who came to demonstrate the PCs to the students and staff was quite intimidated by how much these two students knew about the workings of computers.

At first, nobody was quite sure what to do with these machines. Should computers be taught as a stand-alone subject or integrated into all subject areas?... Should they be placed in one classroom or brought around to classrooms as required? Did we buy the right machines? What software should we use? How do you teach computing, etc. etc.? We hadn't even used them, yet already we were beginning to appreciate their complexity.

The decision was made to train all members of the teaching staff in computer programmes applicable to their subject areas and then, hopefully, computers would evolve naturally into all areas of the school curriculum. The training would, of course, be carried out by the two '*wunderkinds*' mentioned earlier – which seems to me to approximate some kind of adult education ideal: teachers and students sharing skills and expertise…

Some articles went into some depth, such as one by Tessa West, an Inmates Services Manager at an English prison, which reported on the International Conference on Prison Education which took place in Tallinn, Estonia, in May 1992. (There is more on this timely conference in Chapter 8). Tessa referred to four speakers from Estonia, two from the Ministry of Justice and two practitioners. They painted a pessimistic and negative picture. They faced many difficulties, in particular a lack of resources, overcrowded prisons, riots, an unresolved

[94] Newsletters from this time are available on the EPEA website.

legal situation and little prospect of a better future. However, she concluded a little more optimistically, saying "there is still a vast amount to be done, and sometimes it seems unachievable, but going to Estonia gave me time to reflect, and the opportunity to renew reserves of energy". [95]

Newsletter number 5 achieved what now looks like something of a 'scoop' in that it published an article by Andrew Coyle, then Governor of Brixton Prison in London (which he famously described elsewhere as "a human dustbin"). He had just published what would become an important book, *Inside: Rethinking Scotland's Prisons*, following his experience as a Governor in that country's then troubled prison system. Andrew Coyle would in time gain world-wide recognition as a penal reformer and founder in London of the International Centre for Prison Studies.[96] A short extract from his 1992 *EPEA Newsletter* article is given in a boxed section below: the closeness of his thinking to that of the Council of Europe, and his support for education in prison as a form of personal development in the widest sense, is striking. Very similar thinking is again found in a newsletter article eight years later (Number 18, January 2000), this time written by William Rentzmann, the long-time Director General of the Prison and Probation Service in Denmark. He concludes: "when new learning cultures are to be created in a prison, you, as educators, must choose an educational method that promotes normalization, openness and responsibility as much as possible". [97]

Prison Education: an island of normality, by Andrew Coyle
(An extract from an article in *EPEA Newsletter*, number 5, Winter 1992/1993)

Prison is an abnormal place. We do well never to forget that. One cannot normalise the abnormal. The best we can hope for is to reduce the abnormality to an absolute minimum… Once a person is admitted to prison, it is the responsibility of those who work in the prison system to ensure that the experience of imprisonment is a positive one. This means that prisoners must be given every opportunity to make use of the time during which they are deprived of liberty to re-assess their personal position, to gain skills and to build up support mechanisms which will help them on release. One of the best ways of doing this is to introduce the person who is in prison to a range of resources and activities which are present in the community and which can be made use of after release. The same principle applies to people who are serving long sentences in prison. The resources provided will help them primarily to serve their sentences in a positive way…

….. The education unit will be one of the few areas in a prison which is a neutral zone, where people are given the opportunity to be themselves, to display their weakness and gain new strengths. The influence of a good education unit will extend into all walks of prison life. It will give people the opportunity to become aware of their cultural heritage. This is particularly important for those who are of ethnic minority, a group much over-represented in most prison systems. It will offer techniques for personal relaxation which help prisoners to cope with the stress of prison life. It will be an important vehicle for bringing many sectors of community life into the prison. Through art, music and drama it may open a world to prisoners which they have never experienced before. And all of this on top of the key work of helping people to acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy… (continued …)

[95] *EPEA Newsletter* 6 Spring/Summer 1993 pp. 12-15
[96] See www.prisonstudies.org.
[97] *EPEA Newsletter No. 18,* 18 January 2000 pp. 1-10

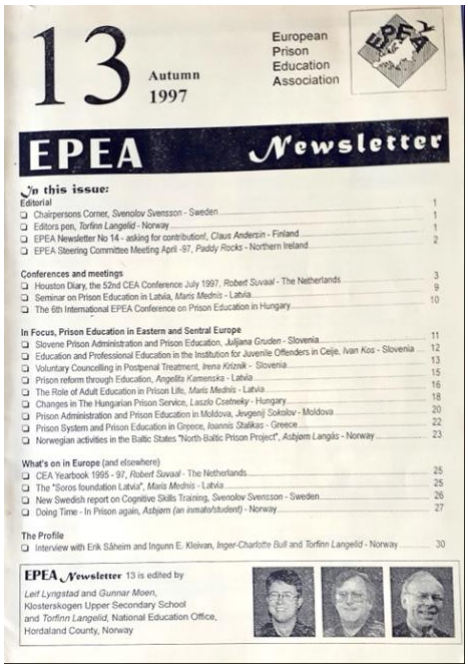
……..

The best education units in a prison setting do not exist in a vacuum. Teachers… will be able to show prison officers that offering prisoners positive and relevant experiences is not a threat to security. On the contrary, it does much to enhance security in a positive way. In meeting the challenge which we all face of reducing abnormality of prison life to a minimum, those who provide education are not on the margins. They are key players.

The best form of education in prison goes far beyond learning of the academic kind.

The second phase in which the *EPEA Newsletter* was produced, where people from different countries took turns to collect for and prepare one issue each, commenced in the mid-1990s and continued through 16 issues up to 2003. The first such issue was number 10, which was edited by Mary Kett and Peter Doyle from Ireland; the last issue compiled in this manner was number 25, in Spring 2003, edited by Kristal Warm of Estonia. In all, 16 such special issues were compiled by editor groups from an impressive variety of countries: Ireland, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Scotland, France, Denmark, England and Wales, Italy together with Northern Ireland, Sweden, Ireland, Bulgaria, Germany, Norway and Estonia.

It is notable that this series of newsletters followed guidelines provided by the EPEA; each issue was expected to follow a set structure, with sections titled Editorial, Conferences and Meetings, 'What's on in Europe' and an 'In Focus' section which contained the core content with articles from a range of countries. The back section of each issue served as a directory which had information on EPEA membership, a membership form, and contact details of all Steering Committee, Liaison Persons and Contact Persons. The final page invariable had the 17 Council of Europe Recommendations on education in prison.


13 Autumn 1997

European Prison Education Association

EPEA Newsletter

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EPEA Newsletter 13 is edited by Leif Lyngstad and Gunnar Moen, Klosterskogen Upper Secondary School and Torfinn Langelid, National Education Office, Hordaland County, Norway

For example, looking at issue 13, which came out in Autumn 1997, one is struck by the extensive engagement in this period from countries right across Europe, both 'East' and 'West'. The Editorial section had notes from the EPEA Chairperson, Svenolov Svensson, and the editor of that issue, Torfinn Langelid, together with a request for material for the following issue number 14 from Claus Andersin of Finland. There was also a detailed report on the April Steering Committee meeting by Paddy Rocks of Northern Ireland. The 'Conferences and Meetings' section contained an extensive report on the CEA conference in Houston, Texas, in July by Robert Suvaal of the Netherlands, while Maris Mednis of Latvia informed readers of an upcoming seminar on prison education in his country. Another page gave the preliminary programme for the 6th EPEA conference in Budapest, Hungary, that November.

In that issue the main 'In Focus' section concentrated on Eastern and Central Europe, with three articles from Slovenia, two from Latvia, and one each from Hungary, Moldova and Greece. An article by Asbjørn Langås, Deputy General Director of the prison system in Norway, gave an account of the Nord-Balt project which involved close co-operation between Nordic and Baltic states. An extract from one of the Slovenian articles is

given in a boxed section below and describes a very progressive approach to the care and education of young men aged 17 to 22 in Celje Institution.

Education and Professional Training in the Institution for Juvenile Offenders in Celje, by Ivan Kos
(A slightly shortened version of an article in *EPEA Newsletter*, number 13, Autumn 1997, about work with 17 to 22 years-olds in Celje Institution in Slovenia)

Until 1996 we usually organised education and professional training in the institution, but we enabled the prisoners to attend classes outside as well. In 1996 we had no education and professional training in the institution because the number of prisoners was extremely low and it was impossible to form classes or groups. We had only about 30 prisoners per day.

It would be too expensive to set up for each the programme he desired. So we sent all the prisoners interested in education and professional training to outside educational institutions. Four of them attended primary school, three took part in a course for cooks, two in a course for waiters, five attended courses for drivers, and seven of them went to various secondary schools.

In our experience, there are several advantages to education and professional training outside:

- The prisoners have a wider choice of educational programmes.
- The quality of the education and professional training outside is on a higher level.
- The prisoners study in a 'normal situation', among ordinary pupils.
- The expenses are lower.
- As they go out of the institution daily, prisoners' motivation for education is stronger.

There are also some disadvantages to the prisoners going outside: surveillance is difficult, not every prisoner can be allowed to go out, and there always exists the possibility of different kinds of abuse, e.g. alcohol, drugs, not going to lessons, running away, committing another criminal action, etc.

Until 1996 we practically hadn't any trouble with the prisoners studying outside. But last year a lot of unexpected difficulties turned up, mainly connected with drugs. After testing, we found that five of them had been taking drugs regularly. We stopped their going out immediately but didn't stop their education. As they had been successful pupils, we enabled them to study individually and then pass exams. Later on they were given another chance to study outside under the condition that they wouldn't take drugs. They promised everything but didn't keep their word. So, their going out was broken off definitely. Nevertheless, three of them finished their education successfully.

The prisoners at Celje are not obliged to pay anything. The institution pays school fees and buys all necessary books and requisites. If the inmates are successful at school they can be awarded special leaves of absence.

Over the years of the second phase, when this format for the *EPEA Newsletter* was in place, other countries were involved, in addition to those mentioned already. They included Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Russia, Spain and Turkey. Importantly, engagement by the membership at large was clearly

also quite strong in this period. For example, in 2002 *EPEA Magazine* number 24 noted that, in the election for Membership Secretary in that year, 204 votes were cast from 19 countries. The new century also saw information about European Union projects relevant to education in prison appear regularly in the newsletter or magazine, much of it stimulated by Alan Smith, who was responsible for coordinating "Grundtvig", the Adult Education action of "Socrates", which was the EU's programme for European cooperation in the field of education.[98]

Then, when we get into the middle and later part of the 2000s decade, or what we have referred to as phases 3 and 4 of the *EPEA Newsletter/Magazine*, we find a continuing richness of content in the publications. There are articles from Iceland to Bulgaria, Spain to Finland, and many places in between. This was the time when the EPEA Constitution was revised through extensive interaction with the membership. It was also a time when the European Prison Rules were revised, and the EPEA was actively engaging with the Council of Europe having been officially recognised by the Council as an NGO some time previously. All these developments were reflected in the *EPEA Magazine*. Among many other topics covered, there is a good deal of material on the use of computers and the internet, an increasingly important dimension of education in prison.

EPEA BULLETIN, EPEA NEWS

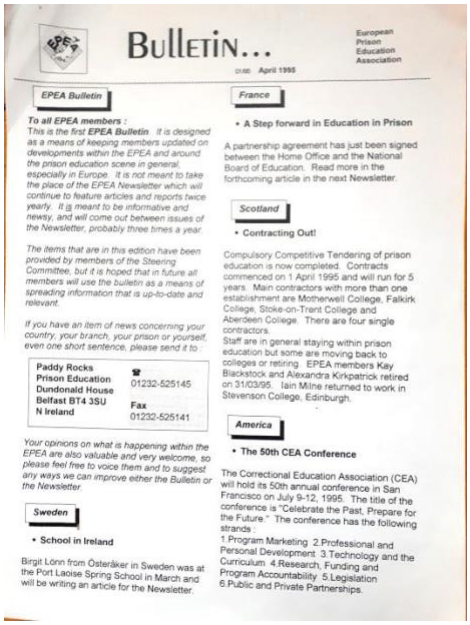
While the *EPEA Newsletter* or, as it was called for a period, the *EPEA Magazine* grew more substantial over the years, the publication usually reached EPEA members just twice a year. So, it was felt that there was also a need for more frequent, if briefer, communication. The *EPEA Bulletins*, which were issued between 1995 and 2009 (and called *EPEA News* from 2004), did this job, giving short snappy news about such matters as upcoming new projects, conferences and reports, as well as information about the Steering Committee, election results, who were the current Liaison or Contact Persons, and so forth.

Initially, Paddy Rocks from Northern Ireland had responsibility for compiling the *EPEA Bulletin* and it was circulated to Liaison and Contact Persons via the Membership Secretary for distribution to members. In the first Bulletin, produced in April 1995, Paddy explained its purpose:

> This is the first EPEA Bulletin. It is designed as a means of keeping members updated on developments within the EPEA and around the prison education scene in general, especially in Europe. It is not meant to take the place of the *EPEA Newsletter* which will continue to feature articles and reports twice yearly. It <u>is</u> meant to be informative and newsy, and will come out between issues of the Newsletter, probably three times a year. The items that are in this edition have been provided by members of the Steering Committee, but it is hoped that in future all members will use the bulletin as a means of spreading information that is up-to-date and relevant.

[98] More information about the European Union's support for education in prison is given in Chapter 7.

In the first edition (01/95) there was information from Sweden, France, Scotland and the United States. [99] Paddy Rocks encouraged the members to send items of news concerning their country, their branch, their prison or themselves. In practice, the *EPEA Bulletin* came out about three times a year, each Bulletin having two pages made up of short notes relating to education in prison.



BULLETIN...

European Prison Education Association

April 1995

EPEA Bulletin

To all EPEA members :
This is the first **EPEA Bulletin**. It is designed as a means of keeping members updated on developments within the EPEA and around the prison education scene in general, especially in Europe. It is not meant to take the place of the EPEA Newsletter which will continue to feature articles and reports twice yearly. It is meant to be informative and newsy, and will come out between issues of the Newsletter, probably three times a year.

The items that are in this edition have been provided by members of the Steering Committee, but it is hoped that in future all members will use the bulletin as a means of spreading information that is up-to-date and relevant.

If you have an item of news concerning your country, your branch, your prison or yourself, even one short sentence, please send it to :

Paddy Rocks
Prison Education
Dundonald House
Belfast BT4 3SU
N Ireland
☎ 01232-525145
Fax 01232-525141

Your opinions on what is happening within the EPEA are also valuable and very welcome, so please feel free to voice them and to suggest any ways we can improve either the Bulletin or the Newsletter.

Sweden

• School in Ireland

Birgit Lönn from Österåker in Sweden was at the Port Laoise Spring School in March and will be writing an article for the Newsletter.

France

• A Step forward in Education in Prison

A partnership agreement has just been signed between the Home Office and the National Board of Education. Read more in the forthcoming article in the next Newsletter.

Scotland

• Contracting Out!

Compulsory Competitive Tendering of prison education is now completed. Contracts commenced on 1 April 1995 and will run for 5 years. Main contractors with more than one establishment are Motherwell College, Falkirk College, Stoke-on-Trent College and Aberdeen College. There are four single contractors.
Staff are in general staying within prison education but some are moving back to colleges or retiring. EPEA members Kay Blackstock and Alexandra Kirkpatrick retired on 31/03/95. Iain Milne returned to work in Stevenson College, Edinburgh.

America

• The 50th CEA Conference

The Correctional Education Association (CEA) will hold its 50th annual conference in San Francisco on July 9-12, 1995. The title of the conference is "Celebrate the Past, Prepare for the Future." The conference has the following strands :
1.Program Marketing 2.Professional and Personal Development 3.Technology and the Curriculum 4.Research, Funding and Program Accountability 5.Legislation 6.Public and Private Partnerships.

Bulletin 8, which came out in January 1999, gave notice of another initiative to reach out and connect with members in the form of a Liaison Persons' meeting due to take place the following year in Paris, and these meetings will be discussed later. Bulletin 8 also made the first reference that we can find to the EPEA website. Paddy Rocks, by then EPEA Chairperson, set this up, at first using his own email address, at *http://users.tibus.com/epea .*[100] He encouraged members to use this in conjunction with the Bulletin and Newsletter. 35 issues of the *EPEA Bulletin/EPEA News* were circulated before it was decided its role was superseded by the website in 2009[101]. By the mid-2000s, the internet had become much more widely used and the *EPEA Bulletin* and *EPEA News* eventually gave way to www.epea.org as the main means for communicating information to members.

THE EPEA WEBSITE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

As the new century began, the world was becoming increasingly digital. Computers which (at least for most educators) were a novelty a decade earlier were becoming ever more pervasive. E-mails were displacing post and telephone calls, and hard-copy text of all kinds was being replaced by electronic communication. And the speed of this transformation was astounding to many. As elsewhere, the changes in communication impacted also on the EPEA. Printed publications and bulletins continued for some time: as noted above, the printed version of the *EPEA News* continued until 2009, and the *EPEA Magazine* remained available in hardcopy until 2014. However, such publications were available also in electronic form for many years alongside the hardcopies, but in time the printed versions ceased and all such communication was solely via the EPEA website and emails.

Paddy Rocks, as Chairperson of the EPEA, set up the first website for the EPEA in 1999, using his own email address. The following year, an *EPEA Newsletter* stated:

> The EPEA is always trying to improve communications with its members. In addition to the Newsletter, you can now visit the EPEA website. This carries a discussion section (forum). If you have ideas and opinions concerning prison education or simply want to share your experience with others, why not log on to the website?[102]

A planning meeting in Belfast in 2001 included the development of electronic communication as a new item in a revised Action Plan for the EPEA. From 2003, Per Thrane

[99] *EPEA Bulletin* 01/95 April 1995
[100] *EPEA Bulletin* 8 January 1999
[101] The last issue of *EPEA News* was issue 35 in May 2009.
[102] EPEA Newsletter 19, Summer 2000, p.3.

produced Webmaster reports for the Steering Committee, and these indicated a steady increase in the use of the EPEA website. 2003 is also the year when www.epea.org was established.[103] Two years later, Per Thrane was able to report on extensive visits to the EPEA website, not just from Europe but from many countries around the world – even from far-off places like Fiji, Micronesia and Bhutan![104] Most visits, however, came at that time from the English-speaking world, but it was noted that, as material was uploaded in other languages, interest in the website became more widespread. The Council of Europe Recommendation on education in prison, for example, was made available in an increasing number of languages.

Surprising also are reports from this time that there was some usage of the internet in education in some prisons in Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, England and Wales, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Spain and Sweden.[105] Reports produced after EPEA Conferences from as early as 1991, many of them very comprehensive and extensive, were put on the EPEA website. Use of the site increased steadily through the 2000s and peaked especially in the run-up to conferences. In time, people registered for conferences and made payments for them via the website. The website also became an important vehicle for communication in relation to EU projects dealing with education in prison, as these projects grew steadily in this decade.

In 2020, the EPEA membership voted to change the Constitution to make electronic voting in EPEA elections possible, but notification of elections and communications about candidates had already been carried out electronically for several years. Likewise, information about developments in the EPEA and the field of education in prison generally rely today almost entirely on electronic means, and has done so for perhaps a decade at least. However, there are questions as to how effective much of this communication is, there being some evidence that many important announcements have come to the attention of very few members. Moreover, there are also doubts about how effective the EPEA's use of technology has been in achieving a significant level of *engagement* from the membership at large.

EPEA DIRECTORIES

Effective communication needs to be more than 'top-down'; it must be inter-active, and horizontal as well as vertical. Part of the rationale of the EPEA was to link prison educators across Europe with each other in any way possible. Clearly, in conferences, seminars and other meetings such as those that came about via the European Union Grundtvig projects, these kinds of connections are made in a very effective way. But beyond such formal occasions, crucial though they are, the EPEA from the beginning saw the need to go further, to facilitate the making of as many connections as possible, including informal ones, between prison educators in Europe. It may be recalled that, in the very first *EPEA Newsletter* in 1991, Pam Bedford spoke of hoping "a network for visits between prison educators in different countries will be developed".[106]

This was the context for a further initiative at the turn of the century. The Steering Committee decided to compile a Directory in book form which contained the contact details of every EPEA member, with a view to providing a copy of this to everyone in the

[103] *EPEA Newsletter* 25, Spring 2003, p.32.
[104] *EPEA Magazine* 28, Spring 2005, pp.18-21.
[105] *EPEA Magazine* 28, Spring 2005. pp.18-21.
[106] *EPEA Newsletter*, Number 1, March 1991, p.2.

organisation. Each Directory contained the name, position, address and telephone number of every member, and where available fax numbers and email addresses also. The Membership Secretary was given responsibility for this task and five such Directories were produced between 2000 and 2005. The goal for each Directory was to facilitate opportunities for communication across borders as a means of supporting and strengthening the work of education in prison. While the core of a Directory was the contact details of members, listed according to country, each also contained information about the EPEA such as its aims, structures and history. As the EPEA Chairperson, Paddy Rocks, said in the foreword for the very first Directory:

> I hope you will be able to make good use of it, especially as a means of improving communications between members, and of sharing information of good practice as well as the realities of working in the various aspects of prison education in such diverse systems. So often members have commented, "if only we could know who the other members are!" Hopefully it will also help in the development of stronger personal relationship among members across Europe and beyond and in reducing, even a little, the sense of isolation that is often felt by the many practitioners working in this specialised field. [107]

It is likely that 'reaching-out' initiatives such as this helped bring the organization to a healthy place: by 2005, there were over 600 members in the EPEA.[108]

THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF LIAISON PERSONS

From its beginning, the EPEA was conceived as an organization whose primary role was to support educators working in prisons and elsewhere in penal systems *through European co-operation*. Its founders were clear that its role therefore was to facilitate connections between prison educators in different countries, and especially those 'working on the ground'. They understood that its success or otherwise would be judged largely by the extent to which the EPEA ensured such mutually-supporting interactions were taking place across Europe, and they were wary of the EPEA becoming just one more self-perpetuating body on the NGO landscape.

The barriers to creating such a network of supportive connections were and are very significant, arising obviously from distance, but also from national, language and cultural boundaries. Yet, as against that, as Pam Bedford said in the first *EPEA Newsletter*, those involved in prison education in different countries have "much in common in their specialist, and often isolated, field" and welcome "the opportunity to share experience and develop ideas together." The similarities of the challenges and problems, she said, far outweigh "the considerable differences of cultural, educational and political background."[109] So, if enabling supportive connections across Europe between teachers and other educators in prisons and such places is the *raison d'être* of the EPEA, the means of communication that have been discussed in this chapter, such as newsletters, magazines, bulletins and directories, are vital.

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[107] *EPEA European Prison Education Association DIRECTORY 1999/2000*
[108] *EPEA News* 21, November-December 2005.
[109] EPEA-NEWSLETTER, Volume 1, Number 1, March 1991, p.2.

We conclude this discussion of efforts to 'reach out and make connections' by examining one further and crucial feature of the EPEA – the key role of the 'liaison person'.

It may come as a surprise to many EPEA members to learn that there were Liaison Persons in the organisation before other elements in the EPEA's structures which we are familiar with today – before there was a constitution or a formally-established Steering Committee, even before the EPEA organised conferences of its own volition (which only happened for the first time in 1995). As was explained in Chapter 3, when the founding group first wrote in January 1990 to every country then in the Council of Europe, the first step was to ask countries to nominate two 'liaison persons', at least one of whom had to be "in daily contact with prisoners". Such liaison persons, it was hoped, would form the 'network' which would grow into a "fully-fledged organisation".

This was how things developed. 16 countries, making up a large majority of Council of Europe countries at that time, responded positively and nominated liaison persons. The following year, in 1991, liaison persons representing 12 countries met at what was later called the '3rd EPEA' conference in Bergen, the Netherlands, and agreed among themselves to form another *ad hoc* group to move matters forward. The minutes of that first Liaison Persons' meeting state that it was agreed "that the steering group consist of liaison persons from the Netherlands, Sweden, Northern Ireland, England, Ireland and Scotland". [110] Importantly, that Liaison Persons meeting also agreed the aims of the EPEA, which were the same aims that were incorporated into the constitution when that was adopted two years later in Sigtuna, Sweden:

Clearly, then, Liaison Persons as a whole had a central and major role in the formation of the EPEA, and in its growth in the early years. The steering group they established at Bergen came together three times before the next conference in Sigtuna in 1993. They met in Blagdon, England, and in Falkirk, Scotland, in 1992; and once again in Akersberga, near Stockholm, in the days just before the Sigtuna conference. Ahead of that conference, Anne Cameron from Scotland, who had taken on the role of Secretary of the steering group from Pam Bedford, notified all Liaison Persons that a draft constitution had been prepared and would be voted on in Sigtuna, and she urged as many as possible to attend. At the time of the Bergen conference in 1991, there were 33 Liaison Persons from 17 countries. [111] Two years later, there were 43 Liaison Persons from 23 countries, including six countries from Eastern Europe. [112]

It was the Liaison Persons present at Sigtuna in 1993, then, who formally adopted the EPEA constitution and included in it the aims they had agreed in 1991. The constitution also defined the General Council, which would meet every two years and be largely composed of Liaison Persons from countries across Europe, as the highest authority in the EPEA. The Liaison Persons were also at the heart of the networking system which was key to how the EPEA operated. In 1998, when the Steering Committee set out more formally the roles of different post holders in the organization, they listed among the duties of a Liaison Person the following: (a) to be familiar with the constitution of the EPEA (b) to promote and represent EPEA in their respective countries and (c) to copy and disseminate EPEA Newsletters, Bulletins and other relevant information to the membership.[113]

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[110] Minutes of the meeting of EPEA liaison persons and European observers at Bergen, 13 May 1991.

[111] *How High the Walls: Report 3rd International Conference on Prison Education*. 1991. Bergen, the Netherlands, pp. 85 -90.

[112] *Report from «Beyond the Walls» 4th EPEA European International Conference on Prison Education*. 1993. Sigtuna, Sweden, pp. 28-32.

[113] The role and duties of Liaison Persons were formally agreed at a Steering Committee meeting in Glasgow in May 1998.

However, while the Liaison Persons in each country remained crucial to having a vibrant network of interaction between prison educators in Europe, their role inevitably became less central after the EPEA and the Steering Committee were formally established in 1993. The danger then was that their role would become marginalized and interactions between prison educators and between different countries would thereby be weakened. So, a few years later, in an effort to revitalise the functioning of Liaison Persons in the organization, the Steering Committee embarked on a strategy of bringing them together frequently with a view to strengthening their contribution to the EPEA's work.

Obviously, Liaison Persons who attend conferences participate in General Council meetings there, but such meetings in the middle of busy conferences tend often to be brief and hurried. So, a pattern began of holding meetings specifically devoted to helping Liaison Persons discuss and develop their roles. Some of these special meetings were organized in conjunction with other events such as an EPEA or Grundtvig conference or a Steering Committee meeting, but given substantial time just before or after these occasions. One such gathering of Liaison Persons, held in Paris in 2001, was a stand-alone event that offered significant support for the role and work of these key representatives of the EPEA. In all, 15 such Liaison Persons meetings took place between 1998 and 2014 and these are listed in Appendix 2

The first Liaison Persons meeting in this series was organized on behalf of the Steering Committee by the Deputy Secretary, James O'Hare of Scotland, together with Rosalba Falsanisi of Italy and Torfinn Langelid of Norway. Following a letter from James urging them to attend, Liaison Persons from 12 countries came together in October 1998 in Sliema, Malta. A survey of Liaison Persons conducted by Rosalba and Torfinn shaped the agenda of another meeting the following year in Athens: much of the questioning and suggestions focused on how the EPEA might communicate better.

From Left Svenolov Svensson (Sweden), Valentina Petrova (Bulgaria), Kevin Warner (Ireland), Ingunn Kleivan (Norway), Tuula Aamuvuori (Finland) and Laszlo Csetneky (Hungary)

The Paris Liaison Persons two-day meeting in 2001 was a very significant event, planned by an organising committee[114] on behalf of the Steering Committee. The EPEA subsidised one Liaison Person from each country, but a second person was able to attend from several places, so that 24 came from 16 countries, including four delegates from four Eastern European countries. The aim of the meeting in Paris was to (a) give the background to the Council of Europe's Recommendation on education in prison, (b) give information about the Aims and the Constitution of the EPEA, (c) discuss the role of Liaison Persons, and (d) discuss how they might develop local branches of the EPEA in their own countries. Action plans for each country were formulated over the two days, focused primarily on the establishment of branches where they had not yet been formed and guided by the experience of those from Norway, where their branch FOKO had several hundred members. Subsequent yearly meetings of Liaison Persons, such as in Budapest in 2002, Malta in 2003 and Budapest again in 2004 revisited and reformulated these plans. After a break of a few years, 'Liaison and Contact Person Meetings' were reactivated in 2008, with two taking place that year in Sofia

[114] The Paris organising committee consisted of Ingunn Kleivan from Norway, who was Chairperson of FOKO, and Torfinn Langelid (Norway), Anthony Vella (Malta) and Niek Willems (the Netherlands).

and Norway for the purpose of shaping a vision and developing plans for the EPEA.[115] A further such meetings was held in November 2010.

A LOWERING OF HORIZONS

The Liaison Person system is one of the means by which the EPEA can ensure some level of connectedness and interaction, not just between individual prison educators, but also across European countries as they are involved in prison education. It is notable that in the 1990s and the 2000s, a high number of European countries and individuals within them were engaged with each other through the EPEA. Other people and other countries were not so involved, or not involved at times, despite great efforts to make linkages across the barriers already referred to. However, in those decades when a high priority and great effort went into 'reaching out', a relatively high level of engagement was ensured. The evidence for this can be seen in the high number of countries represented in EPEA conferences in these decades; and the many educators 'on the ground' in this wide range of countries who were involved in the conferences and in other international projects and, crucially, engaged in the EPEA as Liaison Persons.

Problems arise when there is insufficient effort and priority given to this kind of 'reaching out and making connections'. As authors of this history, it appears to us that this may have happened to the EPEA in recent years, with the result that the number of countries engaged with the EPEA has declined, including many that were significantly involved in the past. This has happened in all parts of Europe, but the decline in engagement in most of Eastern Europe is particularly marked. It seems to us that the focus and the priorities in the EPEA have narrowed, possibly unintentionally, to those countries with active branches. Yet, at present, there are only seven such countries in Europe – as against 47 in the Council of Europe.[116]

Surprisingly to us also, a move was made by some on the Steering Committee in 2017 to have the Constitution changed so that only countries with branches would in future have Liaison Persons in the General Council, and this proposal was ratified in a ballot of members in 2020. We fear this change has lowered the EPEA's horizons and risks reducing the organization to a clique of countries, or even to a clique of personnel. We wonder if the proposers of this idea failed to understand how Liaison Persons *as originally understood* have been vital cogs in the EPEA, one of the important means of making linkages across the multiple barriers of distance, language and culture. In our view, by now only recognizing as Liaison Persons those from the seven countries which have branches, the EPEA may have seriously undermined its primary 'reaching out' purpose.

[115] *EPEA News*, Issue 30, Summer 2008, p.2.

[116] The EPEA website lists only seven currently active branches (June 2021), and this is how it has been for some years now.

Chapter 7

Shared European Values: involvement with the Council of Europe and the European Union

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 we explained how the EPEA is essentially a child of the Council of Europe. The EPEA was formed with the intention of promoting education in prison in line with the Council of Europe policy document on that activity - the Recommendation adopted by the Council in 1989, or what we know more generally as the report, *Education in Prison* (1990). This Recommendation came about in the context of the Council of Europe's principles and philosophy around human rights and human dignity, which are embedded particularly in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). These principles, and a shared outlook on penal policy based on them, spurred the leadership of penal administrations in Europe to set in motion, and give terms of reference to, the Expert Group which produced *Education in Prison*.

This chapter will detail the EPEA's ongoing engagement with two major European institutions: with the Council of Europe and with the European Union, which became a major promoter of European cooperation in prison education. The chapter will explore the way in which the Council of Europe remained an important part of the EPEA's story in the decades since 1989. It will also chart the EPEA's increasing engagement with the European Union from the turn of the century.

In the 1990s, the Council of Europe expanded greatly eastwards as far as Russia and brought many countries into new membership, so that it now has 47 members (Belarus being the main exception). The European Union (EU) has also expanded over the years and now includes many countries from the former Soviet block. In addition, other countries have integrated closely with the EU in certain ways, such as Norway and Iceland, which together with the EU and Liechtenstein make up the European Economic Area (EEA), or Switzerland which has a bilateral agreement with the EU. All European Union members, as well as close associates of the EU, are also members of the Council of Europe. Today, following the departure of the UK at the end of 2019, the European Union has 27 members.

The overlapping character of these two major European institutions is striking, so close at times as to be confusing, at least in terms of external symbols and institutional titles. For example, each has a base (with shared facilities) in Strasbourg, each has adopted the blue European flag with twelve yellow stars reflecting unity and each uses very similar terminology – as in the Council of Europe and the European Council, or Parliamentary Assembly and European Parliament. More importantly, membership of the European Union is

conditional on adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), which the Council of Europe brought into force in 1953.

While the Council of Europe is a significantly an older body, and larger in terms of geographical spread, it is often overshadowed these days by the European Union, which has a significant presence on the world stage, is invested with major legislative powers and has much greater economic and political clout. Yet, each of these European institutions has promoted and continues to drive European co-operation, and to an extent European integration. So, for a relatively small organisation like the EPEA, which seeks "to support and assist the professional development of persons involved in prison education through European co-operation", both the Council of Europe and the European Union are clearly natural sources of support. The EPEA's involvement with each is examined in this chapter.

PARTNERSHIP STATUS WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Although the EPEA's central role is to promote the holistic form of education in prison envisaged by the Council of Europe, it did not have a formal relationship with the Council for most of the 1990s. However, that was rectified near the end of the decade when it was decided to seek consultative status with the Council of Europe. The then Chairperson, Svenolov Svensson, wrote on behalf of the Steering Committee to Wolfgang Reu at the Directorate of Legal Affairs in the Council of Europe in March 1998, seeking a meeting:

> It would be a great honour if we could have the possibility to meet you in Strasbourg and present our organisation and our ideas and perhaps discuss a follow-up study related to the Recommendations R (89). Our next Chairperson Janine Duprey-Kennedy is working in Strasbourg so a meeting could be arranged in an easy way.

Janine Duprey-Kennedy, a French prison educator, was at that point due to follow Svenolov Svensson as Chairperson of the EPEA and by good fortune was indeed based in Strasbourg. This meant she was in an excellent position to pursue the EPEA's application, including having face-to-face meetings as necessary at the Council of Europe's headquarters. The process, however, was a long one, but in the summer of 2000, she was able to inform EPEA members via the Newsletter that the organisation had been accepted as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) enjoying consultative status at the Council. This meant that the EPEA was now recognised by the Council of Europe as an expert source on all questions relating to education in prison.

The involvement of the EPEA and other NGOs with the Council of Europe was upgraded from consultative to participative status in 2003, a move which recognised both the importance and the 'legal personality' of international NGOs in the eyes of the Council of Europe. Throughout the first decade of this century, the EPEA was very actively engaged with the Council of Europe, a dynamic relationship that was very much built up by Janine Duprey Kennedy. For example, she had five meetings in the Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg in 2004, and four more in the month of January 2005 alone. The EPEA was a member of two NGO groups at the Council of Europe, Human Rights and Education and Culture, reflecting its central concern with penal policy and adult education. The EPEA took

part in conferences of NGOs and parliamentarians, and it became a member of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, more commonly known just as the CPT.

Following the Council of Europe's enlargement eastwards in the 1990s, which more than doubled its membership, the early years of the new century saw the Council of Europe very focused on building democracy and human rights throughout Europe. The EPEA offered its advice as one small part of this process, stressing in particular the right of all people in prison to education. The EPEA was an advocate for this right in a wider sphere also: following a meeting in Oslo in September 2004, the Steering Committee decided to send a letter to all European Ministers of Justice and Education and to the Council of Europe, UNESCO and EU to remind them of prisoners' right to education.

EPEA INPUT INTO THE EUROPEAN PRISON RULES

The significance of the EPEA's role as a participative NGO within the Council of Europe can be seen in the way it influenced the revision of the European Prison Rules, as they pertained to education in prison, which took place towards the middle of the first decade in the new century. As outlined in Chapter 3, the European Prison Rules that had been drawn up in 1987 were strongly supportive of education within prisons. These Rules asserted, among other things, that a comprehensive programme of education should be available to all within prison, that the education should have deep developmental objectives and that "education should be regarded as a regime activity that attracts the same status and basic remuneration within the regime as work" (Rule 78, 1987). The scientific advisers to the Council for Penological Co-operation within the Council of Europe drafted revisions to these rules in 2004 that would have weakened the role of education in prison in several ways. However, consultation with the EPEA around these drafts ensured education's role was once again greatly strengthened.

A conference for Directors and Coordinators of Prison Education, held in conjunction with the EPEA, took place in London in December 2004 (see Chapter 10 for more details of these conferences). Anita Van de Kar of the Council of Europe used the occasion to share an early draft of the new Rules as they related to education in prison and asked for feedback. Considerable reservations were expressed by those present, including by Anne Costelloe, who represented the EPEA at the event. Writing in the *EPEA Magazine* some months later, Anne Costelloe pointed out the shortcomings of this draft in the view of those who met in London. She noted that "some of the language was outdated and failed to reflect current educational thought"[117] and outlined how the London conference offered stronger drafts which stressed a wider programme of education and deeper objectives. The conference also reasserted the principle of equality between education and work within regimes. EPEA members were invited to send their ideas on the redrafting before the Steering Committee formulated further proposals that would go to an upcoming conference of 46 Ministers of Justice in Helsinki.

[117] See Anne Costelloe, 'EPEA Input to Redrafting of the European Prison Rules (EPR)', in *EPEA Magazine* No. 28, Spring 2005, pp. 23-25.

As matters developed, it is clear that the EPEA succeeded in re-asserting stronger principles and a stronger role for education in prison in the revised European Prison Rules that were finally adopted by the Council of Europe in January 2006. The relevant rules as they now stand are as follows:

28.1 Every prison shall seek to provide all prisoners with access to educational programmes which are as comprehensive as possible and which meet their individual needs while taking into account their aspirations.

28.2 Priority shall be given to prisoners with literacy and numeracy needs and those who lack basic or vocational education.

28.3 Particular attention shall be paid to the education of young prisoners and those with special needs.

28.4 Education shall have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners shall not be disadvantaged financially or otherwise by taking part in education.

28.5 Every institution shall have a library for the use of all prisoners, adequately stocked with a wide range of both recreational and educational resources, books and other media.

28.6 Wherever possible, the prison library should be organised in co-operation with community library services.

28.7 As far as practicable, the education of prisoners shall:
a be integrated with the educational and vocational training system of the country so that after their release they may continue their education and vocational training without difficulty;
and *b* take place under the auspices of external educational institutions.

There is also a statement later in the revised Rules (Rule 106.1) which specifies that "a systematic programme of education, including skills training, *with the objective of improving prisoners' overall level of education* as well as their prospects of leading a responsible and crime-free life, shall be a key part of regimes for sentenced prisoners" (emphasis added). Part of this rule also states: "education programmes for sentenced prisoners shall be tailored to the projected length of their stay in prison" (106.3). So, clearly, the form of education that that is recommended was envisaged as being of the same wide developmental kind that is outlined in Recommendation 89 (12), *Education in Prison*, and should not just be training for work or just interventions designed to 'address offending behaviour'. There are also several specific re-endorsements of the earlier Recommendation on education in prison in the new Rules, including in the Preface to the new text.

MEETINGS IN STRASBOURG

The relationship between the EPEA and the Council of Europe was also deepened by the holding of two Steering Committee meetings in Strasbourg, one in November 2004 and another in February 2008. On each occasion the Steering Committee, as well as conducting its own regular business, held meetings with Council of Europe officials. The 2008 gathering was especially significant as it also involved those participating in the VEPS project, the Virtual European Prison School, an EU supported venture which will be described more fully later.

Writing shortly after the second of these meetings in Strasbourg, in the Spring 2008 issue of the *EPEA Magazine*, Cormac Behan outlined how representatives of the Council of Europe were briefed about both the EPEA and VEPS. He said the event was:

> … an opportunity for the EPEA to liaise, dialogue, and possibly co-ordinate activities with the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) groupings at the Council of Europe. The EPEA is a member of two NGO groups at the Council of Europe – Education and Culture, and Human Rights. There were representatives from both groups at the meeting. The meeting was addressed by EPEA Chair, Dr Anne Costelloe, who outlined the activities of the EPEA. Dr Costelloe explained the connection with the Council of Europe through the policy document *Education in Prison*… She emphasised how much we have in common and the richness of experience in the various groupings. The Council of Europe representatives were very impressed with the work of the EPEA and agreed to explore possibilities for future co-operation.[118]

Cormac Behan goes on to describe how the meeting was also addressed by members of the VEPS Project, which "was established to promote the transfer of best practice in prison education among the participating countries – Sweden, the Czech Republic, England and Wales, Ireland, Greece, Norway and Bulgaria". He states how VEPS Co-ordinator, Valentina Petrova from Bulgaria explained to the meeting that the aim of the VEPS Project is to increase the participation of prisoners in life-long learning in order to enable their reintegration into the society after release. The project is designed to strengthen the role of educational policies in prisons, taking into consideration the Council of Europe's document, *Education in Prison*.[119]

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[118] *EPEA Magazine*, No. 34, Spring 2008, pp.4-5.
[119] *EPEA Magazine*, *ibid*., p.5.

Given that VEPS was essentially a European Union-supported project, but one which aimed to promote a Council of Europe policy document, such a meeting reflected valuable convergence between the two European institutions around the development of education in penal settings.

NIEK WILLEMS - in our memory

As the Steering Committee, those involved in VEPS and others linked to the Council of Europe were meeting in February 2008 in Strasbourg, news came through of another event of significance for the EPEA. Sadly, Niek Willems, who had been Chairperson of the EPEA from 2003 to 2006, had died suddenly. A Dutch colleague, Leonie de Bot, wrote about him shortly afterwards in the EPEA Magazine, telling how he worked in what he regarded as 'his' prison, the House of Remand Noordsingel, as Head of Education:

> *He not only coached (art) teachers, sport-educators and librarians but also organised mini-concerts and bingo-nights for inmates. He presented these activities in a way we were used to see and hear from Niek: as a flamboyant entertainer full of jokes… From 1st July 2003 until 1st July 2006 he was Chairperson of the EPEA. In 2005 he organised with members of the Steering Committee an EPEA conference in Sofia, Bulgaria. He introduced everyone by saying, 'Please give a very warm welcome to…!' That was Niek. If you felt pleasant, he was happy.*[120]

Niek Willems

In her Chairperson's forward to the same issue of the Magazine, Anne Costelloe also spoke of Niek:

> *During his time as Chair, Niek was a wonderful ambassador for the EPEA. He represented the organisation with both professionalism and good humour and his contribution to the development of the EPEA cannot be overestimated. His chairmanship was flawless, his enthusiasm boundless, and his personal manner warm, charming and engaging. The EPEA is indebted to Niek for his leadership and guidance… Niek's death reached the Steering Committee as we were meeting in Strasbourg, but it did provide us with the opportunity to jointly honour his memory and raise a glass in remembrance of him…*[121]

[120] *EPEA Magazine*, *ibid*., p.4.
[121] *EPEA Magazine, ibid.*, p.2.

EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT FOR PRISON EDUCATION

The presence of an EU-funded project like VEPS at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in 2008 is indicative of how the EPEA, and education in prison generally, was supported by the two complementary European Institutions in the first decade of the new century. From 2000 onwards, a great number of projects and events through which prison educators were supported in professional development were funded by the European Union. In general, the concept of education in prison promoted by the EU in its Education Programmes was very much in tune with Council of Europe policy and EPEA aims. A decade of achievement by the EU in this field was reflected in a major conference it organised in Budapest at the end of the decade under the title, 'Pathways to Inclusion'. Several publications which followed that 2010 conference demonstrate the great extent of activity, cooperation and reflection relating to education in prison in Europe that was generated by the EU.

The most extensive and most significant support from the European Union came via 'Grundtvig', the EU's primary programme for European co-operation in adult learning. Adult learning initiatives were appropriately named after Nikolaj Grundtvig, a Danish thinker and writer in the 19th century, widely recognised as the father of adult education. Other EU support for education in prison came via different programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci (for vocational training), the Youth Programme and in particular the European Social Fund (ESF), which focused on social inclusion and skills development, as well as from sources such as that which funded research on life-long learning.

The greater part of the account of European Union support for prison education and the EPEA that forms the rest of this chapter comes from a document written by Alan Smith, who was coordinator of the Grundtvig Programme at the European Commission for most of the period from its inception in 2000 until his retirement in 2011. Titled *The European Union and Prison Education – Cooperation, innovation and support: A historical review of the first two decades*, this comprehensive account is available on the EPEA website.[122] Alan Smith was a frequent participant in the EPEA's biennial conferences during his period with Grundtvig and was made a Life Member of the EPEA in 2015.

Alan Smith

Indeed, Alan Smith also contributed to several of the EPEA's Directors and Coordinators' conferences that tended to take place in intervening years between the main EPEA conferences. He writes of his first encounter with the field of education in prison, and his first engagement with the EPEA, at one of these conferences in Malta in 2000[123]:

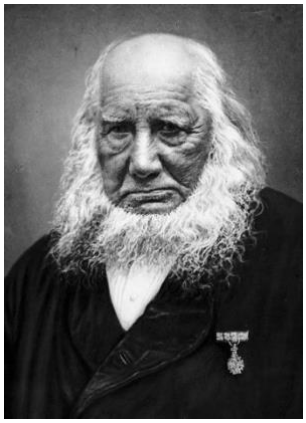
[122] Alan Smith, *The European Union and Prison Education – Cooperation, innovation and support: A historical review of the first two decades* (Bonn, November 2019). Available at https://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/Smith-Alan-The-EU-and-Prison-Education-A-historical-review.pdf

[123] More details of this Malta conference, which centred on a review of *Education in Prison* ten years after its publication, is given in Chapter 10.

> Shortly after my appointment as Grundtvig Coordinator, I was invited to participate in the regular meeting of 'Directors and Coordinators of Prison Education' held in Qawra (Malta) in November 2000. I was new to Adult Education as a whole, let alone Prison Education, and the discussions (formal and informal!) with Prison Education representatives at that meeting left an indelible impression on me – of the social importance of the field, of the enormous commitment of the people working in it, and of the pressing need to help develop concrete forms of European cooperation through the support which the European programmes could offer.[124]

This significant learning by the person charged with leading the adult education programme of the EU was a particularly fortunate event for prison educators in Europe, and for the EPEA. Alan Smith recounts how, in the previous period, education in prison hardly featured at all in the projects the EU funded:

> During the 'Adult Education Action' under Socrates I (1995-1999), prison education was not identified as a distinct thematic category, prisons were not listed specifically among the types of organisations to be supported, and (ex-) prisoners were similarly absent from target groups specifically addressed. Not surprisingly, therefore, only one of the 189 projects selected focused primarily on the Prison Education field.[125]



Nikolaj F.S. Grundtvig

In very sharp contrast to this, in the period which followed from 2000 to 2013, 151 EU projects, partnerships and networks focusing on prison education and training were funded, 126 (or 86% of them) by the Grundtvig Programme. Each project involved several countries, with one organisation acting as coordinator. There was a very wide geographical spread to the 'Grundtvig' projects, with participant organisations from 29 of the 33 eligible countries (including from all but one of the EU Member States[126]). Italian organisations were particularly prominent, but participation from Greece, Portugal and Norway was also notably high relative to their population sizes. Several of the central and eastern European countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 also figured strongly, in particular Romania, Poland and Lithuania. Additional projects were supported by the Leonardo da Vinci programme for vocational training.

Alan Smith's historical review shows how these projects addressed a broad range of prison education concerns. Many of the projects saw themselves in the context of helping those in prison prepare for their subsequent reintegration into society, while others focused on improving the learning environments in prisons. Their themes could, for example, be as varied as the aftercare of those released from prison, or the validation of informally acquired

[124] Alan Smith, *op. cit.*, p.12.

[125] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.10. The sole project was a German one, selected in 1997 and dealing with methods for improving prisoners' chances of reintegration into society by helping them develop their communicative and linguistic competences.

[126] The exception was Croatia, which only joined the EU in 2013.

knowledge, or vocational training, or the role of information technology and the new digital media in learning in prison, or the further professional development of prison educators. The wide curriculum was affirmed within Grundtvig projects especially, and one of the largest thematic clusters was in the area of arts and cultural creativity (notably theatre), the benefits of which in terms of developing social interaction, boosting self-esteem and fostering creative ideas were regarded as just as important factors in providing the basis for a positive future role in society as more technical skills. While several projects addressed the generality of people in prison , a significant number focused on the needs of specific groups, such as juveniles, women, foreign prisoners, those with special learning needs or those with mental health problems.

> "Thank you for giving the opportunity to paint while they serve a sentence. My involvement in a European project opened new horizons for me. I never dreamt that anything like this could happen to me. The project was the turning point of my life."

The words are those of Sava Kostadinov, a former prisoner from Bulgaria who, while serving his sentence, took part in a learning Partnership supported by ´Grundtvig´, the EU´s programme for European cooperation in Adult Learning. After release, Sava pursued his studies in icon painting at the Velico Tarnovo University in Bulgaria. There, he made a copy of an icon exhibited in. the Danish national Gallery depicting Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, widely recognised as the father of Adult Education, which he presented to the European Commission as a token of his gratitude on the occasion of the ´Pathways to inclusion´ conference.

All these projects resulted in a wide range of developments. Alan Smith refers to "new methodologies… new pedagogical resources, toolkits, teaching and learning materials… e-learning frameworks for use in Prison Education, as well as theatrical productions, magazines, creative art and (sometimes autobiographical) literature" and says that "direct involvement of prisoners was a feature of many projects".[127] His review goes on to state:

> Many projects organised conferences, seminars and workshops to… disseminate results, and sustainable networks for future collaboration are said to have arisen from the cooperative activities undertaken. In this way, and over and beyond the direct benefits to the participating learners such as enhanced self-esteem, increased motivation to learn and improved prospects for reintegration post-release, the projects supported by the EU became a highly valued source of professional development for staff, organisational and pedagogical innovation and – according to many – improved overall quality of provision, while greatly strengthening the process of European cooperation in the Prison Education field.[128]

After the first decade of the Grundtvig Programme, the European Union compiled what it called 'A Compendium of 100 High-Quality Projects' and these included five relating to education in prison. Among them were three which had very close links with the EPEA,

[127] Alan Smith, *op. cit.*, p.16.
[128] Alan Smith, *ibid.*, pp.16-17.

and which are also indicative of the wide range that can be found among Grundtvig projects: PAN, a network for organisations involved in prison arts education, coordinated in England; PIPELINE, which sought to develop the use of information technology, including the internet, in prison education and which was coordinated in Norway; and VEPS, the Virtual European Prison School, referred to already in the Council of Europe section of this chapter. VEPS was coordinated by the EPEA itself and launched in 2007.

The VEPS initiative was coordinated by the EPEA through its Bulgarian-based Projects Officer, Valentina Petrova, who played a particularly important role in stimulating the EPEA's project involvement generally during the first decade of this century. The broad aims of VEPS were to increase participation and widen access to education in European prisons. Its primary actions involved the translational transfer of best existing practice and the establishment of a web-based Virtual Prison School. The project lasted from October 2007 to December 2008 and involved a wide range of prison educators from across Europe. The project led to the development of new programmes and the adoption of methodologies, but also to significant changes in policy direction and the restructuring of some prison education services. Furthermore, VEPS can justifiably claim that the transfer of distance learning methodologies and the creation of e-learning opportunities led to the widening of both provision and access.

Indeed, the strength and reach of the project was recognised by the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). Each year, the EAEA presents an award for the most outstanding EU-based adult education and learning project. As 2009 was the 'European Year of Creativity and Innovation', the EAEA categorised project entries under the heading 'Creative and Innovative Ways to Overcome Barriers to Learning'. VEPS was chosen as the winner in 2009 as it was deemed to have achieved that aim along with its primary objectives of benchmarking best practice, informing constructive policy, harnessing innovation in internet, e-learning and distance learning technologies, and facilitating greater contact and cooperation among prison educators internationally. Winning this award was fitting tribute to the immense work and foresight of Valentina Petrova, who was so successful in her role as Project Officer for many years.

President of EAEA awarding Valentina Petrova (right), Anne Costelloe - a helping hand in the middle

The Virtual Prison School established a repository for educational programmes, teaching materials, course syllabi, etc., which prison educators could access to assist international students to study in their mother tongue while imprisoned abroad. Extensive information on VEPS is available in the publication it produced at the end of 2008, in conjunction with the EPEA's conference of Directors and Coordinators of Prison Education which was held in Malmö that year. Titled *Prison Education in Europe: Informing Practice, Provision and Policy*, it reviews the entire project and outlines many of the programmes, materials and other developments achieved through VEPS.

An earlier document produced under the VEPS programme includes an insightful statement, under the heading 'What we stand for', on the nature of the education which the EPEA seeks to promote. This statement also illustrates well the values and principles which have been at the heart of the co-operation between the EPEA and both the Council of Europe and the European Union. A part of that statement below in the box:

> The EPEA promotes a student-centred approach to prison education, one that is focused on the development of the whole person… this can be best achieved by providing a liberal education within a broader curriculum… the EPEA recognises the power of education to transform the lives of prisoner students by broadening their sense of possibility, expanding their sense of a larger humanity, liberating them from the confines of unexamined assumptions, and providing them with a language of critique and possibility… prison education can support the prisoner towards successful re-entry into society by cultivating a combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation necessary for active citizenship. Importantly, we advocate that prison education should not be limited to the acquisition of work-related skills and the upgrading of qualifications but incorporate the opportunity for a significant change in understanding and worldview.

A further feature of Grundtvig was the availability of mobility grants for staff working in adult education. By using these grants, educators in penal settings were able to travel to other countries for training courses, job shadowing and participation in conferences. In this way, for example, many prison teachers were able to participate in EPEA conferences who would not otherwise have been able to attend. Alan Smith estimates that "several hundred grants must have been awarded to Prison Education staff over the entire 2000-2013 period" to attend EPEA conferences.[129] So, it is with some justification that Alan Smith could remark:

> … the period 2000-2013 can be seen as a golden age for EU support of education and training in the context of prisons. True, this still made prison education a relatively small 'player' in the overall picture, but at the very least it can be said to have placed it on the European Union map for the first time and to have given it a visibility and weight more commensurate with its role in national education and training systems in the participating countries.[130]

Clearly, EU projects and programmes gave an enormous boost to the field of education in prison in Europe and greatly facilitated the core EPEA aim of supporting professional development through European co-operation, and there is ample further evidence of these developments to be found in Alan Smith's review.

[129] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.20.
[130] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.11.

THE RATIONALE FOR EU SUPPORT

One might ask why the European Union would engage to this extent in strengthening the opportunities for education for those held in prisons or other penal settings. Alan Smith's review explains the reasoning for this development. He is perceptive in noting that education in prison stands "at the intersection between three policy areas: justice, social policy, and education and training."[131] And, while all three areas are primarily the responsibility of Member States, there are aspects of each of them in which the European Union does have competence. The rationale for the EU's involvement in education in prison derives from particular parts of EU Treaties. So, for example, the European Union is required to complement Member States in developing quality education by means such as encouraging mobility, promoting cooperation and "developing exchanges of information and experience".[132] Likewise, the EU is significantly involved in combating social exclusion, a matter of great significance for those coming out of prison. Moreover, in relation to justice, there are highly relevant articles in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, such as the statements that "Human dignity is inviolable. It must be protected and respected" (Article 1) and "Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training" (Article 14.1)[133] – thinking and legal principles that are very much in tune with the outlook of the Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

Among these policy areas, that of Education and Training emerged during the first decade of this century as being of particular significance for the field of education in prison. Throughout this decade, there developed an increasing emphasis on life-long and adult learning within EU policy, "focusing in particular on disadvantaged learners in society and on strategies to help remove the barriers that prevent them from engaging in learning activities".[134] Identifying the main characteristics of the EU's conception of adult learning, Alan Smith points to the direct relevance of these for education in penal settings:

> … the emphasis on providing opportunities for less well qualified learners, and on the related role of Adult Learning in helping to combat social exclusion. The need for a holistic approach to Adult Learning embracing not only general but also vocational learning, not only cognitive elements but also personal development and social skills, the importance of a learner-centred approach to Adult Education and the urgent need for effective strategies to give credit for informally acquired knowledge, skills and competences – all these have been traditional hallmarks of the EU's approach to Adult Learning.[135]

[131] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.4.
[132] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.5.
[133] Alan Smith, *ibid*., pp.5-6. The text of the Charter is available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf.
[134] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p7.
[135] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.8.

Concern with such issues "created a policy environment highly propitious to the needs of Prison Education" and was the basis of the European Union's concrete support for education in prison from 2000 onwards.

Several policy statements were developed within the EU which have a relevance for education in prison and which typically take the form of Resolutions or Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the European Council. Notable among these were the Recommendations on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning and the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning in 2006 and 2008 respectively. The Key Competences in particular, says Alan Smith, "form a comprehensive framework covering… not only cognitive aspects but also the key competences needed to access employment and achieve personal fulfilment, social inclusion and active citizenship – a vital backdrop for Prison Education and Training".[136]

Then, in 2011, the European Agenda for Adult Learning was adopted. This was the first formal stand-alone policy document on adult education which the EU developed and in it prison education was explicitly referred to as a priority for education policy. As part of Priority 3 in this Agenda in the period 2012-2014, Member States were encouraged to focus on addressing "the learning needs of people […] in specific situations of exclusion from learning, such as those in […] prisons, and providing them with adequate guidance support."[137] The context in which prison education is placed in the European Agenda for Adult Learning is Priority 3, which deals with equity, social cohesion and active citizenship. This makes it clear that, in the EU's view, what is envisaged for the further development of prison education is the kind of wide and holistic education that is also to be found in Council of Europe policy on education in prison, a concept of education that is clearly reflected in the Key Competencies and also in the wide range of prison education projects described earlier.

Beyond the extensive development in relation to education in prison which Grundtvig facilitates, another important source of EU funding is the European Social Fund (ESF). This is a major instrument of the European Union which aims to help member states:

> … to improve employment opportunities and access to the labour market, in particular for disadvantaged persons, to strengthen social inclusion, combat poverty and discrimination in society and to promote education, lifelong learning and in particular vocational training for socially marginalised groups.[138]

Clearly, then, it is of great relevance to people in prison, and several EU states use ESF funding to improve the provision for those who are in prison or released from prison. For a number of years the ESF also supported a large number of transnational projects and an important post-release network, the Ex-Offender Community of Practice (ExOCoP).[139] However, sometimes projects promoted under the ESF can tend to focus in too narrowly on training for employment as the means of reducing recidivism and can lack the wider perspective generally associated with adult education which underpinned the Council of

[136] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.7.
[137] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.8.
[138] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.21.
[139] Alan Smith, *ibid*., pp.21-25.

Europe's prison education policy as well as the great majority of projects relating to education in prison supported by the EU.

However, the simplistic idea that job-training is the sole or primary means of reducing recidivism often holds great sway and dominates penal policy thinking in many countries, but it is out-of-line with the insights of Council of Europe policy and with thinking elsewhere in the European Union, which stress a more holistic approach. In Council of Europe policy, vocational education is but one part of education directed at 'the whole person', just one segment of a fuller education, like the segment of an orange – and no one segment can achieve what the whole can. In particular, the more holistic approach is very evident in Grundtvig projects and also came across strongly in the 'Pathways to Inclusion' conference in 2010, as will be referred to later.

The more holistic view is also found in EU research. Alan Smith refers to an Estonian-coordinated project, 'Towards a Lifelong Learning Society: the contribution of the education system'. Part of this research was published in a report authored by Paul Downes of Dublin City University under the title, *Access to Education in Europe: A framework and agenda for system change*[140]. This report, reviewed by Cormac Behan in the *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*[141], contained two chapters dealing with education in prisons which highlight the inadequate approach found in some countries. Downes is quoted as stating that it is "evident from a number of national reports that prison education is completely lacking in strategic focus and intervention at national level in some countries".[142] Based also on Behan's analysis, Alan Smith goes on to summarise in his review the finding of this research:

> In many instances, furthermore, prison education was found to be subordinated to the mere acquisition of skills for employment to the detriment of other goals such as active citizenship, social cohesion and personal fulfilment. An urgent need to remove barriers to digital literacy was also identified. Downes pleads for a conception of lifelong learning espousing more than mere economic advancement, and a rights-based attitude towards Prison Education, delivered with methodologies built on the Adult Learning philosophy of a student-centred approach, as called for in the EU's policy in this field… [143]

PATHWAYS TO INCLUSION

In 2010, the European Commission organised a conference in Budapest titled 'Pathways to Inclusion – Strengthening European Cooperation in Prison Education and Training'. It was co-hosted by the Hungarian Prison Service and supported by people associated with the EPEA, as well as the ESF-funded network, Ex-Offender Community of Practice (ExOCoP). ExOCoP involved partners in 14 Member States and was coordinated by Jürgen Hillmer at the Ministry of Justice in the German State of Bremen. The conference involved 218 participants from all Member States and other associated countries. Its purpose was to highlight projects

[140] Paul Downes (London: Springer, 2014).
[141] Vol. 3 No. 1, June 2016, pp.5-7.
[142] Alan Smith, *op. cit*., p.27.
[143] Alan Smith, *ibid*., p.27.

and partnerships developed under 'Grundtvig', 'Leonardo da Vinci' and other EU programmes. It "brought together for the first time on such a large scale 'practitioners' and 'policy-makers' in Prison Education from across Europe", with the result that "three days of intensive discussions led to both broad and in-depth exchange of knowledge and experience in the respective areas."[144]

A number of valuable studies followed the 'Pathways to Inclusion' conference. The EU Commission contracted an English organisation to review available research on prison education and training. It was published in 2011 as *Prison education and training in Europe - a review and commentary of existing literature, analysis and evaluation*[145] and contains, in addition to the review as such, an extensive bibliography and a section with recommendations for future research. In addition to this literature review, GHK were asked "to conduct an appraisal of the current situation and evolving trends in Prison Education in Europe".[146] Their work was supported by an 'expert panel' that included three previous EPEA officers, Anne Costelloe, Torfinn Langelid and Anita Wilson, and the Final Report[147] was published in 2012. A further 'Summary report' on prison education and training was published by GHK in 2013[148], pulling together the results of the preceding studies.

However, perhaps the most insightful post-script to that Budapest conference of 2010 is the list of "Key Messages resulting from EU support for Prison Education", formulated by Alan Smith after that conference, and which he includes at the end of his historic review. He sees the 'Key Messages' as constituting the distilled wisdom of the 'golden age' decade of EU prison education projects. These messages, based on the author's personal assessment but also clearly reflecting the views of the Budapest conference, are very much in tune with Council of Europe and EPEA perspectives on education in prison. Set out as a list of 17 points[149], the opening four clearly convey the essence of their progressive thinking and sharp understanding of both penal policy and adult education:

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[144] Alan Smith, *ibid*., pp.28-29.

[145] https://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/Hawley-Jo-et-al-for-EU-Prison-Education-and-Training-in-Europe-Literature-Review-2011.pdf. The study was authored by Jo Hawley for GHK consultants. Anne Costelloe and Torfinn Langelid from EPEA assisted the author as "contributors" and Walter Hammerschick (Vienna) and Eduard Matt (Bremen) from the ExOCoP network as "reviewers".

[146] Alan Smith, *op. cit*., p.31.

[147] Jo Hawley, Ilona Murphy and Manuel Souto-Otero (GHK), *Survey on Prison Education and Training – Final Report*. (Contract report for DG Education and Culture, European Commission, Birmingham, 2012). The survey is available at: https://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/Hawley-Jo-et-al-for-EU-Prison-Education-and-Training-in-Europe-Survey-2012.pdf.

[148] Jo Hawley, Ilona Murphy, Manuel Souto-Otero (GHK), *Prison Education and Training in Europe. Current state-of-play and challenges*. (A summary report authored for the European Commission, May 2013). Available at: http://klasbak.net/doc/EC.pdf. (Hawley *et al*, 2013).

[149] Co-incidentally, there are also 17 Recommendations in the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison*. The 17 "Key messages resulting from EU support for prison education" do not correspond exactly to these, but the thinking in each is very much in harmony.

17 Key Messages by Alan Smith – the first four:

- Prison systems emphasising reprisal rather than rehabilitation, are out-of-phase with democratic ideals: "People should be sent to prison as punishment, not for punishment!"
- Prison inmates – including those with special learning needs –have a right to education just like any other citizen. This principle should be implemented in all countries.
- "No-one is only a prisoner". Education and training can help to develop the prisoner's full personality and greatly enhance his or her self-esteem.
- Prison Education and Training should consequently espouse a holistic approach embracing basic and general education, social and personal skills, artistic and cultural creativity as well as practical and vocational training.

The full text of the 17 'Key Messages' formulated by Alan Smith is available as Appendix 3 of this book.

Chapter 8

The EPEA Conferences: bringing prison educators together: 1991 to 1997

INTRODUCTION

This chapter and the following one look at the crucial role the biennial EPEA conference plays in advancing the aims of the organisation. It will be recalled that the second aim of the EPEA is "to support and assist the professional development of those involved in education in prison through European co-operation". One of the most effective ways in which prison educators can be supported and offered professional development is by bringing them together for several days in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere that is stimulating and understanding. The 'European co-operation' element can be found through enabling prison educators from different countries to share experiences, problems and insights, and this can happen as much in informal exchanges as in formal sessions. Clearly, then, there are several crucial factors which are necessary to make a success of such conferences, including location, atmosphere, opportunities to be together, cost and ease of access – and especially the ideas and experiences that are shared.

What were retrospectively called the First and Second EPEA Conferences took place in England in July 1984 (Wiston House) and September 1989 (Wadham College, Oxford). These were described in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. It was also noted in Chapter 2 that an even earlier conference, which was held in Nicosia, Cyprus, in May 1984, likewise played a key role in developing European co-operation in prison education matters. This chapter and the next will focus on subsequent EPEA conferences, which took place every two years from 1991, and will concentrate on these events over two decades, i.e. up until Cyprus hosted a conference once more in 2009.

We will, however, make some brief references to the following decade (2011 to 2019) and note some distinctive changes in the style of conferences in these more recent years. In our view, some of the most valuable qualities of the conferences in the earlier period were sometimes lost in later years. Apart from the main EPEA conferences, another strand of smaller conferences, which focused more on the needs and interests of national directors and co-ordinators of education in prison, took place on seven occasions between 1994 and 2010. These 'Co-ordinators and Directors conferences', will be examined in Chapter 10.

'THE THIRD EPEA CONFERENCE': BERGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

As was explained in Chapter 2, the numbering of EPEA Conferences arose from gatherings that took place in England in 1984 and 1989 being designated, *in retrospect*, the First and Second EPEA Conferences.

In 1991, four Dutch educators who had been present in Oxford in 1989[150] organised what was originally simply called a 'follow-up' conference to the one that took place two years earlier. These organisers consciously set the theme of the 1991 conference as addressing three questions which Prof Norman Jepson highlighted in his closing address at Oxford in 1989:

1. What is the place and role of education in penal institutions?
2. What are the limits of a prison, i.e. what relationships exist between penal institutions and society?
3. Is prison education unique? What is the purpose of prison education: correction, treatment or education?

Although, once again, the EPEA did not appear in the title of the conference and the event was simply described as ''How High the Walls': 3rd International Conference on Prison Education', it too is now, in retrospect, referred to as the '3rd EPEA Conference'.

However, the embryonic EPEA had more of a part in this conference than previous ones. It was at Bergen, although largely on the fringes of the conference, that the organisation began to take shape and the *ad hoc* group formed at Oxford gave way to a new Steering Committee. As noted in Chapter 3, some steps forward had been made the previous year in Vancouver when three Europeans (Pam Bedford, Robert Suvaal and Kevin Warner) met there for a working breakfast. After this, 16 countries nominated Liaison Persons, many of whom came together for a meeting at Bergen, and their names and addresses, along with other EPEA information, were given in the report on the conference that was later published.[151]

Moreover, the nature of the 1991 conference in Bergen, the Netherlands, was very much in tune with the style of EPEA conferences that would be held over the following years, and in many ways Bergen set the tone for what was to follow. The location was excellent: a Folk High School set among the sand dunes, which was given over exclusively to the conference participants for the four full days of activity. This helped to generate an atmosphere of togetherness that would become characteristic of EPEA conferences over the following decades. Rooms were shared, in part in order to keep the cost of attending down. The 'De Zandhoeve' Folk High School made bicycles available for participants to borrow, and many (even some who had not cycled for years!) made use of these to explore the cycle paths that ran along the shoreline and among the sand dunes. Moreover, it set a trend in being what Robert Suvaal, who was clearly the lead organiser at Bergen, called a 'working conference', where nearly all of those attending were fully involved throughout.

It was also a more 'European' conference than that at Oxford. There was again a significant presence from the USA and Canada, and one came from Australia, but on this occasion 18 European countries were represented. The Berlin Wall had fallen in the meantime, and so the Bergen conference was novel in being able to welcome participants

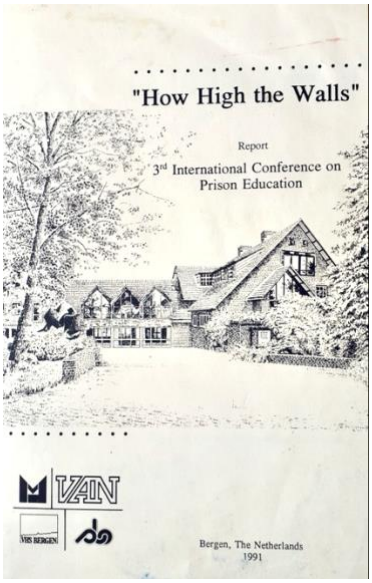
[150] The four who organised this conference were Nico Emmer of the Folkhighschool Bergen; Dirk van Kooten of Boerhaave Adult/Continuing Education College; Robert Suvaal of the Prison Service in the Ministry of Justice; and Willem van Zon of the National Institute for Curriculumdevelopment. They were joined on the Organising Committee by Rina Hiemstra, Secretary from the Folkhighschool Bergen.

[151] *Willem van Zon, Robert Suvaal and Pam Bedford, 'How High the Walls': Report from 3rd International Conference on Prison Education (Enchede, the Netherlands: national Institute for Curriculum, 1991)*

from Albania, Estonia, Hungary and Poland. The extensive report, published in book form after the conference, gives the full text of all the keynote presentations, details all the workshop presentations, and summarises group discussions and other meetings, and gives information on the EPEA. In all, there were 70 participants from 21 countries at this EPEA conference, and it is notable that 42 of these gave formal inputs of some kind – very much ensuring Bergen became a 'working conference'.

From left; Torfinn Langelid (Norway), Tessa West (England), Stephen Duguid (Canada), Svenolov Svensson (Sweden) and David Jenkins (USA)

The themes of presentations and workshops at any EPEA conference tend to reflect the character of the education and the preoccupations of those involved in the field at that particular time. Workshops are mostly offered by prison educators 'on the ground', while keynote addresses or other plenary presentations are often made by those with wider oversight such as Directors of prison systems, those with other national roles or academics. At Bergen, the opening keynote address was given by Hans Tulkens[152], who would have been widely known as a key figure in the development of European penal policy, through his work in the Council of Europe and as Director of the Dutch penal system.



Conference Report, Bergen, the Netherlands

By 1991, Hans Tulkens was a Professor at the University of Groningen. His speech focused on the obligation of prisons towards those held in prison, an obligation that is set out in Rule 3, one of the 'basic principles' of the European Prison Rules (1987):
The purposes of the treatment of persons in custody shall be such as to sustain their health and self-respect and, so far as the length of sentence permits, to develop their sense of responsibility and encourage those attitudes and skills that will assist them to return to society with the best chance of leading law-abiding and self-supporting lives after their release.[153]

In that context, Hans Tulkens saw education in prison as being able to "contribute to reducing the walls of prisons, to reforming prison as an institution and to reviewing the notion of imprisonment and penalty as such"[154]. He saw education in prison as being the trumpets that could bring down the Walls of Jericho.

Plenary addresses were also given by two national leaders in prison education, Ian Benson[155] from England and Kevin Warner[156] from Ireland, both of whom were on the Select Committee that produced *Education in Prison*. They drew out some

[152] Hans Tulkens, "Education in Prison: Is it about the trumpets or about Jericho?" in Wilhelm van Zon, *et al, ibid*., pp.11-20.
[153] Hans Tulkens, *ibid*., p.12.
[154] Hans Tulkens, *ibid*., p.20.
[155] Ian Benson, "'How High the Walls' – Institutional co-operation: education and penitentiary facilities", in van Zon, *et al, ibid*., pp.39-40.
[156] Kevin Warner, "Education in Prison: developing the whole person", in Wilhelm van Zon, *et al, ibid*., pp.21-25; also, "Is prison education unique?" pp.57-59.

of the main themes of this report, notably its 'adult education orientation', its focus on 'the whole person', the need for a wide curriculum, and the importance of co-operation between educational authorities and penal institutions. Stephen Duguid, who worked as an academic at Simon Fraser University as well as the Director of a university programme in prisons in British Columbia, also gave a plenary speech which sought to address the questions Norman Jepson set out at the conclusion of the Oxford conference.[157] Stephen Duguid had been at the Wiston House and Oxford conferences previously, and was the Chairperson and main organiser of the CEA conference in Vancouver the previous year, and he therefore represented a key strand of continuity between all these events.

The themes and issues reflected in the wide range of workshops held at Bergen were broadly in line with what one might find in subsequent years at EPEA conferences, although there were also some unique and unusual topics. For example, Joy Clarke, the Chief Education and Training Officer in Northern Ireland's prisons (and a key member of the Steering Committee in the EPEA's early years), described the introduction of an intensive open learning system in the Maze Prison, where paramilitary prisoners were strictly segregated and subject to high security. David Jenkins, from Maryland in the USA and a regular participant at EPEA conferences for many years, described a project with some parallels to that in the Maze, whereby efforts were made to provide education to 'hard-to-reach' prisoners, who "suffer increased isolation and depersonalisation while incarcerated"[158].

Resonating with themes in other EPEA conferences, it is noticeable that there were four workshop presentations on art in some form, and three dealing with literacy or adult basic education. Four workshops looked at educational provision in the context of an overall prison system, in places as diverse as California, Hungary, Luxembourg and Sweden. Other presentations dealt with the relationship between education and the institution, co-operation with the community outside, university studies in prison, adult education, vocational education, second language teaching and much more. Tessa West from England presented a philosophical reflection on education in prison – and also wrote a commentary on the whole four-day event for the conference report.[159]

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN TALLINN, ESTONIA, MAY 1992

Made Kirsti, from the Ministry of Education in Estonia, was present at Bergen and she then took the initiative to organise an important conference on education in prison in Lohusalu, near Tallinn, in 1992. Just as Vancouver served in some ways as a bridging event in 1990 between Oxford and Bergen, the gathering in Estonia in 1992 was an important bridge between Bergen and the 4th EPEA Conference in Sigtuna, Sweden, in 1993. It was also an important event in its own right, both for the Estonians involved in the field and those from 12 other countries who attended. This conference took place very soon after Estonia regained its independence from the Soviet Union. The invitation to the conference from the Vice-Minister of Education, Kalju Luts, stated: "The independent Republic of Estonia is bringing into effect radical changes practically in all spheres of life, including education. Undoubtedly, it will have its influence on prison education which in our opinion should be integrated into the European system in the future". The letter specifically stated that the idea of the conference "arose after the participation in the international conference on prison education in Bergen".

The Lohusalu conference ran from 26 to 29 May 1992 at a State Department conference centre 40 km from Tallinn. Although a bigger event than either of the 1984

[157] Stephen Duguid, "The International Context of Penal Education", in Wilhelm van Zon, *et al, ibid*., pp.26-34.
[158] Wilhelm van Zon, *et al, ibid*., p.63.
[159] Tessa West, "Epilogue", in Wilhelm van Zon, *et al, ibid*., pp.78-80.

conferences in Nicosia or Wiston House, it had a similar shape to these earlier conferences in having a large proportion of the attendance from the home country; 21 of the 53 who took part were Estonian. Estonia's near neighbours, Sweden and Finland, sent 11 and 7 participants respectively. These three countries also contributed the majority of conference presentations, although there were also inputs from representatives of seven other countries, nearly all of whom had been at Bergen, The Netherlands. Most contributions described some aspect of prison education in the speaker's home context, reflecting the desire of the Estonian hosts to learn about "the European system". Robert Suvaal spoke about the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison.*

In the 1990s, Estonian authorities put a great deal of effort into reforming and developing education and vocational training in their prison system and engaged intensively with others in Europe as part of this project. The Nordic countries, in particular, had extensive bilateral co-operation with Estonia on penal matters generally. The Estonian government also requested advice and support from the Council of Europe on a number of prison-related issues, including on vocational training and education. The Council sent Kenneth Neale and Kevin Warner, Chairpersons respectively of the *European Prison Rules* (1987) and *Education in Prison* (1990), in response to this request. They visited together for a week in March 1995 and issued a joint report advising on a way forward, entitled 'Estonia: Prison Regimes (Work and Education)'. In September 1996, Estonia hosted the second 'Co-ordinators and Directors' conference on education in prison, and this will be described more fully in Chapter 10.

THE 4TH EPEA CONFERENCE: SIGTUNA, SWEDEN

The same style, substance and atmosphere of Bergen continued two years later in Sigtuna, Sweden. Instead of 'How High the Walls', the 1993 conference was called 'Beyond the Walls'. This time, however, the term 'EPEA' did appear in the title, which declared the event to be the '4th EPEA European International Conference on Prison Education'. Yet, the Sigtuna gathering was not actually organised by the fledgling EPEA, but rather by the Swedish Prison and Probation Administration, in co-operation with similar governmental bodies from the justice and educational fields in the neighbouring countries of Denmark, Finland and Norway. However, these Nordic organisers not only generously bestowed the 'EPEA' brand on the conference, but also gave plenary speaking time in the programme to EPEA representatives and space for EPEA information in the substantial conference report that was produced afterwards.[160] They also enabled the EPEA to hold meetings before and during the conference, in one of which an important step forward was made when the EPEA Constitution was adopted. The involvement of four new countries (Belarus, Italy, Latvia and Lithuania) now brought the number of European countries involved in the EPEA via Liaison Persons to 22.

Sigtuna is an attractive medieval town about 40 km north of Stockholm and is regarded as the first town to be established in Sweden, having been founded in the 10th Century. The conference took place at the Sigtunahöjden conference hotel, which was just outside the town and overlooked part of the great lake Mälaren. Just over 100 participated, thus making it the largest 'EPEA' conference to date. It took place in mid-June and those from more southern parts of Europe were surprised to experience very long daylight – even prompting some to swim in the lake under the 'midnight sun'. Another bonding feature which began at Sigtuna and which would become part of future EPEA conferences, adding greatly to

[160] *Report from 'Beyond the Walls': 4th EPEA European International Conference on Prison Education, Sigtuna, Sweden, 1993* (Norrköping: Kriminalvårdsstyrelsen Förlaget).

From left; Gustavo Bagu (Sweden), Bob Semmens (Australia), Ian Benson (England), Kaj Raundrup (Denmark) and Grethe R. Fodstad (Norway)

their atmosphere, was participants singing together in the evenings, ably led on his guitar by Paddy Rocks from Northern Ireland; he would later become the EPEA Chairperson.

Another feature introduced at Sigtuna and which also continued for many years was an invitation to a few participants, usually those at an EPEA conference for the first time, to share their thoughts and feelings about the gathering at the concluding session. This usually highlighted how valuable and moving participation in the event had been for many of those attending, and especially newcomers working 'on the ground' in diverse areas of education in prison. In 1993, the prison teachers who spoke at the conclusion were Maria Alice Guilares da Costa from Portugal and Pam Lorenz from Ireland[161]. Alice spoke of learning a lot from the keynotes, workshops and informal meetings. She said: "The good environment among the participants allowed a close contact with many of them. That was really nice!" She was especially impressed (as was Pam) by her visit to Österåker Prison which focused on drug rehabilitation, saying "it really interested me because 50% of my inmates are drug addicted". Pam Lorenz said "as prison educators… we have to deal with the difficulties and problems that the prison system throws up at us, and sometimes it can be a very lonely job. We can feel very alone and wonder what we are doing at all". However, the conference had given her encouragement:

> I think one of the strongest feelings I will be taking away with me will be the genuine interest and care people have for their work. That so many of us have similar aspirations has created an atmosphere of warmth, goodwill and friendship and that is very meaningful for me. I think that was also expressed in the wonderful music and songs by everyone last night.

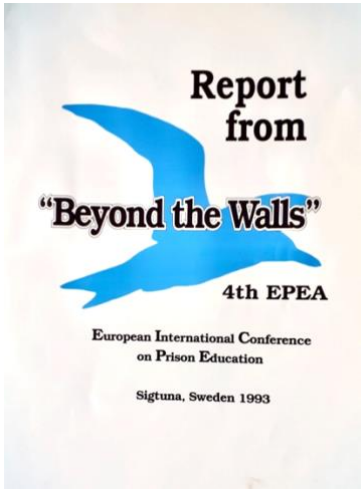
Pam Lorenz's reference to the final evening's dinner and associated happenings emphasise the importance of such celebrations, and indeed the importance of other events (such as after-dinner talks, theatre, poetry, music or other cultural features) or excursions or visits during a conference, in generating togetherness, enthusiasm and a sense of solidarity. Being encouraged in this way may have been what many prison educators valued most from EPEA conferences, certainly in the two decades we are examining here, from 1991 to 2009. An important practice that began at Sigtuna was the awarding of subsidies to prison educators 'on the ground' to attend the conference when they might not otherwise be able to do so. This initiative continued at least up until Cyprus in 2009 and was important for optimising access for those most central to the EPEA's purposes.

Another impressive dimension to the Sigtuna conference was the quality of its content. Some 40 workshops and paper presentations conveyed a very strong sense of the challenging, innovative, collaborative and rich nature of the field of education in prison and continuing

[161] See 'Summary and Conclusions', *ibid.*, pp.75-79.

beyond the prison[162]. A very wide concept of education is again suggested, including presentations on physical education, life-skills in various forms, libraries, literacy, humanities and many other areas. Yet, there were also descriptions of many forms of adaptation to the prison context, with accounts of multi-disciplinary projects, preparation for release, post-release support, family contact initiatives and therapeutic communities, etc. There was a presentation in the opening plenary session on one morning of a play by Anders Peedù from Gotlands Teatern in Sweden, which was a presentation of a play he regularly performed both in Swedish and Norwegian prisons. The play was called *The prisoner as a human resource – take no prisoners*, its purpose was to generate discussion between those held in prison, prison staff and to improve relations between them.

What was particularly striking about the content of the Sigtuna conference, certainly to those from outside the four countries involved, was the quality and coherence of the penal policy thinking and practice that was conveyed. The organisers deliberately set out to communicate "ideas and glimpses from the Correctional Services of the Nordic countries and the context in which they work", and achieved this remarkably well[163]. Nordic reflections on and analysis of penal matters were evident especially in the keynote addresses. One of the aims with this conference was to present a Nordic view of prison, the prison population and prison education. The title *"Beyond the Walls"* was further meant to reflect a double perspective – from the inside looking out, and from the outside looking in. In an after-dinner speech on the second night, Thomas Hylland Eriksen from the University of Oslo gave a cultural interpretation of the prison institution in Nordic societies. He explained that Nordic countries see prisoners as part of society. This, he said, is the basis for 'open' prisons, 'normal' working conditions and fairly liberal regimes, approaches that are associated with social democratic ways of thinking.



Asbjørn Langås described 'the Import model' which was launched in Norway in 1969 when the school authorities took responsibility for offering education in prisons. Kaj Raundrup talked about the special situation in Denmark where the majority of people in prison served their sentences in open prisons. Other related ideas include concepts such as 'normalisation' and 'openness', an example of the latter being, for example, when sports events or other activities are arranged in prison with citizens from the surrounding areas, or when summer high schools are offered in closed prisons with topics such as drama, music or folk-dancing.

The long-time Director General of the prison service in Finland, K.J. Lång, gave an inspirational keynote address on the final morning of the conference that might be taken to convey the essence of Nordic penal values and thinking. Titled 'What kinds of prisoners do we meet during the 1999s?'[164], his talk characterized most of those in prison as representing a socially and psychologically disabled class – features very common to many countries and other decades. He spoke of the low utilization rate of their skills and abilities, mostly because they had been deprived of chances to develop and use their stronger parts. Generally, they are poorly educated and have been unemployed for long periods. It is striking that a Director General of a prison system would see the implication of such characteristics being that "all our efforts when organizing correctional services should be analysed as to their ability to

[162] See 'Abstract of papers', *ibid.*, pp.14-27 App.
[163] *Report from 'Beyond the Walls', ibid*., p.21.
[164] *Report from 'Beyond the Walls', ibid.*, pp.65-68.

support, uphold and address the self-esteem of the prisoner".[165] Such a perspective made sense of his opening comment, that what are often called 'correctional services' in English have very different connotations in Nordic languages: the Finnish 'vankeinhoito' means 'care of prisoners', the Swedish 'kriminalvård' means 'care of criminals'.

Two important organisational steps forward happened at Sigtuna. Henning Jørgensen called together a meeting of national coordinators or directors of education in prison who were present at Sigtuna to explore the need for a specific conference for such people, and to examine the possibility of making it happen. Coordinators and directors from 14 countries attended. There was enthusiasm for this kind of event and a planning group consisting of Henning Jørgensen, Svenolov Svensson and Torfinn Langelid was formed to plan the first of such gatherings in Poland in 1994. Such conferences will be examined in more detail in Chapter 10. The other initiative, important to the development of the EPEA, was the establishment of the first Steering Committee after the Constitution was formally adopted. Its members are listed in the boxed section below.

EPEA, first Steering Committee

Chairperson:	Kevin Warner (Ireland)
Secretary:	Anne Cameron (Scotland)
Treasurer:	David Marston (England)
Membership Secretary:	Pam Bedford (England).

The other members of the SC: Isabelle Jegouzo and Yves Le Guennec (France), Pam Lorenz (Ireland), Jan Marten Terweil and Robert Suvaal (the Netherlands), Joy Clark and Dominic Henry (Northern Ireland), Kay Blackstock (Scotland), Agneta Bergendal and Anita Johannisson (Sweden), Vincent Theis (Luxemburg) and Otilia Marques Graala da Costa (Portugal).

THE 5TH EPEA CONFERENCE: BLAGDON, ENGLAND

The 5th EPEA Conference, held in October 1995 in Blagdon in the English 'West Country', was the first one to be actually organised by the EPEA itself and was given the title, 'Bending Back the Bars'. It was held in the state-owned Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) college, commonly known as Coombe Lodge, which under the leadership of Keith Scribbins[166] had for some years given extensive support to both education in prison and the EPEA. Once again, the location of the conference was in pleasant countryside looking out on a lake, with the Mendip Hills in the background. There were just under 100 participants, some of whom stayed in Coombe Lodge itself, while others lodged in Bed & Breakfast facilities nearby.

Apart from one intrepid American, Errol Craig Sull, all who took part in this conference were from 17 European countries, including 23 from England and 23 from Norway. The four-person Planning Committee, all of whom were members of the EPEA

[165] *Report from 'Beyond the Walls', ibid.,* p.67

[166] Keith Scribbins had participated in the Wiston House, Oxford and Vancouver conferences and had been a keynote speaker at Bergen. He generously offered the Coombe Lodge facility for EPEA Steering Committee meetings in both April 1992 and March 1995. FEDA regularly ran courses for prison education staff and produced several publications on education in prison.

Steering Committee, once again came from four countries: Anne Cameron from Scotland, who was EPEA Secretary; Pam Lorenz from Ireland; Dave Marston from England, who was EPEA Treasurer; and Paddy Rocks from Northern Ireland. They were supported by staff from Coombe Lodge. A substantial report on the conference was produced in Ireland after the event.[167]

If there was a major focus on progressive penal policy in the keynote contributions at Sigtuna, the particular emphasis at Blagdon was on good educational approaches, especially adult education and the wide curriculum. The opening keynote address at Coombe Lodge was given by James McKinnon, the Director of the Butler Trust, which gives awards in Britain for innovative work in prisons. He dwelt on the actual educational process that takes place between teachers and prisoners, through which the learners "can really grow normally… and develop at a pace and in a way appropriate to them".[168] Echoing the comments with which K. J. Lång concluded the Sigtuna conference, James McKinnon's opening remarks at Blagdon spoke of the majority in prisons throughout Europe having had "the odds stacked against them by fate… often reinforced by poverty, poor housing and many other negatives which can debilitate lives."[169] The role of the teacher is to offer people in prison, who "do not feel good about themselves", a sense of vision, confidence and growth.[170] He declared:

> Never let the prison system damage or erode that aspiration. God forbid that you should ever become parts of the great penal machine which processes criminals. You must stand out! An education department that is invisible has something wrong with it! It should be a goad. The Governors should say "These bloody teachers!"[171]

Robert Suvaal, one of the Council of Europe Select Committee that produced *Education in Prison*, emphasised the wide curriculum called for in that report. Saying "a wide concept of prison education is not a luxury but a necessity", he stressed in particular the importance of prison libraries, creative activities, physical education and sport. This message was reinforced at the conference in numerous ways through workshops and papers on these aspects of education, a drama performance on the opening evening (by Mike Moloney from Northern Ireland) and a film from Norway called *Big Boys Don't Cry*, which was made with eight young men in Oslo Prison who overcame drug addiction. Another one of the Select Committee, Ian Benson, Chief Education Officer for the Prison Service in England and Wales, emphasised the professionalism required of those who teach in prisons. He said:

> In all learning (but nowhere I suggest more relevantly than with prisoners), students should be encouraged to exercise choice, accept responsibility, develop tolerance and demonstrate success. These things occur largely through the inter-action between the teacher and the taught. This relationship is owned by them. This is a powerful form of ownership which will continue to lie at the heart of all learning.

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[167] EPEA, *Report from 'Bending Back the Bars', 5th International Conference, 1-4 October 1995, FEDA, Blagdon, England.*
[168] EPEA, *ibid.*, p.16.
[169] *EPEA, ibid., p.*17.
[170] *EPEA, ibid., p.*18.
[171] *EPEA, ibid., p.*29.

While the major focus at Blagdon was on the education process, some attention was also given to the wider prison context. The actual penal situation in England in 1995 was very different to that reflected in the Nordic countries at Sigtuna two years earlier. The Home Secretary (Justice Minister) for England and Wales at the time was Michael Howard and he had adopted a markedly punitive approach, greatly increasing the numbers in prison under the slogan 'Prison Works' and advocating 'austere prisons'. However, James McKinnon firmly challenged that approach and an inspiring plenary presentation on the work of Blantyre House prison described a highly positive regime that involved community work, theatre performances and creative arts projects, through which long-term prisoners turned their lives around.[172]

In his opening talk, Kevin Warner dwelt on the European Prison Rules and the vital role Kenneth Neale had played in developing these. He said: "It is said of Ken that he had 'a Scottish heart and an English head'. Clearly, both qualities are present in this very valuable pragmatic philosophy. It is an example of British leadership in Europe that deserves better attention". Conference participants split into groups of 12 to 20 and visited seven different prisons, including Leyhill open prison, which held about 400 men. The conference report stated:

> Leyhill is the only open prison in the country which takes all types of offenders. The population includes a maximum of 125 lifers and somewhere between 30% and 40% of the populations have sexual connotations in their offences. There is no segregation at Leyhill and no holding cell.[173]

The sense of supportive togetherness that was becoming a key feature of EPEA conferences was also strongly present at Blagdon, helped no doubt by the suitable location and a thoughtful programme. The after-dinner drama performance on the first night, the barn dance on the second and the conference dinner on the third certainly contributed to this positive atmosphere. Another, more informal, bonding feature, which had begun in *ad hoc* fashion at Sigtuna, led by Ian Benson, became more established at Blagdon and then continued at many EPEA conferences. This was the 'spoof' or mock 'Europrison Song Contest', a source of great fun for more than a decade. Ian Benson explained it:

> Although this is based on the Eurovision event, some changes have been introduced to enhance efficiency and objectivity. Rather than having a multiplicity of voters, each with their own prejudices, there is only one whose decision is final. I have always bowed to the pressures that this person should be me because of my ability to cope with my embarrassment of the UK being the regular winner. I notice from the delegate list that Norway might break the habit of a life-time and not score '*Nil Point'* by bringing along a massed choir.[174]

Ian Benson led this chaotic and hilarious 'competition' through several conferences. David Jenkins of the USA ably took up the baton at a number of later conferences.

The practice of asking participants to share impressions at the conclusion of the conference which began at Sigtuna continued in Blagdon, where four spoke at the final session. Martin Drüeke of Germany said:

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[172] The work of Blantyre House in Kent is described in the EPEA conference report, *ibid.*, pp.119-123. However, the Ministry of Justice closed it temporarily in 2015, and it was decommissioned permanently in 2019.
[173] *EPEA, ibid., p.*167
[174] *EPEA, ibid., p.* 57.

> It was the first time I took part in an EPEA conference and I was very impressed by the atmosphere… I was also impressed by the optimism with which all prison teachers spoke about their work and how convinced they were by the necessity for it. Without optimism we cannot help disadvantaged students.[175]

Martine Fuchs of Luxembourg described herself as "one of the youngest participants and also one who is new to this business, as I have only worked in prisons for a year". She went on to say: "I gained most from the workshops and the many discussions with other people, learning about not only what they have achieved but how they did it and what were the problems and the successes". But she emphasized, in particular, "the motivation I found here and which I will carry home with me; the motivation to achieve a few projects step by step in my country where prison education is not as well organized as elsewhere".[176]

Seán Wynne from Ireland, who would later become Secretary of the EPEA, was also at his first EPEA conference. He too spoke of the atmosphere, describing it as "an atmosphere of camaraderie… permeated by optimism". He referred to his "first encounter" when he met "a colleague from Hungary as we both made our way on foot to Blagdon Village". He noted "great enthusiasm for the workshops – one hadn't to ask what was going on, it was being talked about all the time".[177]

The sole American present, Errol Craig Sull, said of Coombe Lodge:

> One could not ask for a more tranquil or conducive setting: from my bedroom window I could see sheep grazing below, the twisting and narrow roads weaving in the English countryside, an occasional stone house, a lake in the distance, and an ancient stone cathedral at the bottom of the valley.

More familiar with CEA-style conferences in the US, he noted: "One studies intently during the daytime hours of the conference… and one parties equally intently during the evening at European Conferences". Errol Craig Sull would become well-known for his renditions of his 'Rehabilitation Rap' at EPEA conferences. He reflected:

> Each country has a different approach to correctional education, and each of these approaches – including ours – is a reflection of that country's culture, society and social conscience. Perhaps more than anything else, this EPEA Conference made me realise just how isolated correctional educators throughout the world are away from conferences… and how much we can gain and enhance our efforts through increased sharing of ideas, teaching methods and various programmes. To remain isolationist will, ultimately, limit the opportunities for our students and ourselves.[178]

Such points, made by the four who spoke at the end of the Blagdon conference, were typical of the benefits participants in general felt they obtained from EPEA conferences in the 1990s and 2000s.

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[175] *EPEA, ibid., p.*141.
[176] *EPEA, ibid., p.*141.
[177] *EPEA, ibid., p.*141-2.
[178] Errol Craig Sull, 'Impressions of the EPEA Conference in Blagdon', *ibid.*, pp.138-141.

AT THE HEART OF EUROPE: BUDAPEST 1997

Up to 1997, all of the main EPEA Conferences had taken place in the North-Western part of the continent, but the 1997 conference brought the EPEA to the heart of Europe. The event that year was held in Hotel Agro in the hills above the city. This '6th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education' was the largest up to that point, drawing 126 participants from 27 countries. In particular, there were 30 participants from eight Central and Eastern European countries, enabled by the dramatic changes that had happened since the beginning of the decade as the Cold War ended. While 19 of this 30 were from Hungary, the host country, there were also participants on this occasion from Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Clearly, with this more diverse geographical spread, the EPEA was becoming a truly European organisation. The Organising Committee for this conference comprised two from Hungary, Janos Boros (Chairperson) and Laszlo Csetneky (Secretary), together with four current or recent members of the EPEA Steering Committee who had been involved in the planning of previous EPEA Conferences.[179]

In opening the gathering, the EPEA Chairperson, Svenolov Svensson, pointed out that the conference programme began with the general theme, 'Prison Life and Humanisation', then "narrowing towards Prison Education and what is really working, and finally opening up looking at the next millennium".[180] This reflected what was becoming a pattern in EPEA Conference themes: concern with the wider issue of penal reform, but also a questioning exploration of what education in prison was about.


National Prison Administration Hungary
European Prison Education Association
«Protective Bars?»
6th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education 1-5 November 1997 in Budapest
Conference News - Sunday 2nd November -97
Welcome cocktail/reception

Conference News, about the first day of the Conference

Giving his address on the opening Sunday morning, Ferenc Tari, Director-General of the Hungarian Prison System, described the obligation on authorities to make prison systems humane, not just in theory as in mission statements or regulations, but in actually treating citizens in prison with respect for their human rights and autonomy, and in ensuring acceptable practical conditions on the ground.[181] The implication of this approach for education in prison, he said, is that it should be voluntary, independent of political ideology, offer real choices and respect those in prison as "competent, adult and responsible".[182]

Ferenc Tari's keynote address was very much in tune with Council of Europe thinking on both penal policy and education in prison, and his perspective was strongly complimented three days later in the keynote by William Rentzmann from Denmark who had been Chairman of the Council for Penological Affairs at the Council of Europe.[183] Recognising many current trends which hinder the development of humane prison systems, Rentzmann urged educators in prisons to use the stated progressive principles in national and international guidelines to push for practical positive change – "use them as an argumentative basis", he said, pointing in

[179] The four international representatives on the Organising Committee were: Torfinn Langelid (Norway), David Marston (England), Kaj Raundrup (Denmark) and Svenolov Svensson (Sweden).
[180] *Report on the 6th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education: Protective Bars? 1-5 November 1997* (Central and East European Information and Documentation Centre, Budapest, 1997), p. 9.
[181] Ferenc Tari, 'Prison System and Humanisation', *ibid.*, pp.14-19.
[182] *ibid*, p.18.
[183] William Rentzmann, 'Beyond 2000: Perspectives, New Horizons', *ibid*., pp.38-49.

particular to Council of Europe Recommendations. He also urged educators to involve prison staff in educational activities and to:

> Exploit all the possibilities available to open prisons to the public with all the trouble that this entails. Examples of openness in your field might be visits from the outside by other educational institutions, or at least contact with them, leave for the purpose of external education, volunteers in the prison, etc. All of these are measures that may change some people's concept of prisons and inmates. Because it is of paramount importance to realise that public opinion is not a given or static phenomenon.[184]

Many of the practical ways in which such humane principles can be applied were given in other presentations at the conference, and these were elaborated in particular, for example, in Anita Wilson's paper on 'People in Prisons and their Literacies', which is included in full in the conference report.[185]

The 'What works?' theme was also addressed at the conference, with Andras Csoti of the Hungarian Prison System presenting a keynote on the historical role of treatment in Hungary, a model which he described as "a Central European one".[186] In another keynote, Friedrich Lösel, from the University of Nürnberg –Erlangen, gave a presentation on 'correctional programming'.[187] Reviewing meta-analysis, he concluded that those who receive some kind of psycho-social treatment tend to make more progress than those who do not, but the overall effect of such treatment was relatively small. However, he asserted that community-based programming tends to produce better results than programming delivered in custody.

The keynote lecture on the second day was given by Robert Suvaal, who had been centrally involved in both the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison*, and the establishment of the EPEA.[188] His talk dealt with what he saw as "the most essential issues in prison education" and very much went to the heart of things.[189] He was unapologetic in stating that his focus was on the needs of learners in prison. He said: "prison education has essentially educational goals and… cannot be seen as an instrument to tackle recidivism. Our one and only mission is to educate".[190] Yet, he saw education having a role, integrated with other disciplines, "aimed at the whole development of the client". This, he said, "is quite different from holding prison education responsible for the reduction of recidivism. But… prison education can be very important as part of an integral and developmental approach".[191]

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[184] *ibid*., p.47.

[185] Anita Wilson, 'Prisoners are People: Maintaining Social Identities in Prison', *ibid*., pp.50-59. Anita has written extensively on education in prisons, often based on ethnographic research, in the *Journal of Correctional Education* and elsewhere. She was Chairperson of the EPEA from 2009-2012.

[186] Andras Csoti, 'Nothing Works? Something Works!', *ibid*, pp.32-37.

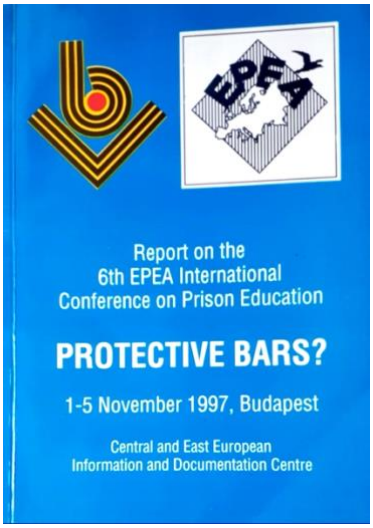
[187] Friedrich Losel, 'Effective Correctional Programming', *ibid*, pp.28-31.

[188] Robert Suvaal died in 2020. An Appreciation of him and his work is available in the November 2020 edition of the *EPEA Newsletter*, https://www.epea.org/robert-suvaal-an-appreciation/

[189] Robert Suvaal, 'New Challenges in Prison Education', *Report on the 6th EPEA International Conference*, *op. cit*., pp.20-27.

[190] *ibid*., p.21.

[191] *ibid*., p.21.



Clearly, progressive thinking around education in prison and penal policy generally were well integrated at this, as at other, EPEA Conferences. Almost every one of the workshops at Budapest reflected in some way the "integral and developmental approach" Robert Suvaal spoke of. Some focused on wider prison issues, such as public opinion on prisons, co-operation between the prison systems of different countries, co-operation between disciplines within penal systems, pre-release support and post-release support, developing education within a changing prison system, etc. Some concentrated on an aspect of education - such as social education, literacy, the arts, cognitive skills, the continuation of education beyond the prison – while others dealt with responses to the needs of particular groups of people held in prison, e.g. those on remand, those in overcrowded prisons, juveniles, etc.

As was clear from the feedback from conference participants cited in the previous chapter, one of the most valued benefits of involvement in EPEA Conferences tends to be the informal interaction between people of like-mind and in like roles in different countries. So, the coming together of all conference participants in activities other than plenary or workshop sessions – be these at coffee breaks or dining, in visits to prisons or to the local area, in cultural or other activities – are of great importance.

As well as extensive formal sessions, the Budapest conference gave ample opportunities for such mixing, with the programme including 'sightseeing by bus', 'dinner and wine-tasting in a wine-cellar', a 'Hungarian folk-music concert' as well as visits to prisons. However, there can hardly be a better way of generating convivial interaction between people than bringing all participants together on a boat, and this was achieved on the last evening, when the 'closing banquet' was 'held on a boat on the river Danube hosted by the Minister of Justice'. [192]

[192] To our knowledge, the only other such happening at an EPEA conference was in Norway in 2003, which had two boat excursions: on one evening there was a 'boat excursion in the Langesund Archipelago', while on another all participants boarded a boat together on the Telemark Canal.

Participants of the Budapest Conference

Chapter 9

The EPEA Conferences: bringing prison educators together: 1999 to 2009

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will continue the account of the main EPEA Conferences, from the 7th in Athens in 1999 to the 12th in Cyprus in 2009. These gatherings remained the primary means by which the EPEA implemented its mission of supporting professional development through European co-operation. In this period, the conferences continued to be important and dynamic events, with never less than 100 participants and never fewer than 21 countries involved. In 2009, the conference in Protaras, Cyprus, brought 193 prison educators from 34 countries to the island, thereby being the largest EPEA Conference to date. This chapter will conclude with a brief reflection on the general characteristics of EPEA conferences in the 1990s and 2000s, and also some comments on these EPEA gatherings in the subsequent decade.

THE MILLENIUM CONFERENCES: ATHENS (1999) AND NOORDWIJKERHOUT (2001)

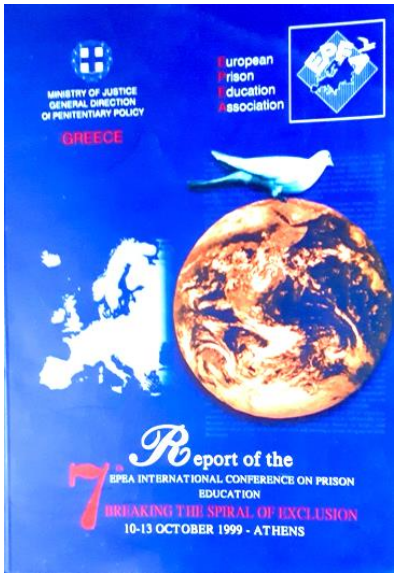
The momentum generated by the EPEA Conferences through the 1990s continued to the turn of the century and into the new millennium. The EPEA itself also grew and developed as an organisation in this period. The 7th EPEA Conference took place in the centre of Athens in 1999, a location which many regard as the cradle of European civilisation. Held in the Titania Hotel, it attracted even more participants than Budapest: 144 attended from 21 countries. However, the larger attendance represented fewer countries than two years previously, and the lack of involvement on this occasion from Central and Eastern Europe was particularly noticeable, although Laszlo Csetneky from Hungary did participate. There were 29 from Norway and 24 from Greece at Athens, but impressive representation also from The Netherlands (11) and the USA (9).[193]

The Planning Group which oversaw the shape of the Athens conference consisted, as in Budapest, of a local Chairperson and Secretary (Sevasti Papadimitropoulou and Ioannis Stalikas respectively, both from the Greek Ministry of Justice) and four experienced EPEA representatives.[194] However, much of the practical preparation for the conference was undertaken by a local Organising Committee which drew on the help of a further nine Greeks. A coherent theme to the Athens conference was reflected in the title given to the event,

[193] Some from Albania and Cyprus were expected to attend but appear not to have done so.
[194] The four from the EPEA were Janine Duprey-Kennedy from France (EPEA Chairperson), Paddy Rocks from Northern Ireland (EPEA Deputy Chairperson), Dominic Henry from Northern Ireland (EPEA Treasurer) and Kaj Raundrup from Denmark.

'Breaking the Cycle of Exclusion'. This concept was developed around four sub-themes or 'topics': normalisation, minorities, social exclusion and literacy. It is striking that, on this occasion, the four keynote speakers who analysed these topics were academics, all professors.

The opening keynote was given by Sean McConville, a Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of London, who explored 'normalisation' from a historic point-of-view.[195] Asking 'How, once in an institution of total control, can we make space for prisoners to make choices?', he outlined ways in which education can help in this regard through a broad curriculum and by enhancing self-esteem. He also pointed to the rationale for open prisons and advocated "bringing the world into the prison… religious, cultural, sporting and social groups" engaging with those in prison to advance normalisation.[196]



At the time of the Athens conference, close to half of those in Greek prisons were from other countries, many of them undocumented. This was the issue addressed in the keynote lecture introducing Topic 2: 'Minorities – Who are they? – What can education do?', given by Yannis Panoussis, Professor of Criminology at the University of Athens.[197] He explained how adult education programmes based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 26 which recognises everybody's right to education, were introduced in prisons, aimed at "social reintegration after their release from prison and the creative use of their spare time".[198]

Each of the four topics built around the exclusion theme were explored on different days at the four-day conference, and each introductory keynote was accompanied by a set of workshops related to that issue. So, the Athens conference had a very well-thought-out and well-structured programme. On the third day, the keynote address was by Prof Jean-Michel Mertz from the French Ministry of Education, whose topic title was 'Exclusion/Imprisonment/Exclusion: A Vicious Circle?'[199] He focused on both economic exclusion, saying "crime finds its roots in unemployment and homelessness", and cultural exclusion, noting that "our prisons are filled with poor people… the ones who have been denied proper access to education".[200]

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[195] Sean McConville, 'Towards Normalising Prison Life' in *Report of the 7th International Conference on Prison Education, Breaking the Spiral of Exclusion, 10-13 October 1999 – Athens* (Ministry of Justice Prison Administration, Athens, 1999), pp.17-22.
[196] *ibid*., p.21
[197] Yannis Panoussis, 'Minorities – Who are they? – What can education do?', *ibid*., pp.23-25.
[198] *ibid*., pp. 23-24.
[199] Jean Michel Mertz, 'Exclusion/Imprisonment/Exclusion: A Vicious Circle?', *ibid*., pp.26-36.
[200] *ibid*., pp.27-28.

The thoughtful structure of the conference can be seen also in the two-and-a-half hours given to EPEA business just after Prof. Mertz's address on the third morning. The EPEA General Council meeting took place then, followed by a Liaison Persons' meeting to elect new members to the Steering Committee. In her opening address to the conference on the first morning, Janine Duprey-Kennedy had highlighted the importance of these EPEA meetings for the mission of the organisation; it was for this reason that they were held in the middle of the conference. There were, however, possibly fewer opportunities for informal get-togethers by participants in Athens than there were at Budapest, which set a high standard in that regard. However, there were visits to the Acropolis and to prisons, and dinner at a Greek Taverna on one night with the inevitable 'Europrison Song Contest'. On other nights, participants came together for dinner at the hotel and many then adjourned to the hotel's open air 'Sky Bar' which had splendid views over Athens.

Participants of the conference in Athens

The keynote on the concluding day was given by Prof Solveig-Alma Halaas Lyster, from the Institute for Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo. In her extensive paper, she explored how some children, often those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, fail to adequately develop their literacy at schools. She noted how this can contribute to 'acting out' and to delinquency. She concluded:

> Children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and children who struggle to develop adequate reading should be acknowledged for the competence and culture they bring with them to school. Positive expectations will pay off… Perhaps we can reduce crime activities in the adolescent population and delinquency in general if the school meets the challenges socially disadvantaged children bring with them - and

> children with other kinds of problems, such as learning disabilities - in a more prepared way than is done today? Being an outsider is not easy. Having no support at home makes the situation even worse. Having no support in school may trigger an undesirable development both academically and behaviourally.

While these four keynote addresses were well-focused and set the tone for the conference, it was, as always, in the workshops that the most productive interactions between prison educators took place. These workshops are well documented in the detailed 132-page report on the conference, published by the Prison Administration in the Ministry of Justice in Athens. As well as including welcoming and opening statements, the report gives the full text of all four keynote addresses, as well as full papers related to some of the workshops. Among the workshops was one by Carolyn Eggleston and Thom Gehring from California, both historians and each having many decades of involvement in education in prison. They gave a presentation exploring democratic initiatives linked to education in the unlikely setting of the USA's 'prison/industrial system'. George Fleeron and Sean Wynne[201] each gave a workshop on the education of paramilitary prisoners, in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland respectively. Tony Vella and Joe Giordmaina from Malta gave a critique of the prison system, while in another paper Øyvind Alnes and Erik Såheim outlined the innovative and very special regime at the open prison at Bastøy, in Norway.[202]

From North America, Patrick Mulgrew from Alberta, Canada, David Jenkins from Maryland, USA, and Sylvia McCollum from the Federal Bureau of Prisons all gave workshops on different initiatives to prepare those in prison for release. Maria Hegarty from Ireland and three Dutch artists/teachers offered workshops on art in prison.[203] Michelle Malone and James O'Hare gave a paper on education with remand prisoners at Longriggend in Scotland[204], and Ray Dormer from Sydney, Australia, gave one on 'Teaching Minorities'.[205] There were workshop papers on dealing with dyslexia in prison in England[206], creative writing in Dutch prisons[207] and on distance learning in German prisons[208].
The Dutch involvement in the Athens conference was impressive. Of the 11 who participated there, four were artists/art teachers, two were librarians in prisons and there was a creative writing teacher. Clearly, this reflected the rich and dynamic form of education in prison that had been built up in the Netherlands at the time, and in particular the broad curriculum envisaged in *Education in Prison*.[209] It is evident from the conference report (page 79), for example, that at that time the prison in Rotterdam contained three libraries run by five

[201] Sean Wynne's paper, 'Education and Security – When the twain do meet!', was subsequently published in the *Journal of Correctional Education*, Vol. 52, Issue 1, March 2001.
[202] 'From humiliation towards vitalization. From discipline to responsibility'' in the Report of the 7th EPEA Conference, *op. cit*., p.48.
[203] Legs Boelen, Detlef Greinert and Hans Pruyn, 'Art in Prison – Prison in Art', *ibid*., pp. 66-69.
[204] *ibid.*, pp.49-55.
[205] *ibid.*, pp.56-58.
[206] Bridgid Everitt, 'Dyslexia – Breaking Down the Barriers', *ibid.*, pp.71-73.
[207] Jan Roelof van der Spoel and Narda Romijin, 'Writing as an expression of freedom', *ibid.*, pp.74-78.
[208] Jürgen Hillmer, 'Virtual Holes in Prison Walls', *ibid*., pp.59-62.
[209] Some years later, much of this extensive education was greatly reduced so that there was very little educational provision available to each person in prison in The Netherlands, and the curriculum was also radically curtailed. Art education and library services were terminated in Dutch prisons from 2012.

librarians, for a prison population of 450 split among five different regimes. We also learn that the libraries in this one prison held 20,000 books in 23 languages, thus responding well to the needs of a very diverse clientele. It is not surprising, then, given such educational energy and EPEA participation among Dutch prison educators, that the Netherlands offered to host the next EPEA conference, which took place in Noordwijkerhout in October 2001.

Exactly two years after the Athens conference, the '**8th International EPEA Conference' took place at the Leeuwenhorst Centre in Noordwijkerhout**, The Netherlands, in October 2001, supported by the National Agency of Correctional Institutions (DJI). As when the Dutch were hosts ten years earlier, the location was once again by the sea, on this occasion in a conference hotel. The theme was 'Prison Education: A Multicoloured Palette?', a title chosen, as the EPEA Chairperson Paddy Rocks explained in the high-quality and colourful report that was produced afterwards, "to reflect the various concepts of prison education and how these interlink with the contexts in which it operates, to highlight a multitude of structures and practices that are in place, and to stimulate debate on the directions it could take in the future"[210]

The conference programme followed a pattern set in earlier conferences in many ways, with welcoming and keynote speeches (but just two keynotes), workshops, EPEA business meetings and prison visits. However, there were some variations also, one being group discussion with set questions. The formal events were concentrated into two full days, and the third day (a Saturday) was given over to prison visits, sightseeing by bus and a conference dinner hosted by the DJI. On the Thursday evening, Alan Smith of the European Commission gave a presentation on Grundtvig funding, while the EPEA's General Council meeting was held on Friday evening. The programme also included a three-hour EPEA Steering Committee meeting on Wednesday, the opening afternoon, prior to an "ice-breaking reception (talks, drinks, food)" led by Niek Willems, Chair of the Planning Committee. A regular item also appeared on the conference programme for the first three evenings, which read: "21.30 -? Bar open (opportunities for informal contacts and networking)". This session was upgraded on the final Saturday evening to "21-00 – 24.00 Party".[211]

At this conference in Noordwijkerhout 106 participants joined, somewhat less than attended Athens, but they came from a wider spread of 29 countries, and Eastern and Central Europe was once more well represented – with participants from Albania, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia and Slovenia. As well as high participation from Norway (16), Ireland (14) and The Netherlands (12), there was more engagement than is often the case from Germany (8), Sweden (6) and France (5). And, even after the tragic '9/11' events in the USA less than a month previously, three prison educators from there gallantly made their way to Noordwijkerhout, including the President of the CEA, Patricia Franklin, who travelled from Washington State.

Writing about the style of the conference, Paddy Rocks explained: "Each participant was informed well in advance that the experience was to be an interactive one, with the accent

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[210] Paddy Rocks, 'Foreword', in *Prison Education: A Multicoloured Palette?: Report of the eight international conference on Prison Education,* compiled and edited by Joke Holdtgrefe (The Netherlands), Robert Suvaal (The Netherlands) and Sean Wynne (Ireland) (The Hague: Dutch National Agency of Correctional Institutions, 2001), p.7.

[211] Conference Programme, *ibid*., pp.71-72.

on participation, and a minimum of speech-making".[212] The selected workshops were given greater emphasis than usual, and each was conducted twice so that participants could be involved in four of them. In his welcoming address to the conference, Paddy Rocks made clear how the EPEA by that time had become quite a dynamic organisation:

> From its very modest beginnings there are now around 900 members in 35 countries over several continents. There are active branches in around 20 countries… There is a network of Liaison and Contact Persons connecting members with the organisation…[213]

He referred to the fact that every EPEA member had recently been sent an EPEA Directory, that an "EPEA Internet Website" (as he called it) had just been initiated and that Vision 2006 had been guiding the EPEA forward from the previous decade to the new one.

Fiona Crowe, a teacher in a prison for young men aged 16 to 21 on Spike Island in Ireland, was at her first EPEA Conference in Noordwijkerhout, and had also just been selected as one of her country's Liaison Persons. Her account of her experience there, written several months later for the *EPEA Magazine*, offers good insights into the success and atmosphere of this 8th EPEA Conference:[214]

> The Dutch have once again proved how good they are at planning and organisation… my first experience of an EPEA conference was really positive, interesting and fun… [The] seaside location and purpose built hotel was ideally suited to the needs of the conference, with a welcome touch of luxury after *long* days attending workshops and discussion groups.
>
> On the day I arrived at Leeuwenhorst, I spent an enjoyable evening getting to know my fellow delegates in a very social setting, described as 'informal networking' in the programme! The real work started the next morning with opening addresses from D. Mulock Houwer, Director General of PJS (Prevention, Youth and Sanctions) and Chairperson of the EPEA, Paddy Rocks.
>
> The subsequent keynote speech from Andreas Lund, on changing prison education through ICT, was very informative and offered an insight regarding the possible direction and context of prison education.[215] The first round of workshops followed this speech. The workshops on offer were very diverse and interesting. I found it very difficult to choose which workshops I would attend while still sitting in a classroom in

[212] Paddy Rocks, 'Foreward', *ibid*., p.7.
[213] Paddy Rocks, 'Welcome Speech', *ibid.*, p.14.
[214] Fiona Crowe, 'A personal report from the EPEA Conference, Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands', in *EPEA Magazine/Newsletter 22*, Winter 2002, pp.10-12.
[215] In referring to the right of those in prison to education, Andreas Lund of the University of Oslo developed this point to assert that all such learners had a right to "digital competence" in "all sectors of education".

Ireland, despite the descriptions provided. My eventual choice for the morning session was a workshop led by Patricia Franklin (USA) highlighting the similarities in classroom experiences in prison education across the world. This provided a good opportunity to reflect on my teaching and to share and listen to the experiences of my international colleagues.

In the afternoon I attended a workshop led by 'Legs' Boelen on making 'world music'. This novel experience gave me my first opportunity to play a bongo drum, which is much more difficult that it looks!... I thoroughly enjoyed the release offered by the music and appreciated the non-verbal communication that was shared between delegates from eight countries with different languages. At a conference where I was fortunate enough to speak English, the working language of the conference, I began to fully appreciate the difficulties encountered by delegates from countries where English is not the spoken language. I felt humbled by the amazing levels of patience and energy that many delegates showed by participating in the conference through English.

Group discussions followed, on the characteristics of a 'multicoloured palette' in a prison education context. In the group that I was assigned, a very lively discussion took place concerning the exact meaning of the expression 'multicoloured palette'. Many thought that the expression denoted the different cultures and non-nationals now evident in prisons in many European countries, while others thought that the expression related to a broad curriculum.

I then attended the EPEA liaison persons meeting, where new liaison persons were introduced and elections took place for the positions of area representatives. As I was one of those new liaison persons I found the process interesting. It was my first introduction to the constitution of the EPEA, a document I will have to read a few more times before I fully understand all of the details!
Following dinner on that first night, we were told that the bar was open for further informal networking, many of us took the opportunity and as a result *may* have found it difficult to get up the following morning.

Friday began with a report session from each of the discussion groups of the previous day… A keynote speech followed from Fred Bastemeijer, from Albeda College, Rotterdam. This speech outlined the employment schemes organised by the college and provided 'food for thought' regarding possibilities for pre and post- release programmes… The first workshop that I chose to attend on this day was a practical experience of learning to speak Dutch, as a complete and total beginner. This workshop was led by Leonie de Bot and Adrie Slootweg and was great fun. It provided the participants with a practical reinforcement of good teaching techniques and highlighted specific difficulties in dealing with prisoners who do not speak the language of the country in which they are incarcerated.

My second workshop of the day was led by Peter Bierschwale, and examined the concept of public relations for a prison. I gained an insight into the potential that prison education has for generating good public relations for a prison and for prisoners. Peter provided practical advice for overcoming some of the difficulties, inherent in the prison system, that hinder positive public relations. To finish the working part of Friday, we had a surprise music lesson. This energising active/interactive session resulted in a really good rendition of an old Irish ballad in two part harmony. Being Irish, I had an advantage already being familiar with the song, which made it appear that I was quick to learn the tune! The song could be heard again in chorus, with much more passion later that night at another informal networking session in the foyer.

On Saturday delegates went to visit a prison in the locale. I chose to visit a juvenile prison outside De Haag. This was my conference highlight. I work in a juvenile prison in Ireland and was fascinated at the very different approach taken by the Dutch government dealing with/treating young offenders, particularly with regard to the age of offenders housed together and treated in juvenile institutions in The Netherlands. This experience provided me with lots of ideas/possible tools for teaching students with learning difficulties and opened up other possibilities for dealing with my students. My students in Ireland were very interested to hear about these differences and this provoked interesting conversations among the students.

Later on Saturday evening, the conference banquet was held… The Indonesian style food, followed by a jazz band was a great way for delegates to unwind and say goodbye to new acquaintances made at the conference. All went well until Paddy Rocks approached me and asked if I would give an evaluation of the conference on the following morning. I will admit to being a little reluctant. I felt that I would need time to prepare something suitable to do justice to the conference. However, Paddy prevailed and I was seen writing out a few thoughts at 1.30 am! This report has been an attempt to provide a more comprehensive and just review of the conference.

The conference closed the following morning with a small number of evaluations. It is my view that the conference was a great success… The sessions were interesting and varied and were run very efficiently. The opportunities to meet colleagues from around Europe was exciting, especially for a 'first timer' like me… I returned home with a 'fresh' perspective, new ideas for my teaching in the classroom and new ideas for changing the things that are done better in other countries. I look forward to an equally interesting conference in Norway in two years' time.

Other workshops, besides those mentioned by Fiona Crowe, included ones on employment programmes in Canada, humanities teaching in Ireland, two different workshops on computer education in Norway, education and occupational training for youngsters in penal institutions in Northrhine-Westfalia, the 'Nord-Balt Project (involving Latvians and

Norwegians), flexible learning in Ireland and an investigation of the future of Swedish prison education. The workshops alone, clearly, made up a 'multi-coloured palette'.

FROM NORTH-WEST TO SOUTH-EAST: LANGESUND (2003) AND SOFIA (2005)

In the first decade of the century we find a pattern whereby EPEA Conferences criss-cross Europe, often switching from one end of the continent to the other. After Noordwijkerhout, the EPEA first went north to Norway in June 2003, before moving to the other corner of Europe in Bulgaria in May 2005. Each of these events maintained the momentum that had been built up by previous EPEA Conferences and helped to keep the EPEA as a relevant and helpful force among those working in education within prisons. In this period also, there were other positive developments: membership grew; many Council of Europe countries built close involvement with the association; the European Union, working closely with the EPEA, became increasingly engaged in and supportive of education in prison, as was seen in Chapter 7; and the EPEA was widely recognised as the primary voice advocating for learning opportunities for those held in prisons.

That sense of supportive togetherness which 'first-timer' Fiona Crowe found at Noordwijkerhout would most likely have been experienced also **at the 9th conference in 2003 at Langesund in Norway**. The location, theme and programme were likewise designed to generate interaction, awareness and encouragement among prison educators. The 2003 conference[216] took place in the Quality Skjærgården Hotel in Langesund, a coastal village in the south of Norway – Langesund means 'the long strait'. It was certainly an appropriate location and, as Paddy Rocks said of the 2001 conference, "beyond the distractions of a major town".[217] The sense of camaraderie among participants at the 9th conference in 2003 was no doubt enabled by features in the programmes such as boat trips on two evenings (to the Langesund Archipelago and the Telemark Canal), prison visits and drama and music performances by men from Skien and Oslo prisons at the beginning and end of the conference.

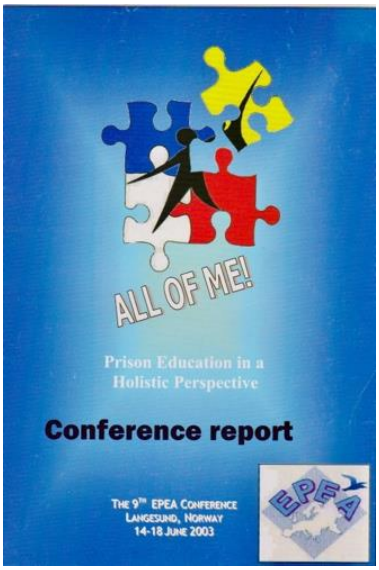
Paddy Rocks on guitar leads the "choir" of the EPEA in Langesund

Another feature of conferences in this period was the production of a daily newssheet called *Conference News*, which would give a brief account of what had happened over the course of a day, such as a short summary of keynote speeches and many photographs of

[216] *Conference Report: ALL OF ME! Prison Education in a Holistic Perspective. The 9th EPEA Conference, Langesund, Norway, 14-18 June 2003.* (County Governor of Hordaland Department of Education, 2003).
[217] 'Welcome Speech', Report on 8th EPEA Conference, *op. cit*., p.13.

participants. This helped generate a sense of purpose and a sense of occasion at these conferences. The first issues of this newssheet were produced by Leif Lyngstad and Gunnar Moen from Norway at the conference in Budapest in 1997. They would produce an issue overnight so that it would be available on breakfast tables the following morning. It was quite a demanding task for the two, which could involve turning a hotel bathroom into a dark room (this was at the end of the analogue era) or, in the case of the Athens conference in 1999, driving a lot of equipment across Europe from Norway. At the conference in Langesund, Leif Lyngstad once again produced a daily *Conference News*, helped on that occasion by two other colleagues.[218] At the next occasion, in Sofia in 2005, as many as nine issues of *Conference News* were put together in the course of the conference.

While a Norwegian educational authority (the County Governor of Hordaland) was the lead organiser on this occasion of the Langesund Conference in 2003, the Organising Committee for the conference represented four Nordic countries[219] – just as happened ten years previously in Sigtuna (Sweden). As mentioned earlier, that Sigtuna conference was striking, at least to those from outside the host countries, for its elaboration of Nordic thinking and practice in penal policy. This perspective was also present at Langesund, but perhaps it was more focused this time on the education of people in prison rather than on the wider prison context. The progressive thinking was reflected in the title given to the conference: 'ALL OF ME! Prison Education in a Holistic Perspective', in many ways reiterating the emphasis on the wide curriculum found at Noordwijkerhout. A keynote presentation on the final morning offered insight into 'A Nordic Approach to Prison Education', the outcome of a Nordic Council sponsored comparative study of education in prison in the four countries.[220]



There was an impressive attendance at Langesund – 135 from 32 countries. The geographical spread of the participants, from both 'East' and 'West', indicated the strong involvement in the EPEA across most parts of Europe at this stage. This pattern was also reflected in 'Eastern' involvement in the EPEA's leadership at this time, with Steering Committee members in 2003 from Albania, Bulgaria and Hungary.[221] The EPEA as an organisation had a strong presence in Langesund: there were Steering Committee meetings just before and also during

[218] At Langesund, the *Conference News* was produced by Jon Erik Rønning and Asbjørn Støverud, as well as Leif Lyngstad.

[219] The Organising Committee consisted of Torfinn Langelid and Liv Rogstad, both from the County Governor of Hordaland, Vuokko Karsikas from the Criminal Sanctions Agency in Finland, Kaj Raundrup from the Department of Prisons and Probation in Denmark and Svenolov Svensson from the Swedish Prison and Probation Administration.

[220] See 'A Nordic Approach to Prison Education' in the Conference Report, *op. cit*., pp.89-97. Two years later a full report on this project was published in book form: *Nordic prison Education: A Lifelong Learning Perspective* (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2005), available at http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:701860/FULLTEXT01.pdf.

[221] The members of the Steering Committee were Marinela Sota (Albania), Valentina Petrova (Bulgaria) and Peter Ruzonyi (Hungary), all of whom were Regional Representatives.

the conference, and a General Council meeting on the evening of the first full day. An EPEA office, where participants could get information on the EPEA or take out membership, was located amid the plenary and workshop rooms and was open throughout the conference.

The conference programme was structured more like Athens than Noordwijkerhout. After an overarching keynote address, there were four further keynotes setting sub-themes for each day, and an abundance of workshops. As in Athens also, the Organising Committee for the Langesund conference drew on a group of nine locals who offered 'secretarial assistance'.[222] An extensive report on the conference, compiled by those involved in organising it, was subsequently published in Bergen by the County Governor of Hordaland. As well as a text of some 150 pages, it also included a compendium on Grundtvig 2 projects and a CD strapped inside the back cover which had workshop papers and excerpts from a *Les Miserables* performance in Oslo Prison.

The needs of the person held in prison and the imperative in Council of Europe Recommendations to develop 'the whole person' were the main touchstones for explorations in the conference. The opening keynote address[223] was given by Prof Ole Thyssen from Copenhagen, who said: "The prison is not just a way of isolating and marginalizing criminals, and not just a place for resocialisation, but also a part of the welfare system, which means that the prison has to take total care of the prisoners, body and social, economics and culture."[224] Taking her starting point as "the needs of the inmates", Tone Pettersen,[225] a researcher from the University of Trondheim, said:

> To meet all the inmates' needs, prison staff, teachers and other staff, like social workers and therapists, must work closely together, and with the inmate, in an organised way. I will like to stress the importance of a comprehensive plan – a holistic future plan – for each and every inmate, where education plans, treatment plans and plans where practical questions like housing, economy, employment, and leisure activities are included.[226]

Subsequent keynotes, suggesting ways in which different needs could be met, indicate the breadth of the 'wide curriculum'. Prof Leikny Øgrim from Oslo University College spoke of ICT as "a gateway to the outside world"[227]; Sonja Kurten-Vartio, a Deputy Governor at Vaasa Prison in Finland, gave a presentation on vocational training[228]; and the final keynote was given by Jon-Roar Bjørkvold from the University of Oslo, titled 'The Creative Human Being: Art Education in Prison, Creativity and Re-Creation'.[229] All these addresses are given in full in the conference report.

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[222] These helpers are named on p. 128 of the Conference Report, *op. cit*.
[223] Ole Thyssen, 'Punishment, Confinement and Care' in Conference Report, *ibid.*, pp.17-25.
[224] *ibid*., p.25.
[225] Tone Pettersen, 'Does Prison Education Benefit the Needs of the Inmates?', *ibid.*, pp.26-32.
[226] *ibid*., p.32
[227] Leikny Øgrim, 'Information Communication Technology (ICT) – A gateway to the Outside World. Possibilities and Pitfalls', *ibid*., pp.37-42.
[228] Sonja Kurten-Vartio, 'Vocational Training in Prison – From Swords to Ploughshares. Habilitation as a Mental Process.', *ibid*., pp.50-56.
[229] Jon-Road Bjørkvold, *ibid.*, pp.60-64.

As in Athens, the workshops were arranged to follow (even if loosely) the topics of the keynote addresses. So, there were four sets of workshops and each set offered six different options. With 24 workshops (involving 34 presenters) offered in all, this element of the programme was also more extensive than in Noordwijkerhout. The breadth of workshop themes was as extensive as ever, and included literacy teaching, best practice in prison education, the treatment of juveniles, European networking, ICT, resocialisation, vocational training, the arts, special educational needs, and European and North American thinking on education in prison.

By the time of the Langesund gathering, a number of regular events had begun to appear on EPEA Conference programmes. Alan Smith from the European Commission was one of these and a regular presenter on matters such as Grundtvig funding, and in Langesund he outlined how education in prison could be supported through the European Union's life-long learning policies[230]. His keynote presentation on the Tuesday morning was accompanied by examples of such support via presentations by Valentina Petrova from Bulgaria[231], Johan Floan[232] from Norway and Anthony Vella from Malta[233]. There was also a meeting of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education to arrange the next conference for this group, which happened in London in 2004.

The structure of the programme at the EPEA Conferences in Athens and Langesund, each of which had four keynote addresses and workshops arranged in relation to each of these topics, was used again to good effect in **Sofia, Bulgaria, in May 2005. The '10th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education'** had as its title, **'Challenges for European Prison Education – Let's make the changes together!**' and so, as in Langesund, focused very much on the process of education within prisons. The Sofia conference had 110 participants from 28 countries, including 29 representing 'Eastern' Europe[234], 20 from Norway and 15 from the host country, Bulgaria. Both key European institutions, the Council of Europe and the European Union, had important roles in Sofia: the conference was held 'under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe', and some 30 participants were supported in attending via EU funding. The conference also had the patronage of the Execution of Sentences Directorate in the Ministry of Justice in Bulgaria, which formed the major part of the Organising Committee, which was chaired by Valentina Petrova, a teacher in Lovech Prison.[235]

[230] Alan Smith, 'Grundtvig 2 Project: European Support for Prison Education', *ibid.*, pp.69-82.
[231] Valentina Petrova, 'Co-operation in the Grundtvig 2 Project', *ibid*., pp.83-84.
[232] Johan Floan, 'Adapted adult education in prison and how to follow up after release', *ibid*., pp.85-87.
[233] Anthony Vella, 'Implementing lifelong Learning Policies: Promoting Education in European Penal Institutions', *ibid*., pp. 87-88.
[234] The countries in Central and Eastern Europe which had participants in Sofia were: Albania (4), Czech Republic, Estonia (6), Hungary, Latvia (2) and Russia (5).
[235] Apart from Valentina Petrova, those on the Organising Committee were Liliana Alexandrova, Valentina Karaganova and Kostantin Kostantinov, all from the Execution of Sentences Directorate, as well as Niek Willems, EPEA Chairperson.

Members of the EPEA Steering Committee and other members

The setting in Sofia was a remarkable one and served very well the objective of bringing everyone together in one amenable location which was given over exclusively to the conference. The gathering was held in the Boyana Residence, a large government-owned hotel complex which was situated in parkland at the foot of Vitosha Mountain, 10 km south of the city centre. Built originally in the communist era, the complex had, as well as ample conference and hotel facilities, a number of apartments, villas and 'presidential suites'. It had originally included the residence of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, in a building that today is the National Museum of History. Architecturally, the Boyana Residence is seen as "a particular manifestation of totalitarian ideology" and " a prime example of the leading trend in the 1970s", in which, despite "the existing symmetry of both design and façade, the buildings appear perfectly blended with the environment. Specially designed window openings make the Vitosha mountain a dominant element in the interiors and let nature 'flow inside'."[236] Ironically, it was in this physical expression of communism, on 10 November 1989, that the Bulgarian dictator Tador Zhivkov was ousted and the process towards democracy in Bulgaria began.

Like the Boyana Residence, prisons in Bulgaria were other institutions that were required to change significantly as the political system changed. During the conference, participants split into different groups and were bussed to three prisons. A special booklet was prepared, in Bulgarian and English, which explained these institutions to the visitors. As the booklet noted in relation to Stara Zagora Male Prison:

> The transition to market economy and the democratic changes taking place in Bulgaria set a lot of new challenging tasks to the prison system. The prisons are faced with the necessity of putting into practice new approaches to the prison management and to the humane treatment of inmates. The adoption of a new philosophy… is a complex process which requires a long adaptation time and the will of all… involved.

[236] From ATRIUM, Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes, Cultural Route of the Council of Europe', available at http://www.atriumroute.eu/heritage/sites/sofia/boyana-residence

> The Prison School has a key role in that process. The curriculum is equal to the one in the ordinary primary, secondary and vocational schools in Bulgaria. In addition, the school offers courses in areas such as cognitive and job-training skills. The library, sport, art and project activities facilitate the process through which adults develop a new attitude to their previous beliefs and ideas, to their own potential.

Some participants visited the 'Correctional Home for Juveniles' in Boichinovtzi. The school here also provided primary, secondary and vocational education and claimed to give special attention to those "who have difficulties in reading and writing". These juveniles also have access to a library, "a computer room with 11 computers", physical education, sport and a swimming pool.

The Male Prison in the town of Lovech was built in the 1930s and was regarded as "a high security prison for recidivists and life-long sentences", as well as some on pre-trial detention. Offering education at different levels on a voluntary basis, the prison visits booklet stated:

> Aside from the challenges for the prison schools, and all the barriers and obstacles facing the ex-prisoners after release, we should recognise the importance of education in minimising the detrimental effects of imprisonment. According to the rules of the Bulgarian prison system, the attendance at a prison school reduces the duration of the sentence. One school year shortens the sentence with 80 days.

The focus on teaching and learning is clearly seen in the keynote speeches. The first keynote was given by Odd Bue, a Head Teacher in a Prison School in Norway, whose talk was 'Flexibility in Prison Teaching – practices and tendencies'. He spoke of how his school had modulated subjects in lower secondary education, with every module meant to take about 40 hours. An advantage of this system was that prisoners who were transferred to other prisons could continue their education there. Another helpful reform introduced by the government was that adults could combine their formal, informal and non-formal competences in achieving qualifications.

The second address was by Dugald Craig of the European Commission, who set out the European Union's policy on lifelong learning and its relation to education in prison. The European Union representative was followed two days later by a keynote speaker from the Council of Europe, who was also a teacher in France. Pierre Boulay's talk, 'What makes a good teacher?', set out a ten-point programme: know the subject, be prepared, be a fair judge, know how learning works, motivate the students, be in charge, be state-of-the-art, promote universal values, be a bridge-builder and be a lifelong learner.

EPEA Chairpersons, 1991 to 2009, left Kevin Warner (Ireland), Svenolov Svensson (Sweden), Janine Duprey-Kennedy (France), Paddy Rocks (Northern Ireland), Niek Willems (Netherlands) and Anne Costelloe (Ireland). In the back, Membership Secretary Torfinn Langelid (Norway).

The EPEA as an organization was again very much to the fore in Sofia. As in Langesund, an EPEA office was open in the Boyana Residence throughout the conference. There was also a meeting of Liaison Persons and Contact Persons, this time chaired by Anne Costelloe, as well as the usual Steering Committee and General Council meetings. Particular people stand out strongly when remembering the Sofia conference, among them Niek Willems, by this time the EPEA Chairperson, ably carrying out his official role, but also generating great fun and camaraderie in more informal settings with his exceptional talent as an entertainer. Niek's late-night renditions of the Rolling Stones' 'I can't get no satisfaction' are fond memories for many.

One other larger-than-life prison educator, Jim Turley, was also part of the Sofia conference story, although he was not an attendee. Jim had been a Senior Teacher at Magaberry Prison in Northern Ireland and an enthusiastic participant in, and advocate of, Grundtvig Projects, but he sadly died in 2004. Yet, Jim Turley was warmly remembered at Sofia when some of those who had been involved with him on Grundtvig exchanges held a small memorial service for him in an Orthodox chapel in Sofia on the Saturday afternoon while other participants were sightseeing in the city. His colleague in Magaberry, Geoff Moore, also gave 'a short talk in memory of Jim Turley' in the 'What makes a good teacher?' strand of workshops. Geoff Moore remarked how Jim "was a big man in every way, his laughter was infectious and he spread it around a lot… he listened well, his empathy was enormous".[237] Geoff Moore also said:

> Jim was a prisoners' champion, he was always in tune with the thoughts and troubles of his students – never far away from their emotions – he cared passionately about prisoners' rights, their individual needs, legal requirements, resources and facilities. These were the most important constituent parts of Jim's day.[238]

Geoff Moore noted that it was Valentina Petrova, Chairperson of the conference Organising Committee and another Grundtvig enthusiast, who had asked him to speak about Jim Turley. If there was one personality who successfully shaped the Sofia conference and set her imprint on it, it was Valentina Petrova. As a member of the Steering Committee, she

[237] Workshop paper by Geoff Moore: 'The Grundtvig Project and the Good Teacher. A short talk in memory of Jim Turley (1950-2004)', *10th EPEA Conference*, 2005. International Conference on Prison Education 18-22 May 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria. Conference Report pp.82-85.
[238] Geoff Moore, *ibid*.

advocated for bringing the 10th EPEA Conference to her native Bulgaria and determined to facilitate good interaction between her country and those from elsewhere. And, as the conference's focus on teaching and learning indicates, she advocated in particular the development of best practice in holistic adult education.

FROM WEST TO EAST: DUBLIN (2007) AND PROTARAS, CYPRUS (2009)

The EPEA Conferences continued to cross-cross Europe. In 2007, two years after Sofia, the conference moved westwards to Ireland and after that moved once again to the opposite side of Europe, to Cyprus in 2009. The 11th EPEA Conference in Ireland was held in Dublin City University in June 2007 and had 174 participants from 32 countries, so it was by far the biggest EPEA Conference up to that time. However, even that large attendance was trumped when the EPEA next gathered in 2009 at a conference that had 193 from 34 countries taking part, in Protaras, Cyprus. These conferences had equally appropriate, if contrasting, settings: the Dublin event took place in persistent summer rain in a new university campus, while the Cyprus conference was held in a hotel by the sea where, despite it being 'end of season', there was warm autumnal sunshine.

The high participation in these conferences in the late 2000s, from all across Europe and beyond, may be seen as closely related to the healthy state of the EPEA at that time. The programme for the Dublin conference speaks of the EPEA having "established itself as the European voice for prison education, drawing its membership from over 40 countries".[239] While the largest numbers of those participating in Dublin were, as regularly happens, from the host country (with 35) and Norway (26), there was impressive involvement also from England (13), the USA (11), Germany (10), Russia (7) and Northern Ireland (6). There were four or five delegates from each of Australia, Denmark, Estonia, Greece and Latvia, and involvement also from Albania, Georgia and Turkey, as well as a representative from UNESCO.

Kevin Warner, co-ordinater of Irish Prison Education

On this occasion, the Organising Committee was entirely Irish, but included people with wide EPEA experience such as the Conference Chairperson Cormac Behan, who had been a member of the EPEA Steering Committee and was Chairperson of the Irish Prison Education Association (IPEA),[240] and Anne Costelloe, Chairperson of the EPEA at that time. Most of the Organising Committee of six were teachers in prisons, mostly in Mountjoy Prison in Dublin while one taught in Cork Prison.[241]

The title of the Dublin conference was 'Learning for Liberation', consciously chosen to reflect the possibilities of adult education. The opening keynote address, given by Ted Fleming from the National University

[239] Conference programme: *Learning for Liberation: 11th EPEA International Conference, Dublin, Ireland, June 13th – 17th 2007*, p.33.

[240] Cormac Behan was elected as Deputy Chairperson of the EPEA in 2020 and took over the role of Chairperson in January 2021.

[241] The Organising Committee consisted entirely of educational personnel: Cormac Behan (Arbour Hill Prison and Mountjoy Prison), Marie Breen (Mountjoy Prison), Catherine Coakley (Cork Prison), Anne Costelloe (Mountjoy Prison), Paula Egan (Mountjoy Prison) and Kevin Warner (Co-ordinator of Education).

of Ireland at Maynooth, was titled 'What Liberation is Offered by Learning?' and set the tone for the conference.[242] He attempted to tease out "why people turn to adult education as a source of ideas for working in prison education".[243] He gave three reasons for this:

> Firstly, adult education provides support for the idea that the learner is an adult, or responds best when treated in an adult way… Secondly, because adult education takes seriously the idea that school (and indeed other parts of the system world) have failed those in prison. The principles and practices of adult education form a counter position to classroom or school learning… Thirdly, it offers connection, engagement and a developmental possibility.[244]

The workshops, and indeed other items in Dublin such as exhibitions, poster workshops and presentations on research, were not arranged to follow on from particular keynotes, as happened in earlier conferences. However, the programme did offer an abundance of ideas and experiences related to the adult education theme. There were four sessions of workshops and 28 workshops in all. In addition, on the first afternoon, delegates were invited to wander (with coffee cup in hand if they wished) among a rich variety of poster workshops.[245] There were two photographic exhibitions on display throughout the five days: one of photos taken by young prisoners in an English prison, and the other of photos taken by youngsters in St. Patrick's Institution in Dublin.[246] Further, the Research Forum, a plenary session on research related to education in prison, chaired by Terje Manger and Arve Asbjørnsen from the University of Bergen, heard from eight such research projects in Australia, England, Northern Ireland, Norway, Hungary and Spain. Later, meetings of those interested in research on adult education in prison would become a regular 'side' event - and on occasion even a plenary event - at EPEA Conferences, and the establishment of the *Journal of Prison Education and Re-entry* arose out of such meetings.

Some of the Irish delegates

The range and creativity of the workshops offered in Dublin were impressive. In all EPEA conferences, workshops tend to indicate the issues, concerns and innovations

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[242] The full text of Ted Fleming's talk, 'The Awful Truth and Budgies: What Liberation is Offered by Learning?', is given in the *Conference Report: Learning for Liberation*, pp.6-15 and pp.26-27. The conference report was more limited than some of those for previous EPEA conferences, but was accompanied by two DVDs, one of which included film footage of conference highlights compiled by Michelle Mullins, a teacher of film at the Midlands Prison. The other gave papers which accompanied workshop presentations.

[243] Ted Fleming, *ibid.*, p.11.

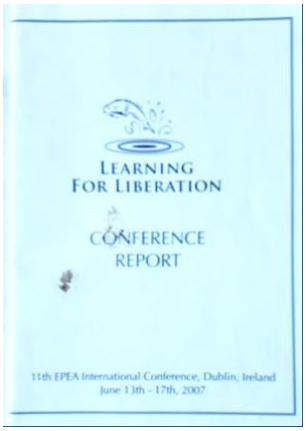
[244] Ted Fleming, *ibid.*, pp.11-12.

[245] There were 13 poster workshops from nine countries on matters such as transition, research, Grundtvig projects, prison translation, special education, art and music.

[246] The St. Patrick's Institution exhibition was the result of work done by photographer Klavdij Sluban with young men in that institution. He had previously carried out similar work in places such as Fleury-Mergois Prison in France, and also in Eastern Europe and South America.

preoccupying educators in prisons at that time. So, in Dublin, we find attention on work with aboriginal people in Canada, young people in New York and prison staff in Turkey. Fitting in with the theme of adult education, several workshops focused on methodology in some way: critical pedagogy and prison teacher education in California, distance education in Latvia and Ohio, the issue of professionalism in prison education in Estonia. Important policy initiatives in relation to education in prison were explained in presentations from Norway and from the state of Victoria, Australia. As regularly happens at EPEA conferences, literacy and aspects of special education received attention, on this occasion from England, Norway, Spain and the USA. Another regular topic is employability, and this was addressed at the Dublin conference by presentations from Australia, Germany, Norway and Scotland. And the social exclusion or inclusion of those in prison was a central issue in workshops from Ireland and Turkey.

However, the predominance of the arts in one form or another is what stands out most when one looks at the Dublin programme. Nine workshops and six poster workshops dealt in some way with artistic themes. In addition to that rich content, there was a 'conference within a conference' organised by PAN, a European network of organisation involved in adult arts education for people in prison or released from prison. It was brought into being at earlier EPEA conferences and was supported by Grundtvig funds from the European Union. With 18 partners in 13 countries, PAN represented organisations involved in the visual arts, performing arts and multimedia: prisons, education colleges, arts organisations and professional practitioners. Its key themes focus on policies and practices relating to prison arts education across Europe, supporting the training of teachers in using arts in a prison context and encouraging innovation and best practice.[247] Such dynamic around the arts was evident in the main conference workshops also, where there were workshops on film-making in prisons in Ireland and Northern Ireland, photography in England, theatre in prison in Austria, England, Ireland and the USA, and creative writing among aboriginal prisoners in Alice Springs, Australia.



Moreover, the first full day of the conference concluded with dinner and entertainment at Kilmainham Goal, one of the largest unoccupied prisons in Europe and now a national museum. On this first evening, conference participants toured the museum and learned about its political and penal history, and saw contemporary Irish prison art on exhibition there. The arts permeated several other parts of the conference also, as in the talk on James Joyce by Catherine Coakley and reading from his *Ulysses* by Jacinta Sheerin, both prison teachers, just before the 'Gala Banquet' on the final evening. This was fitting since the date, 16 June, was the day in 1904 when Joyce had his main character in *Ulysses*, Leopold Bloom, walk through the city of Dublin – a day now celebrated annually as 'Bloomsday'.

Andreas Lund, leader of the EU-project Pipeline

While the primary attention in the Dublin conference was on education in prison, wider penal issues and policies were never far away. This

[247] Conference programme: *Learning for Liberation: 11th EPEA International Conference, Dublin, Ireland, June 13th – 17th 2007*, p.31.

was particularly evident in the other keynote addresses. One was given by Andreas Lund from the University of Oslo, who co-ordinated a Grundtvig project titled PIPELINE, which stood for 'Partnerships in Prison Education: Learning in Networked Environments'. Another keynote was given by Therese Heltberg, who had conducted research at the Danish Prison Service; she spoke about 'Ethnic Minorities and Cultural Sensitivity in Prisons'. On the Saturday morning of the conference, the keynote speaker was Erwin James, and author and former prisoner in England.[248] Following a childhood in care that was "brutal and rootless"[249] and limited formal education, he embarked on an Open University degree while on a life sentence in prison. Called 'Prison Education: the Great Liberator', his talk doubled as the Liam Minihan Memorial Lecture, organised annually by the Irish branch of the EPEA.

On the concluding Sunday morning, the final keynote, 'Opening Doors for Prisoners', was given by John Lonergan, a former Governor of Mountjoy and Portlaoise prisons in Ireland.[250] He was described as follows in the conference programme:

> His philosophy is that change, personal or otherwise, cannot be forced upon people… [but] comes about through consent and agreement… the task for all of us is to find the humanity in another human being and then to nurture it. The more a person becomes aware of their own humanity the more likely they are to treat others with respect. He argues that there is a direct link between crime and social and economic deprivation and believes that the biggest challenge facing us today is not the economy but how we are going to create a just, inclusive and cohesive society based on the core values of justice, equality, fairness and compassion.[251]

When John Lonergan concluded what was an inspiring address, there was silence for a few moments. Then, Randall Wright,[252] a Californian-based Canadian, asked the first question from high up in the lecture theatre: "How did a guy like you ever get to become a Governor?"

As was noted earlier, generating a sense of solidarity and togetherness among prison educators was always one of the aims of EPEA conferences and much was done in Dublin to try to achieve this. The timing and location seem to have helped, being accommodated in a university in the period just after the academic year had concluded and before summer programmes began, so that the EPEA conference had the campus more or less to itself. Using basic but good student accommodation and facilities also helped to keep the cost as low as possible for those who attended. Apart from the programme events already mentioned, a yoga session was available to participants each morning before breakfast, organised by prison teacher Maria Magee. This proved very popular, even for some of those who may have stayed

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[248] Erwin James's best-known books are *A Life Inside: A Prisoner's Notebook* (2003) and *The Home Stretch: from Prison to Parole* (2005).

[249] Conference programme*, op. cit.*, p.21.

[250] John Lonergan's autobiography is *The Governor: the life and times of the man who ran Mountjoy* (Penguin Ireland, 2010).

[251] Conference programme*, op. cit.*, p. 28.

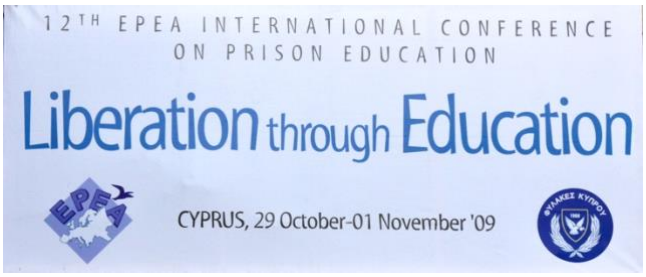
[252] Randall Wright edited and wrote in a celebrated book, *In the Borderlands: Learning to Teach in Prisons and Alternative Settings* (California State University, San Bernardino, Third Edition, 2008).

up late the night before. The Organising Committee also provided transport to and from Dublin airport for delegates, a facility that was also arranged in Cyprus two years later. Whereas a pattern of including prison visits within the main programme had been established at EPEA conferences, this facility was made available in Dublin as an optional activity on the day before the conference officially opened, but was taken up by many. Instead, at the Dublin conference, a midday to midnight outing was organised for participants on the second full day. Buses were arranged to bring people to three locations in the Dublin and Wicklow mountains: to the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, to Glendalough National Park and finally to Ireland's highest pub in Glencullen for dinner and entertainment.
It would appear that this outing and other shared events worked as intended, to judge by remarks made by participants in feedback. The conference was seen to have had a "positive atmosphere of collaboration and creativity" (Alan Clarke, England), and even to have been "the best conference I've ever attended", with "excellent speakers and thought-provoking presentations… balancing the formal settings of the workshops and addresses with the breathing spaces of social activities" (Deborah Tobola, USA).[253]

A feature of both the Dublin and Cyprus conferences was that special efforts were made to enable prison educators to experience as 'first timers' what Deborah Tobola describes, and so give effect to the core EPEA idea of supporting those promoting learning 'on the ground' within institutions. For the Dublin and Cyprus conferences, ten scholarships were given in each case to educators who had not previously attended an EPEA conference and whose work involved them being 'in daily contact with prisoners'. The conference organisers budgeted to support such 'first timers' by waiving fees and paying for travel, recognising that it was to such teachers and other educators that the EPEA's central mission was directed. Applications for such scholarships were sent to the EPEA and selection was made, in the case of Dublin and Cyprus, by 'elders' of the EPEA, i.e. some of those who had been centrally involved in earlier years.

The Dutch branch of the EPEA also granted two additional scholarships for the Dublin conference in memory of Niek Willems, and at earlier conferences the Norwegian branch offered similar support to prison educators in other countries. Of course, in time, Grundtvig support was available to many more in order to attend EPEA conferences, although that scheme, while extensive, did not always reach the target group of the EPEA scholarships – such as the sole teacher in a small prison inside the Arctic Circle in Sweden who applied for, and received, a scholarship to allow her to attend her first EPEA conference in the southern extremity of Europe, in Cyprus. There she would have connected with kindred spirits (and some sunshine) to boost her before facing back in November to work and winter in her Arctic prison.

[253] Conference Report, *Learning for Liberation, op. cit*., p.30.



The 12th EPEA Conference took place at the end of October 2009 in Protaras, Cyprus. It was held in the Sunrise Hotel, a modest but very pleasant seaside hotel which was due to close for the winter on 1 November as the conference concluded. So, being this late in the season, the EPEA had the hotel all to itself and this made for a very appropriate conference location, and the timing also meant that costs were kept down and the event was more accessible. It is not surprising, then, that a record 193 prison educators from 34 countries attended in Cyprus. Grundtvig funding and the EPEA scholarships just referred to also helped to boost numbers – as did the 48 who travelled from Norway, a record attendance also from the EPEA's biggest participant. No doubt the prospect of light and sunshine as winter set in made travel to Cyprus all the more appealing for Norwegians as well as other northern Europeans. Yet contributors to this conference also came from beyond Europe: from Australia, Canada and the USA once again, but also from Nigeria on this occasion.

The 12th EPEA Conference was held under the patronage of the Council of Europe, an appropriate feature given that the Council of Europe had sponsored what was in effect the first pan-European seminar on education in prison in Nicosia, Cyprus, in May 1984. That seminar, and a similar one in England two months later, were in part intended as preparatory meetings for the work of the Council of Europe's Select Committee on Education in Prison, and are very much part of the EPEA's 'pre-history'.[254] Cyprus also hosted the 3rd Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education conference in 1998, as will be described in the next chapter. These two earlier events in Cyprus were organised by the Cyprus Prison Department, as was the 2009 EPEA Conference, led by Eleni Vatiliotou as Head of the Conference Committee.[255] A fitting link between the 'Directors and Co-ordinators' conference and the 12th EPEA conference was that George Anastasiades, a former Director of the Prison Department in Cyprus who had hosted and organised the 1998 event, was present on the opening morning in 2009 to welcome the great attendance.

EPEA conferences tended to have similar structures from one to the other, although there could also be some changes over time as should be evident from this story to date. So, the Cyprus conference was like that in Dublin in many respects, but there were variations and developments also. Called 'Liberation through Education', the theme clearly echoed that of Dublin, and both of these conferences had other elements in common, aside from their large attendances: a structure which gave priority to workshops, a strong focus on Grundtvig projects, the option of prison visits before the actual opening, a local cultural outing within the conference and buses for delegates to and from the airport. Cyprus also facilitated a research forum, although this was in a workshop rather than in a plenary session.

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[254] These 1984 seminars are described more fully in Chapter 2.

[255] The other members of the conference committee were Andros Efthymiou, Marina Georgiadou, Marios Polycarpou, Andreas Pelavas, Charalambos Patsalides and Savoula Charatsi. Eleni described them as having worked tirelessly over the previous year and "shown leadership, patience and humour as we worked through the complexities of preparing this event". (Programme for *Liberation through Education, 12th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education, Cyprus, 2009*, p.4).

Chairperson Anita Wilson

There was continuity also in Protaras with earlier conferences in holding Liaison Persons and General Council meetings within the heart of the programme. Opening the conference as the newly installed Chairperson of the EPEA, Anita Wilson declared "it is my intention to promote the EPEA at grassroots and increase our profile among prison teachers across Europe", and she asked members to "spread the word wherever and whenever you can – tell other prison teachers about us and let's see if we can increase our membership and our EPEA family in the year to come". Later in the conference, Anita Wilson's predecessor as Chairperson of the EPEA, Anne Costelloe, was a keynote speaker whose address, 'Taking stock of prison education 20 years on', meshed with Anita's ambition by examining the development of the EPEA since its foundation in 1989 and the challenges that lay ahead.

Other keynote speakers were Prof Andreas Kapandis, a criminologist at the University of Cyprus, and Alan Smith, by now a regular at EPEA conferences, who updated those present on European Union programmes and policy initiatives. The afternoon in the middle of the conference was time for a bus trip to a monastery and winery in the village of Omodhos. Other bonding events were a 'beach party' on one evening, a 'Cyprus night' on another and a 'gala dinner' on the final evening.

Lena Broo (Sweden) holding a workshop

If the Dublin conference programme had offered an impressive number of workshops and similar activities, the 2009 conference in Cyprus scheduled a great many more. There were six workshop sessions which offered a total of 42 workshops, and these were supplemented by poster workshops, which had been an innovation in Dublin, and also an opportunity for 'special interest groups' to meet. The latter was a new initiative in Protaras and included groups which discussed juveniles, women in prison, research in prison, the EPEA website, and there was also a North American group.

The range of workshops on offer were many and varied. Some focused on issues which had been common at conferences previously. Many workshops once again related to the arts in various forms, but professional development, policy issues, aspects of literacy, preparation for release and learning via technology in prisons were common issues also. Among the more unusual workshops offered were ones on human rights in Nigeria, diversity in England, the Moscow University of the Humanities, mathematics teaching, ethics and prison research, and civic education and political participation – all of these in the context of learning in prison. Clearly, these and many other workshops were the core of the conference

and they indicated a very rich dynamic within European prison education as the first decade of the 21st Century came to an end.

CONCLUSION: CONFERENCES IN THE NEXT DECADE

The conference held every two years has always been the main focus of EPEA activity and the primary means by which it seeks to carry out its mission of supporting those seeking to facilitate learning in prisons or other penal settings. Over the years, EPEA conferences built a reputation for being rather special events with a distinctive style and from which prison educators drew encouragement and support. These conferences were built on a common purpose and were invariably, as Robert Suvaal would have said, 'working conferences' where educators participated fully.

What Paddy Rocks said in his welcoming speech to those who gathered in Noordwijkerhout in 2001 could be applied to any of the gatherings over the two decades we have been examining:

> It is a pleasure to welcome so many actual practitioners to the conference – the people who really matter – and who find it much more difficult to be here than ministry officials and the like. You are the people on whom this conference depends. Without you it could be another theoretical talking shop, and this is one reason why such an emphasis is placed on the workshops and getting full participation in them.[256]

That was always the EPEA's intention and the ambition was generally achieved, if not perfectly on every occasion. Paddy Rocks also referred to the importance of business meetings within the biannual conferences, what he called the EPEA's "own little piece of inward contemplation", and he described a General Council meeting as follows:

> Various officer reports will be presented, there may be constitutional matters raised, and new Regional Representatives will be elected for a two year period from among the Liaison Persons present. It may not sound the most interesting event to attend but it is one of the basic democratic processes on which the EPEA is founded and I would urge all EPEA members to attend this event.[257]

Clearly, arrangements and patterns in the programmes of EPEA conferences changed and evolved over time, but usually without losing essential qualities. Things might emerge at one conference which would continue in later ones, but then later again be dropped from a programme. This applied, for example, to elements such as a feedback session on the last day, the inclusion of a Research Forum, whether and when prison visits would take place, the

[256] Paddy Rocks, 'Welcome Speech', Conference Report, *Prison Education: A Multicoloured Palette? op. cit*., p.13.

[257] Paddy Rocks, 'Welcome Speech', *ibid.*, p.14. The practice of Liaison Persons from a region electing their Regional Representatives to the Steering Committee at a General Council meeting was later changed to a plebiscite of all members in that region. Further, in 2017, the EPEA initiated changes whereby only countries with branches could have Liaison Persons. In 2021, just seven countries had branches.

issuing of a post-conference report – as well as to informal happenings like the celebrated 'EuroPrison Song Contest' and the production of a daily *Conference News*. Such changes were generally appropriate and part of normal evolution.

While this history largely examines the first two decades of the EPEA's story, and this chapter has looked at EPEA conferences up to the one in Cyprus in 2009, we will make just a few brief observations about conferences in the subsequent decade, when five were held: in Manchester (2011), Iceland (2013), Antwerp (2015), Vienna (2017) and Dublin again (2019).[258] All of these were successful in different ways, and all continued the tradition of being major focal points for those in the field of prison education and major events for the exploration of developments in that field.

However, while recognising much continuity in terms of conference style and structure – and the generation of that key quality of supportive togetherness – we have concern also that some changes may not have been for the best. We respectfully raise a question as to whether there has been some drifting away from the core mission of promoting 'professional development through European co-operation' for those who facilitate learning 'on the ground' in prison classrooms, workshops, libraries, studios, gyms and other locations. In what we hope will be seen as a constructive spirit, we raise four points of concern and emphasise that not all apply to each of these five conferences in the 2010s, which in general were still positive, lively and helpful gatherings.

Firstly, we are concerned about a tendency to use very expensive hotels as locations for the conferences and question in particular the choice of the Midlands Hotel in Manchester in 2011 and the Hilton in Antwerp in 2015, and possibly also Flemings Hotel in Vienna in 2017. Such locations, while pleasant and comfortable, can have a number of disadvantages for the kind of conference the EPEA has traditionally held. They are invariably very expensive and so make the conference fees too high and beyond the reach of many prison educators. Such hotels, when they have many other things going on in them, are less likely to facilitate the creation of an EPEA 'space' for the duration of the conference, which is important in ensuring the appropriate supportive atmosphere.

By contrast, the smaller and simpler Sunrise Hotel in Cyprus (2009) and Hotel Ork in Hveragerdi, Iceland (2013), did each achieve that atmosphere. Moreover, expensive accommodation can also mean there are less funds available for convivial meals involving everyone, a key element in generating a sense of 'togetherness'. Of course, such desirable qualities can also be partly lost in other ways, such as where accommodation is very basic or when different elements of the conference are in disparate locations, as happened in Dublin in 2019 despite fees being high. Such problems are often compounded when costly 'event managers', who often do not have sufficient awareness of the EPEA's mission and tradition, are engaged to help organise a conference, as has happened several times in the past decade.

A second concern, which is likely to be related to high fees, is the contraction in the 'reach' of the EPEA across Europe. It is clearly the case that fewer countries have been represented at EPEA conferences in the past decade. This is a loss for prison educators in those countries, but also for the EPEA as an organisation. Given that 32, 28, 32 and 34

[258] Due to the Covid-19 pandemic no EPEA conference was held in 2021, but the organisation plans to resume the two-year pattern in 2023

countries had a presence in Langesund in 2003, Sofia in 2005, Dublin in 2007 and Cyprus in 2009 respectively, it is disappointing to see participation reduced to the low 20s in the following decade, with Eastern European participation in particular noticeable by its absence.[259]

A third, and again related, issue is the contraction in the engagement in the EPEA across much of Europe in the 2010s. It is clear that the General Council meeting generally had a lesser places in the conference programme in this decade. However, most striking is the lack of engagement with Liaison Persons – the key people who had been the representatives and promoters of the organisation within countries - in these later conferences[260]. No conference in this decade had a special Liaison Persons meeting, aside from a 15 minutes one in Manchester. There had been many meetings of this kind in the 2000s and up to 2014, as can be seen in Appendix 2. This, as much as anything, reflects a withering of the EPEA in at least part of Europe. In marked contrast, in 2005, the EPEA and Bulgarian organisers undertook to fund Liaison Persons to come to the Sofia conference where they could not otherwise get sponsorship from their employers or from sources such as Grundtvig.

Finally, it appears that the practice of offering scholarships to prison educators 'working on the ground' to attend EPEA conferences ceased after the Cyprus event in 2009. This is particularly regrettable as supporting such educators should be the EPEA's primary concern. Of course, the use of expensive hotels and the involvement of costly 'event managers' limit such options. We respectfully suggest that the EPEA reflect on this aspect of its role and its priorities when planning future conferences.

[259] There were 22 countries represented in Iceland in 2013, somewhat understandably given its distance from mainland Europe. Yet, there were still only 22 in Antwerp in 2015, and just 24 in Vienna in 2017, despite its location in the centre of Europe. Conference programmes do not list participants or their countries for Manchester (2011) or Dublin (2019).

[260] There were no Liaison Persons meetings in the conferences in the 2010s, except for a 15-minute item in the programme at Manchester, which is described as a "short meeting with Liaison Persons prior to General Council and Election of Regional Representatives" (Conference programme, 13th EPEA Conference, Manchester, October 2011, p.26).

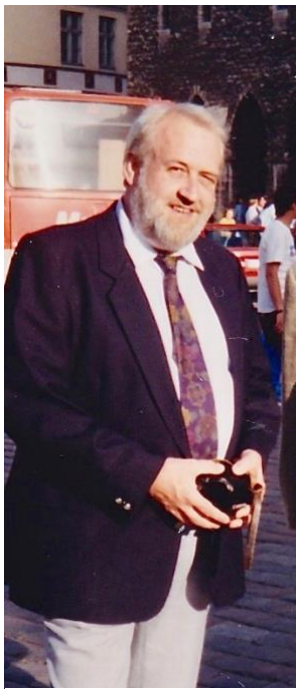
Chapter 10

Bringing Prison Education Leadership Together: The Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education Conferences, 1994-2010

INTRODUCTION

The conferences discussed in the previous two chapters have always been the centrepieces of the EPEA's efforts to promote professional development among European prison educators. From 1989, these major EPEA conferences were organised every two years in 'odd years', a pattern that continued until 2019. They had a very broad focus and included those involved in many aspects of education, and those 'on the ground' as well as those in administration. However, the EPEA was involved in another series of much smaller conferences that took place in 'even years' from 1994 to 2010. These were very much niche events, focused on the concerns of those administering education in prisons at national level, and eight took place in this period. While there could at times be some variation in what these conferences were called, they were generally referred to as European Conferences of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education.

The initiative for these gatherings was taken by Henning Jørgensen, Director of Prison Education in Denmark, who had been a key member of the Council of Europe Select Committee of Experts on Education in Prison in the 1980s. In order to examine whether there was sufficient interest in such events, Henning Jørgensen organised an exploratory meeting within the conference programme at the 4th EPEA conference in Sigtuna in 1993. As the report for that conference makes clear, there was considerable interest in the idea among those centrally involved in the administration of education in prison systems who were present at Sigtuna, whether these individuals were called directors, co-ordinators, advisers, managers or some other title.



Henning Jørgensen, Denmark

A note in that report by Henning Jørgensen states:

At the meeting there were coordinators present from 14 countries: Belarus, Denmark, England and Wales, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Scotland and Sweden. The participants were in agreement about the need for a conference especially for coordinators and their problems. The agenda to the conference should be a follow-up to the Council of Europe

> Recommendation on Education in Prison. A group of three persons were asked to look further at the possibilities of a conference and, if possible, to arrange it in 1994.[261]

This planning group consisted of Torfinn Langelid (Norway), Svenolov Svensson (Sweden) and Henning Jørgensen. It was enlarged later to include Kaj Raundrup (Denmark) and Jerzy Kielbowicz (Poland).

While the idea of these smaller conferences had some aspects in common with the main EPEA conferences (such as reflecting on the Council of Europe Recommendation, exploring research in the field and generating interaction between East and West), the primary objective of these conferences of directors and co-ordinators was to explore policy making and the development of strategies that would strengthen the provision of education in prisons. Henning Jørgensen held the view that these conferences should work on two basic assumptions: that education can benefit all who are in prison, and that the right to learn is a human right. Such thinking was at the heart of *Education in Prison*, but Henning Jørgensen was concerned that this Council of Europe Recommendation might be, as he said, 'left on the shelf', so he was keen that these conferences of senior administrators in the field would focus on the *implementation* of that report, and on the barriers to implementation. He also believed that by coming together national administrators could learn from each other.

The first two of these conferences were held in Eastern Europe in the decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The next two were held in Mediterranean countries and thereafter the event took place variously in western or central parts of Europe. The pattern was as follows:

1994 – Popowo/Warsaw, Poland
1996 – Laulasmaa/Tallinn, Estonia
1998 - Nicosia, Cyprus
2000 – Qawra, Malta
2004 - London, England
2006 - Prague, Czech Republic
2008 - Malmo, Sweden
2010 - Lucerne, Switzerland

A further conference for this group was planned for Estonia in 2014 but did not take place due to low expressions of interest.

'A CHANGING EASTERN EUROPE': THE EARLY CONFERENCES OF DIRECTORS AND CO-ORDINATORS

Even before people had departed from Sigtuna in 1993, one of the participants there, Pawel Maczydlowski, offered facilities in his native Poland which would host the first of these conferences the following year. Pawel Moczydlowski was at that time Director General of the Polish prison system and an ardent penal reformer, having been a forceful critic of Polish

[261] 'Meeting of Central Coordinators of Prison Education in Europe', in *Report from 'Beyond the Walls', 4th EPEA European International Conference on Prison Education, Sigtuna, Sweden, 1993* (Norrköping, Swedish Prison and Probation Administration), p.100.

prisons in the 1980s during the Communist era. So, the first conference met in September 1994 in a Polish Prison Service conference facility at Popowo, near Warsaw.

Driven in particular by Henning Jørgensen, his Danish colleague Kaj Raundrup and Pawel Moczydlowski, this first event set a pattern that would be followed in subsequent conferences. 26 senior prison education administrators from 16 countries attended, with strong involvement from Central and Eastern Europe, so giving the event an intimate atmosphere that would not have been possible in a larger gathering. As Henning Jørgensen had proposed, the conference discussion explored the Council of Europe Recommendation on Education in Prison, especially those aspects which placed special responsibility on managers and other senior personnel. At the time when they hosted the first two of these conferences in the 1990s, Poland and Estonia had become new members of the Council of Europe and were particularly interested in, as well as admirably attentive to, Council of Europe policies and Recommendations. It would be nearly another decade before these countries joined the European Union.[262]

Participants of the first Conference for Directors and Co-ordinators, Popowo, Poland

Those present in Popowo also took some time out to visit Warsaw's Regional Prison at Mokotow, where two floors in one wing called the Atlantis Unit were given over to treatment for 50 men with alcohol dependency. As a leaflet on the prison explained, the Atlantis programme in this wing followed the Minnesota model: "The format is a mixture of education, individual counselling and group therapy, and all participants are self-referred volunteers. It is an intensive course which requires hard work and dedication from both prisoners and staff".[263] The leaflet also noted that this prison had an "oppressive significance" for Polish people, having been built by Polish labour as a 'gift' from the Russian Tsar in 1902 for "unruly citizens who might later be transported", used as a detention camp by Nazis during the Second World War, and as a place for the interrogation of Solidarity activists during the 1980s. The Atlantis Programme, a new gymnasium and a rebuilt prison chapel were all part of an effort to change the prison's role and image.

[262] Poland became a member of the Council of Europe in November 1991 and Estonia joined in May 1993. In 1995, Estonia authorities sought advice from the Council of Europe on prison regimes, and the Council sent Kenneth Neale and Kevin Warner to visit the country together and prepare a report for them; this report is in the EPEA archive in Bergen. On 1st May 2004, Poland and Estonia were among ten countries that became new members of the European Union.

[263] 'Welcome to Warsaw's Regional Prison at Mokotow', January 1994.

The first four of these Directors and Co-ordinators Conferences were spearheaded by Henning Jørgensen, supported by his colleague Kaj Raundrup in all four, and by others at times. Each was facilitated by local prison or educational personnel and crucially, in the case of the conferences in Poland and Cyprus, by very active engagement by prison service Director Generals, Pawel Moczydlowski and George Anastassiades respectively. Each of these four conferences also systematically explored the Council of Europe Recommendation on education in prison, with the fourth conference, in Malta in 2000, re-evaluating the document as a whole.[264] The fifth conference, in London in 2004, contributed significantly to the Council of Europe's revision of the *European Prison Rules* as they pertained to education.[265]

The first two of these conferences, in Poland (1994) and Estonia (1996), were very much of their time, held in the years after the enormous upheaval in eastern and central Europe at the start of that decade. The great change and reassessment that went on in these former-Communist countries was vividly conveyed by Pawel Moczydlowski in a paper he wrote in 1993, and which he made available again at the 1994 education gathering in Popowo. Titled 'Prison: From Communist System to Democracy. Transformation of the Polish Penitentiary System', this paper sets out very clearly the dramatic circumstances of this period in Poland and neighbouring countries. A summary of this paper is as follows:

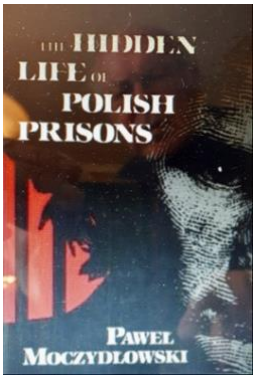
> Crime in the Marxist-Leninist framework was seen as the product of inequitable socioeconomic relations inherent in the capitalist system. The thinking was that crime would vanish in a system which fully realized the idea of social justice. But instead of declining, crime continued to grow. This had to be explained, and the following rationale emerged: since about 90% of common offenders commit offences for economic reasons, this implied that the perpetrators consent to the restoration of the capitalist system. Persons brought before the court were not seen as members of society, but as counter-revolutionaries: enemies of the system. Penal law was consequently extremely severe. Class enemies were considered dangerous and not to be 'supported' by the state, thus requiring heavy labour to pay the costs of their imprisonment.
>
> Social protest (including strikes) was dealt with harshly, often through sentences of imprisonment. As a result, in the 1970s, the prison population reached 300-350 inmates per 100 thousand population. At the same time, the number of staff members was relatively small, so the staff were militarized for maximum efficiency. The aura of confrontation between prisoners and staff was pervasive, making prisons extremely dangerous places. Rebellions within prisons were common. When communism fell in 1989, over 500 protests took place in prisons. Both staff and prisoners were often protesting at the same time. At this time there were over 100,000 prisoners in 150 prisons guarded by 20,000 staff. Prison staff were unprepared to deal with their new role—approximately 45% were replaced.

[264] This re-examination was described earlier in Chapter 4.

[265] Revised rules were adopted by the Council of Europe in 2006. Further revision took place in 2020, without alteration to the section on education.

Prisons are now open to the press and to oversight by national and international bodies. Many programs and privileges available in western prisons are now available to offenders: home leave (5.5% failure rate), the right to vote, and employment which is counted towards pensions. The weak point of the system is reintegration programs, both pre-release and in the community. There is currently a serious growth in crime in Poland, and, as in many countries, citizens feel threatened by this. The fear causes people to withdraw their support for reform and concentrate on seeking safety. This leads to a crime control mentality, and to pressure for greater and greater use of incarceration. The paradoxical result, however, is a reduction in security, as the increased use of imprisonment leads to an increase in de-socialized individuals, and thus an expansion in criminality in general, and in organized crime in particular…

While prisons may be good for the state, they are bad for society. Overpopulated and inhumane, they have the capacity to provide society with individuals who are much worse on release than they were on admission. Current policy in Poland is to avoid this trend and create, as much as possible, prosocial prisons, that is prisons with lawful and humane treatment of prisoners that do not de-socialize them. Prisons must be open to social control, which tends to make them normal places. Prisoners must be seen as members of society, with the majority able to return to the community on temporary leaves, and at the end of their sentence. Two different models of the penitentiary system emerge. In countries that decide on a non-democratic system, the anti-social isolation model of prison will persist. Countries that chose the democratic variant will necessarily develop pro-social prisons. However, economic conditions will dictate that progress towards the latter model will not be in a straight line.[266]



Pawel Moczydlowski, the author of this paper, stood out as a charismatic figure at the first conference of education directors and co-ordinators at Popowo. He communicated vividly the changes that had occurred, in society at large as well as in prisons, and the ambition to develop things in a better way. Prior to the ending of the Communist period, as a Professor of Sociology in Warsaw in the 1980s, he had written books analysing the failures of the penal system, most notably *The Hidden Life of Polish Prisons*.[267] As a consequence, he was regarded as *persona non grata* by authorities and prohibited from entering prisons. However, when Solidarity replaced the Communist regime, he was appointed Director General of Polish prisons, a post he held from 1990 to 1994.

[266] The paper was originally presented at the 'Second International Symposium on the Future of Corrections', which was hosted by the Prison Service of Poland in Popowo in October 1993 and organised by the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy based at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. A report of that conference, from which this summary is taken on pages 31-32, was later published in Vancouver and is available at https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/lbrr/archives/hv%207243%20i591%201994-eng.pdf. The full paper was never published but is now available in the EPEA archive in Bergen.

[267] This was published in English by Indiana University Press in 1992.

REASSERTING COUNCIL OF EUROPE THINKING

It may be noted that several of the destructive features of Communist era penal systems that Moczydlowski identified can also be found to this day in some Western systems, especially in those countries which have moved in a more punitive direction: prisons that are "overpopulated and inhumane"; people in prison considered dangerous and "not seen as members of society"; prisons "militarized for maximum efficiency", with consequent priority of control over care; people in prison becoming increasingly de-socialized; constraints on reintegration due to fear of crime; and "a crime control mentality and pressure for greater use of incarceration". These are some of the key indices that David Garland associates with a 'culture of control', which he identifies as a dominant response to crime in the late 20th Century and found in the USA and Britain in particular.[268]

Clearly, such penal features run totally counter to the Council of Europe values and philosophy described earlier in Chapter 3, and they are also in conflict with the outlook on education in prison on which the EPEA was founded. Moczydlowski wanted "pro-social prisons" rather than the "anti-social isolation model of prisons". Henning Jørgensen advocated a concept of education that saw it as a right, a right which people in prison had as members of society; he also saw education as part of normalisation, a way of interacting with the wider community and a means to reintegration. Moczydlowski's views on prisons and Jørgensen's thinking on education complemented each other and derived from the same beliefs and principles. The two visions are at one, in the same way as the *European Prison Rules* and *Education in Prison* reflect the same essential philosophy.

So, the advancement of penal reform and the strengthening of an adult education approach to the provision of education in prison were both central to the initiative of bringing directors and co-ordinators together in these small conferences. In the 1990s, there was quite a febrile atmosphere of societal change and penal policy debate in much of Europe, and there were significant challenges to Council of Europe thinking and approaches. That was the context in which the early Directors and Co-ordinators Conferences were held.

The Popowo gathering focused on key recommendations in *Education in Prison*, in particular those that addressed access to education for all in prison, the quality of that education, the stipulation that education have equal pay and status to work within prisons, and the possibilities offered when those in prison participate in educational activity on the outside. The programme was planned so that discussion in small groups would be central. There were short (15 minute) plenary introductions to each of five themes drawn from the *Education in Prison* recommendations, then extensive discussion in the groups, followed by plenary reports back on what transpired in these groups. This collaborative tone, set first in Popowo and based on the idea that participants would learn from each other, became a characteristic of these conferences.

Henning Jørgensen had articulated this approach with his phrase "no paper and no speeches" in his opening address.[269] Yet, a substantial report was produced after the

[268] David Garland, *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

[269] Opening Address, in *Report from the First European Conference for Co-ordinators of Prison Education, September 12-14, 1994, in Poland*. This report was issued by Henning Jørgensen, on behalf of the planning

conclusion of the Polish conference, and also after the subsequent gatherings in Estonia and Cyprus in 1996 and 1998. Each of these reports contain detailed accounts of the discussions that were held, but also plenary addresses that were given and papers that were circulated at the conferences related to the central themes. For example, in the report that followed the Popowo conference, a summary by Ian Benson (England) of "the main observations which emerged… following discussion in small groups" was included.[270]

The conference in Estonia two years later followed a similar pattern to the one in Popowo, whereby the core of the event was small group discussion centred on selected aspects of the Council of Europe Recommendation on Education in Prison. On this occasion, the conference had two main themes: firstly, co-operative models between prison and education authorities; secondly, the issue of motivating those in prison to participate in education.[271] Based on the workshops on models of educational provision throughout Europe, Paddy Rocks (Northern Ireland) and Kaj Raundrup (Denmark) compiled observations, and this compilation formed the core of a further report sent from Denmark to European countries after the conference in Estonia.[272]

As in Popowo, the event in Estonia took place at a Prison Service facility, on this occasion at Laulasmaa Training and Holiday Centre, on the shores of the Baltic about 40 km from Tallinn. Henning Jørgensen and Kaj Raundrup were joined in the organising group by three Estonians: Anna Voolma and Jury Iltsenko from the Prison Service and Mart Korre from the Ministry of Education. The number attending was similar to that in Popowo, and likewise appropriate for good dialogue: 31 participants from 17 countries. A visit to Harku and Murru prisons were also arranged. At the end of the Estonia conference, an organising committee to plan a third conference in 1998 was formed, with Penny Robson of England and Camelia Paun from Romania joining the two Danes on this occasion. In the event, George Anastassiades, Director of Prisons in Cyprus, joined these four in that planning group, an involvement that was crucial, as Cyprus hosted that event in Nicosia.

The Nicosia conference followed the pattern that had been set by the previous two, using a similar format to explore aspects of Council of Europe Recommendations. As in Estonia, there were two major themes. Theme 1 involved discussion on the appropriate curriculum and teaching methods in prisons, but focused on three special groups: women, young adults and those from foreign countries. Theme 2, in a repeat of an issue explored in Popowo, examined the interaction between the person in prison and the outside world,

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group, from his office in the Ministry of Justice in Denmark and sent to all member states of the Council of Europe. It did, however, contains papers by Kevin Warner, Torfinn Langelid, Henning Jørgensen, Robert Suvaal and Svenolov Svensson. It is available, along with reports from the conferences in Estonia and Cyprus and material relating to subsequent conferences, in the EPEA archive in Bergen.

[270] Report on the main observations, by Ian Benson, *ibid*.

[271] These issues arise from recommendations 15 and 6 in *Education in Prison* respectively. Number 15 stipulates that, when education takes place within the prison, "the outside community should be involved as fully as possible" (p.9). Number 6 states: "Every effort should be made to encourage the prisoner to participate actively in all aspects of education" (p.8).

[272] Workshop on Models of Provision throughout Europe, by Paddy Rocks and Kaj Raundrup, in *Report from the Second European Conference for Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education, September 8-11, 1996, in Estonia*. This report was again compiled by Henning Jørgensen on behalf of the planning group. The report also contained welcoming addresses and papers related to the two main themes of the conference, one by Raivo Niidas describing educational provision in Estonian prisons, and one by Kevin Warner on motivation.

bearing in mind recommendation 14 of *Education in Prison* ('wherever possible, prisoners should be allowed to participate in education outside prison') and a parallel rule in the European Prison Rules:

> So far as practicable, the education of prisoners shall:
> a) be integrated with the educational system of the country so that after their release they may continue their education without difficulty;
> b) take place in outside educational institutions.[273]

In Cyprus, there were 33 participants from 23 countries. Once again, there were short introductions to the two themes, provided on this occasion by Anthony Harris (England) and Camilia Paun (Romania), before more detailed discussion in small groups. After the discussions, there were reports back to plenary sessions from each of the four groups. These introductions and feedback reports were subsequently included in a conference report produced by Cypriot authorities.[274]

George Anastassiades, Director of Prisons in Cyprus

The conference group also visited Nicosia Prison which, as well as being the main place of incarceration in Cyprus, was also of historical significance, especially in the period of Cyprus's struggle for independence from Britain in the 1950s. In showing the group around, the Director of Prisons, George Anastassiades proudly explained this history, and his own role in the independence movement and as a former inmate in Nicosia Prison. Moreover, the Minister of Justice and Public Order, Nikos Koshis, who joined the conference for dinner one evening, explained how he had also been imprisoned by the British at that time – but had managed to escape! There was a sense among the delegates that the authorities in Cyprus would at least have had some real understanding of imprisonment and an awareness of its detrimental effects.

Before matters concluded in Nicosia, there was agreement that another conference should be planned for 2000. This was hosted by Malta and once again proved to be a lively and well-attended event, with participation from 22 countries. Anthony Vella and Joseph Giordmaina, both from the University of Malta, joined Henning Jørgensen and Kaj Raundrup on the planning group on this occasion. Rather than examine particular aspects of *Education in Prison*, this fourth conference in the series looked at the report in its entirety and assessed whether it continued to be relevant and valuable ten years after its publication.

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[273] Rule 81 in *The European Prison Rules* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Press, 1987), pp.23-4.

[274] *Report for the 3rd European Conference for Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education* (Nicosia: Press and Information Office, Republic of Cyprus, 2000). This report also includes a number of welcome addresses, photographs and a paper made available at the conference by Yiannis Panousis, Professor of Criminology at the University of Athens, titles 'Neo-correctionism: the limits of prisoners' freedom'. Prof Panousis was a keynote speaker the following year at the main EPEA conference in Athens in 1999 (see Chapter 9 above).

However, the format of the gathering in the Dolmen Hotel in Malta was very much in tune with the earlier conferences: four short introductory papers on aspects of *Education in Prison*, followed by workshop discussion in smaller groups and an overall assessment by Ian Benson from England at the end. Juliana Gruden of Slovenia presented one of those introductory papers, drawing on her deep experience of adult education in the former Yugoslavia.[275] The Malta conference was also addressed by Alan Smith from the European Commission, thereby marking his first engagement with the EPEA in what was to be more than a decade of deep involvement by the European Union in supporting education in prisons and the work of the EPEA, a relationship which was detailed earlier in Chapter 7.

The Malta conference looked critically at this Council of Europe Recommendation on Education in Prison and attempted to identify both its strong and weak points in the light of the changed circumstances in Europe in 2000. Much had happened in the previous decade: numerous Central and Eastern countries had joined the Council of Europe and there were significant changes in society in general, such as far greater use of information technology and much more migration. As a result of discussion in Malta, a report from the conference was published, titled 'Re-evaluating the Council of Europe work on Education in Prison: a report from the 4th European Conference for Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education, Malta, 1-5 November 2000'.[276] A summary of that assessment made in Malta was given earlier in Chapter 4.

DIRECTORS AND CO-ORDINATORS CONFERENCES IN THE NEW DECADE

The four Directors and Co-ordinators Conferences held up to 2000 stand together as a series. They were driven by Henning Jørgensen and Kaj Raundrup and all were devoted to asserting and exploring in a collaborative way the Council of Europe report, *Education in Prison*. Four more such conferences did follow in the next decade, from 2004 to 2010, and each was successful in a different way; each of these 21st Century conferences also had its own distinctive style and focus. These later conferences tended to be more 'one off' or *ad hoc* events, although there were also continuities between them. The primary focus remained the concerns of central administrators of education in prison, especially around policy and strategy, but they were also embedded in the host locations and dealt with other issues of the moment.

The four earlier conferences organised by the two Danes stand together almost as one project, based on a vision of Council of Europe values and policies. In his closing speech to the second of these conferences in Estonia in 1996, Mart Korre, an expert in the Estonian Ministry of Education, is likely to have spoken for all when he said:

> I would like to thank Mr. Henning Jørgensen, the initiator of the conference idea, the leader of our joint working group, permanent generator of ideas, a pleasant and

[275] Other introductory papers were given by Joseph Giordmaina, Kevin Warner, Torfinn Langelid and Kaj Raundrup.

[276] This report, written by Kevin Warner, was published in the *Penological Information Bulletin* of the Council of Europe, No. 25, December 2003, pp.8-12.

> sociable person full of good humour. Despite his health problems, he came several times to assist us and give us advice.

Henning Jørgensen was not involved in any of the conferences after Malta in 2000 and sadly passed away in 2001.

While there had been discussion in Malta about holding another conference in 2002, the next one did not take place until December 2004, organised in London by the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit (OLSU) and led by Jane Bateman, Deputy Director of the OLSU.[277] This was to be the smallest of the eight such conferences, involving 21 participants from 12 countries, but it did focus on some crucial issues which national prison education administrators were grappling with at the time. One of these issues, which would persist for some time, was the question of using information technology within learning in prisons. This was explored in Andreas Lund's workshop on 'Innovation in e-learning', a theme that this professor from Oslo University explored at several EPEA and other conferences in this period. At London also, Carolyn Eggleston took on the challenging role of being rapporteur at the conclusion of the conference, one she also took on later in the Prague and Lucerne conferences.

The London agenda also included a workshop on the purposes of education in prison which explored the tension between adult education approaches and ones which focus on 'addressing offender behaviour'. An 'adult education' or 'lifelong learning' philosophy was also evident in a workshop on creative activities in prisons and another which explored "embedding literacy in other activities like arts/parenting" in order to engage "the hardest to reach". The same outlook also underpinned the 'Nordic model' of education in prison and a workshop on this approach regarded learning primarily as the pursuit of knowledge in its own right rather than as a means to reducing recidivism. Embedded also in the Nordic approach are Council of Europe values which see people in prison as citizens, all of whom have rights to education on a par with those outside.[278]

A workshop held by Anita van de Kar of the Council of Europe offered the senior administrators present, the EPEA representatives and others an opportunity to give feedback on the section on education in the revised *European Prison Rules*, which was then in draft form, and this proved to be a highly valuable element of the London conference, as was noted earlier in Chapter 7. However, despite this important consultation in one workshop, one could see elsewhere in the London event something of a lessening in the focus on the principles and policies of the Council of Europe. At this time, England had experienced significant changes in penal thinking and practice, and there was a marked shift in outlook in the approach to education in prisons, or 'offender learning and skills' as the new official terminology put it. Whereas 20 years previously, Kenneth Neale saw the purpose of prison as minimising detrimental effects and seeking ways to promote resocialisation, policy in England by the

[277] Jane Bateman was supported by Kaj Raundrup and Kevin Warner.

[278] See *Nordic Prison Education: A Lifelong Learning Perspective* (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2005), available at http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:701860/FULLTEXT01.pdf. A further Nordic Council publication in 2009, titled *Prisoners' Educational Backgrounds, Preferences and Motivation,* is available at https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:702625/FULLTEXT01.pdf

early 2000s was significantly driven by punitive ideas such as 'prison works', negative stereotyping of people in prison and a narrow view that saw the role of education as primarily to 'reduce reoffending'.

Yet, in the decade of these more *ad hoc* Directors and Co-ordinators Conferences which took place between 2004 and 2010, it may be judged appropriate that the approach of the host country should be a significant part of any conference. Following London, the subsequent conferences in the Czech Republic, Sweden and Switzerland likewise reflected much about the approaches of these host countries, but also explored matters of wider European concern. It was probably also an appropriate time to move beyond such a concentrated focus on *Education in Prison* and to address, in these later conferences, the dominant problems and issues that senior administrators in prison education were concerned with. Yet, the sharp departure from thinking such as that of Kenneth Neale or Henning Jørgensen in at least some aspects of the London conference was striking.

The very different perspective is clear in an account of the event written by Elaine Sweeney, who was part of the 'Change and Communications Team' at OLSU in England, a role that included "writing speeches and briefings for Ministers".[279] While contributions from other countries are noted, the new English assumptions and outlook pervade the article: those in prison are seen one-dimensionally as 'offenders', education is presumed to be mainly about vocational education, the objective of reducing reoffending via employment is dominant. The lack of European awareness is evident when Anita Van de Kar's workshop on the revision of the *European Prison Rules* is confused with European Union legislation. We are told that:

> Speakers at the event included Lord Geoffrey Filkin, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families (with responsibility for offender education) who joined the delegates on the Tuesday morning and highlighted his commitment to Prison Education and focused on getting offenders into employment.

Geoffrey Filken was the junior Government Minister who, a couple of months later, stated: "The sole priority of [prison] education is to get offenders into work – anything else is a means, not an end".[280] Such thinking, now clearly the official view in England (although not necessarily the perspective of many educational practitioners in that country), was very much to the fore in London and would appear to represent a major move away from the outlook of Kenneth Neale, who had, some 20 years earlier, shaped so much of British and European penal policy in a far more progressive direction.

If London was a small gathering, the next three conferences had more substantial and growing participation: 30 from 17 countries in Prague in 2006, 48 from 25 countries in Malmö in 2008, and 64 from 28 countries in Lucerne in 2010. While each of these gatherings had distinctive characteristics, often related to the local context, they also had much in common and there were many clear continuities from one to the other. All of the four later conferences facilitated visits to prisons. All four were organised "in co-operation with the

[279] 'Report on the International Symposium for Directors of Prison Education', in *EPEA Magazine 28* (Spring 2005), pp.11-12.
[280] *Offender Learning and Skills News*, February 2005.

EPEA" and the EPEA's involvement generally increased, but was especially strong in Malmo, where the conference overlapped with a concurrent VEPS Project[281] symposium and shared one full day with this initiative. Alan Smith of the European Commission spoke at both Malmö and Lucerne, cementing the strong involvement by the European Union in education in prison in this decade.

As in the four earlier conferences promoted by Henning Jørgensen, the primary focus of the second set of four conferences was also on policy and strategy. The Council of Europe's policies were always part of the backdrop at least, and at times the subject of specific plenary sessions. There were analyses of penal trends in Europe, such as by Tapio Lappi-Seppala in Malmö, and a focus on research in Prague and Lucerne, with Terje Manger of the University of Bergen (Norway) leading on this. A recurring theme, indicative of a major concern among prison and prison education administrators alike, was that of e-learning, with the PIPELINE Project often central to the discussion. The Director of the Norwegian Prison Service, Kristin Bølgen Bronebakk, addressed this specific topic at Malmö.

Other recurring themes related to key issues facing educational administrators in European prison systems, such as the appropriate curriculum to offer those in prison, how best to response to large numbers from other countries or from minority groups being in prison, or the professional development of prison educators – the latter was the subject of presentations by Joseph Giordmania from Malta in 2006, and by Carolyn Eggleston and Thomas Gehring from the USA in 2008. Substantial documentation is available from two of these last four conferences. Martin Vana of the Czech Republic has preserved an extensive electronic database of all the presentations and country reports from Prague in 2006, and this extensive trove of documents has now been placed in the EPEA archive in Bergen.[282] A substantial printed report produced by the VEPS Project, *Prison Education in Europe*, followed the dual meetings in Malmö, and well over 100 pages of this publication documents the proceedings of the 'Conference for Directors and Coordinators of Prison Education'.[283]

Martin Vana, Chair of the Conference Organising Committee

CONCLUSION: A VALUABLE FORUM WHICH HAD RUN ITS COURSE?

There were continuities across these later conferences in terms of their organisation also. Usually, some of those involved in the organisation of one conference would help with another, although these arrangements tended to be made on an *ad hoc* basis – a precarious arrangement, which may have contributed to the failure to hold any such conference after Lucerne in 2010. Often, at the concluding session of one conference, a small group would volunteer to take on responsibility for the next. However, the organisation in each of these last

[281] The European Union VEPS Project was described in Chapter 7.

[282] Documents from the 6th European Conference of Directors and Co-ordinators of Prison Education, Prague, September 2006

[283] European Prison Education Association, *Prison Education in Europe* (Lovech, Bulgaria: SAFO, 2008), pp. 29-145.

four conferences relied crucially on one key person in the host country: Jane Bateman in London, Martin Vana in Prague, Birgitta Persson in Malmö and Victor Gaehwiler in Lucerne. Some senior educators helped shape several conferences: Jane Bateman, Birgitta Persson and Torfinn Langelid were each involved in most of the later set of conferences.[284]

Whatever variations there were in the themes or organisation between one of these conferences and the next, one constant was a focus on policy and in particular the purposes of education in prison. In her Overview to the report on the Malmö conference, the Chairperson of the EPEA, Anne Costelloe noted:

> There appears to be two diverging trends in penal policy operating in Europe. One is driven by rational, humanistic attitudes to imprisonment, the other by punitive, populist attitudes… Prisoners are not a homogeneous group and any attempt to impose a 'one size fits all' approach to meeting their educational and post-release needs are misguided and must be reviewed… prisoners have a right to education… education should not be seen as a privilege, or a reward, and its withdrawal should never be used as a form of punishment.[285]

As noted earlier, these two contrasting trends were evident in London. They were apparent also in Prague in 2006, visible there in presentations on very different government policy initiatives in England and Norway.[286] What Anne Costelloe called the punitive and 'one size fits all' approach was sharply demonstrated by Katinka Reijnders in her analysis of a new departure in the Netherlands titled 'Towards a more functional enforcement of sentences and measures'.[287] She described the new policy as 'target-group oriented', aimed at reducing recidivism and based on 'What Works' theory. Its effect, however, was to radically reduce the education available to those in prison, excluding some groups entirely, with a very restricted curriculum that brought an end to heretofore core segments of education such as the arts and library services.

A huge value of these conferences lay in providing a forum for senior prison education administrators to update each other on trends within their respective countries. At Prague, Kathinka Reijnders reported quite dramatic changes in the Netherlands, but papers and presentations from other countries were shared there also, including an analysis of recent developments in the USA and Ron Cox's description of the situation in Australia, where education in prison takes the form of vocational training to a large degree. Papers and slide presentations in the Prague conference records also offer good insights into the various situations at that time in the Czech Republic, Latvia, Finland, Ireland, Romania and Wales.[288] England and Wales share the same criminal justice system, but education is a devolved power

[284] Others who played important roles in planning at least one Co-ordinators' conference were Michael Hadjidemetriou (Cyprus) and Eva-Karin Eriksson (Sweden) for the Malmo conference, and Katinka Reijnders (Netherlands) for the last one in Lucern.

[285] European Prison Education Association, *Prison Education in Europe, op. cit.,* p.31.

[286] A Norwegian White Paper called *Education and Training in the Correctional Services, 'Another Spring'*, and an English Green Paper, *Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment*, were both issued in 2004.

[287] This paper and a related slide presentation is available among the Prague papers in the EPEA archive in Bergen.

[288] All of these are available in the EPEA archive in Bergen.

in Wales, and Angela McCarthy offered a rare opportunity to hear of the Welsh educational system and how education was offered in prisons there.

Mindful of the importance of directors and co-ordinators learning from each other, which was a key purpose set for these conferences by Henning Jørgensen at the beginning, substantial space in the programmes was given over to inter-country sharing at both Prague and Malmo. It was referred to as 'Updates from different countries' in the Prague programme, while the Malmö programme noted: "We want this session to be a lively one in which participants from countries who haven't made a presentation or run a workshop are able to talk about the issues they face in delivering prison education".[289]

Every one of the eight conferences that took place was a valuable and important forum for those centrally responsible for developing education in prison systems. Each provided an opportunity for those in such roles to meet and learn from each other, always with a focus on vision, policy and strategy. These events complemented the main EPEA conferences, always taking place in alternate years. Yet, as the decade after the millennium went on, the distinction between these two types of conferences became more blurred.

Directors of Education and others with similar roles had always been very involved in the main EPEA conferences, often taking leading roles. Over time, the 'niche' conferences for this group tended to widen their catchment to include educators or prison officials involved in more varied roles. The participants at Lucerne, for example, included quite a number of researchers and several representatives of NGOs. The Directors and Co-ordinators Conferences became, to some extent, 'mini' EPEA conferences, taking place in 'even' years, and not greatly distinguishable from the main EPEA conferences other than in size. The themes, presentations, workshops and discussion – and even many of the personnel – were not very different. The highly successful Lucerne conference, with 64 attending from 28 countries, certainly appeared to be a 'mini-EPEA' conference in this way.

Perhaps by 2010 the Henning Jørgensen initiative had run its course and there was not sufficient need or demand for subsequent gatherings of directors, co-ordinators and the like. While Estonia hoped to facilitate what was called an 'EPEA Directors Conference' in October 2014 aimed at 'decision-makers', this initiative did not arouse sufficient interest and did not go ahead.[290] Yet, the Directors and Co-ordinators Conference had played a crucial role over nearly two decades in facilitating the leadership of education in prison in Europe to develop their thinking, policy and strategy, always with the aim of trying to enrich the learning opportunities that could be available to men and women held in prison.

[289] European Prison Education Association, *Prison Education in Europe, op. cit.,* p.35.

[290] 'EPEA Directors Conference 2014, Tallin, Estonia', in *EPEA Magazine Issue 44*, p.9. To be called 'Policy and Quality in Education in Prison', the conference hoped to attract "prison education policy level representatives", whom it hoped would share good practice, hear of new research and focus particularly on "foreign prisoners and young offenders".

Chapter 11

The Vision of the EPEA – and its essential future role

INTRODUCTION

As can be seen in previous chapters, the EPEA had a clear set of values, purposes and, to an extent, strategies in its formative years. While it did not put together an explicit vision, mission statement or action plan in this period, it did agree the main aims of the organisation and had a definite sense of what its role and ambition was. Inspired by the values of the Council of Europe, and in particular the principles of that body in relation to penal policy and adult education, the efforts of those involved were very much focused on supporting educators in prisons through European co-operation. Beyond that general aspiration, the vision was implicit rather than explicit.

The approach taken when the EPEA was being conceived and developed was not something that happened in isolation but was very much part of a wider context. A particular 'climate' of thought and action around prisons and education in prison dominated in much of Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. It was from this climate that crucial Council of Europe recommendations such as the *European Prison Rules* and *Education in Prison* emerged. Much of this thinking about prison and education was elaborated earlier in this book, especially in Chapters 2 and 3. So, this was the context in which the EPEA had its origins, a context that needs to be appreciated in order to understand why the EPEA emerged as it did.

This European climate of the 1970s and 1980s can be illustrated further. The thinking is very clear, for example, in the principles of reform adopted by the Swedish parliament in 1973, central to which was the idea that deprivation of liberty as such does not as a rule improve the individual's chances of adjusting to a life of freedom. Among the principles adopted were the following:

- The minimum possible interference: non-institutional care is the natural form of correctional care.
- Institutional care closely co-ordinated with non-institutional care…
- Outward-oriented activity: society's normal service organs should be utilised to the greatest possible extent.

Such approaches – which minimised the use of prison and recognised that persons serving sentences of any kind, whether in prison or in the community, should have the same right to society's arrangements for social support and care as do other members of society –

were widely accepted. Speaking about Finnish penal policy in the 1970s, Norman Bishop (Sweden) states that:

> … a clear distinction was to be made between control measures, which can be coercive, and treatment or social-service help, which must be offered and voluntarily accepted… correctional agencies should only be responsible for the control measures. Treatment and social-service help should be carried out by the community's normal agencies.[291]

In this view, the sentenced person is recognised as having the same rights as the general citizen. In an English context, W. R. Stirling shows similar thinking in relation to education, saying: "Education is not, as the Prison Department would have us believe essentially 'a tool for a job, and aid to living'. It is an individual's total response to his total environment. In the words of Tolstoy, 'the only criterion of pedagogy is freedom, the only method experience'"[292]. Such was the philosophy of education, underpinned by clear principles in relation to penal policy, that characterised the approach of those who took the first steps to establish the EPEA.

VISION 2006

By the mid 1990s, the Steering Committee felt the need to put more flesh on the bones of these general aspirations of the EPEA. Robert Suvaal, who had been centrally involved in the EPEA from its inception, felt the need to move the association on from its initial phase where it took many small steps forward – he characterised this as its 'Small is Beautiful'[293] period. Chaired now by Svenolov Svensson, the Steering Committee embarked on a process of looking some ten years ahead and envisaging what could be achieved by then.

The Steering Committee used what is known as a 'scenario technique'[294], imagining what the actual situation of the EPEA could be ten years later. Beginning with a 'brainstorming' session at a Steering Committee meeting in 1996, the committee began to shape what would be called 'Vision 2006', but this time following the motto ''From 'Small is beautiful' to 'Big is difficult - but necessary'". The Steering Committee tasked a working group with developing this process. The group (Katinka Reijnders, Pam Lorentz, Sonja Kurtén Vartio, Martin Drüeke and Svenolov Svensson) was generously hosted by Martin Drüeke, who organised for them a 'bed and breakfast' arrangement with various friends of his over a weekend in his home city of Wuppertal, Germany. At that time all activities took place during weekends in order to keep travel and other costs as low as possible.

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[291] Norman Bishop, 'Aspects of European Prison Systems', in Louis Blom-Cooper, *Progress in Penal Reform* (Oxford University Press, 1974), p.98. This approach to social support resonates with that of Nils Christie, who coined the phrase 'the import model' in the late 1960s to describe it.

[292] W. R. Stirling, 'The role of education in the penal system', in Louis Blom-Cooper, *ibid*., p.154.

[293] This phrase was popularised in the 1970s with the publication of E. F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful: a study of economics as if people mattered* (Blond & Briggs, 1973).

[294] Förändringsarbete och framtidsplanering: att arbeta med scenarioteknik i organisationer och företag / Thord Erasmie, 1986 Linköpings University.

The scenario work outlined a broad vision of what the EPEA might look like ten years later, in 2006, in terms of size, structure, organisation and influence. It was written as a fiction, but as a wanted and hopefully realistic picture of a future EPEA. The purpose was to create a tool for the near future and for subsequent years. This was also important for yearly action plans, the small steps in what was seen as the right and desired direction. The publication *Vision 2006: from 'Small is beautiful' to 'Big is difficult - but necessary'* was presented, together with an Action Plan for 1998/99, and accepted at the General Council Meeting in Budapest, November 1997[295].

Vision 2006 envisaged that, by that year, the EPEA would have 800 members from most countries in Europe, as well as some from Africa, the Americas and Asia. The scenario also had the EPEA as a registered organisation, with a base in Luxembourg and some paid staff, and formally linked with the Council of Europe. By then also most European countries were expected to have formal branches and it was hoped that there would be Regional EPEA Conferences in the years between the main EPEA Conference held every two years. Other regular activities envisaged in 1996 and 1997 for the following decade included regular Liaison Person meetings, networks of different interest groups, the establishment of an EPEA website and involvement in "university supported research programmes". It was also presumed that by 2006 "the financial situation has also made it possible, every two years, to give scholarship to an EPEA member (preferable teachers) to work/have practice in other countries for 1-2 months".[296]

After some years working with Vision 2006 and the first Action Plans, an EPEA working group consisting of Paddy Rocks, Torfinn Langelid, Sean Wynne, Janine Duprey-Kennedy, Dominic Henry and Geoff Moore met in Belfast in January 2001 and produced, after an in-depth analysis of the current situation, a list of Strategies for the future and a specific Action Plan for 2001 and 2002[297]. The Strategies were supposed to be the key priorities or main directions that the Steering Committee felt that the organisation needed to push itself towards, in order to achieve Vision 2006.

The Strategies of Vision 2006 were summarised in six points:

- Improvement of the EPEA´s networking
- Promotion of Council of Europe Recommendation on Prison Education
- Research
- Stabilisation of the Organisation
- Interfacing with other languages
- Placing EPEA in a secure financial position

[295] See *Report on the 6th EPEA International Conference on Prison Education*, Budapest, November 1997 (Budapest: Central and East European Information and Documentation Centre), p.133.
[296] EPEA, *Vision 2006: From 'Small is beautiful' to 'Big is difficult – but necessary'*, pp.1-3. This document, together with the Review of Vision 2006, various Strategies and two-year Action Plans which were based on Vision 2006, are all available in the Regional State Archive in Bergen, Norway.
[297] Review of Vision 2006, Strategies and Action Plan 2001-2002.

The working group also made a list of General Actions specific to each of the six Strategies and then a selection of these were decided on to form a prioritised Action Plan for the following two years. The Review of Vision 2006, together with the Strategies and specific Action Plans every two years which it gave rise to, are examples of how the Steering Committee tried to focus on making the organisation professional and useful for each member. Another Action Plan[298] was set for the period of 2003 to 2004 with several actions under each of the six Strategy points.

Notable items in the Action Plan 2001-2002 were the production of guidelines for forming local branches, the translation of the recommendation on education in prison into more languages, the dissemination of the Directory and other information to members, the development of the EPEA website and - what would prove to be an important opportunity in the new decade - the seeking of "European Funding (Grundtvig 2)".

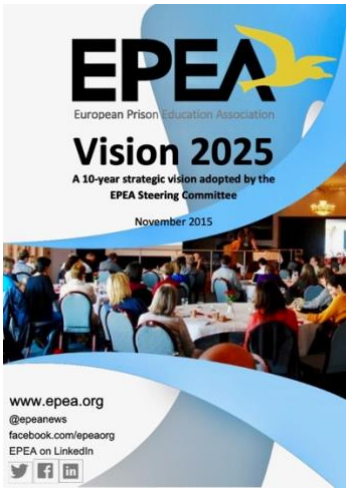
The 'fiction' set out in Vision 2006 clearly only partly matched the reality of what transpired in the following decade. However, by the mid-2000s, the organisation had grown significantly in membership and in the extent to which European countries were involved. It also achieved consultative status with the Council of Europe and became a registered organisation, but in Drammen, Norway, rather than in Luxembourg. The regular two-yearly conferences continued and grew to become very dynamic events. A rich vein of guidelines, manuals, directories and reports were published, largely focused on helping members 'on the ground'. Other ambitions were not achieved: the EPEA has never reached the position where it could employ staff – although there can be benefits as well as restrictions in having an organisation driven only by volunteers. The hope of formal engagement with universities to promote research has not materialised either, although the establishment of the *Journal of Prison Education and Re-entry*, as well as important research on education in prison conducted by some individuals, universities and other organisations closely involved with the EPEA has been very impressive.

Yet, even though not all that was hoped for in Vision 2006 was achieved, the process of compiling that document and having it as a touchstone for the Steering Committee over the subsequent years was very important. It gave the officers, other members of the Steering Committee and Liaison Persons a focus, and ambitious targets towards which they could work. It meant this leadership had raised their sights and did not just resort to keeping the EPEA 'ticking over'. Likewise, the Review of Vision 2006 that was made in 2001 was an important step in bringing energy and strategy to the organisation's daily life while also keeping focused on long-term ambitions. The Steering Committee produced further Action Plans also in the following years, all of them involving wide consultation. For example, Action Plans and the Visions on which they were based were central items on the agendas of five Liaison Persons meetings that took place between 2001 in Paris and 2008 in Sofia.

[298] Action Plan 2003 – 2004, supplement to Steering Committee meeting memorandum, June 2003.

VISION 2025

In June 2015, almost ten years after the end of the Vision 2006, the Steering Committee decided to create a new vision document, Vision 2025.[299] A number of Steering Committee members are credited with contributing to the draft document, which was then compiled and edited by Paul Talbot, then Project Officer with the EPEA. It was formally adopted by the Steering Committee at a meeting in Prague in November 2015.



The introduction to the new Vision states:

The fundamental purpose of the EPEA is to promote education in prison in Europe and internationally. We can only achieve this as a robust and sustainable organisation able to identify and adapt to the challenges of the 21st century. The EPEA Vision 2025 sets out a vision for how the organisation can truly rise to the challenge and achieve its great potential for achieving maximum positive impact on education in prison over the coming 4 (sic) years and beyond.[300]

Later in the document, a view is expressed that a change in direction is necessary in order to meet new conditions in society:

> The purpose of the EPEA has not changed, and many of the issues presented in the 2006 Vision are still relevant today. However, the way that the EPEA can achieve this in the 21st century has changed. The organisation exists in an interconnected world where information is only a few clicks away, and where the self-publishing of information by individuals and other organisations is a common day-to-day occurrence…
>
> Whereas in previous years, the EPEA has been able to have an impact on policy and practice through bringing people together to share and distribute information through its members, it is no longer enough in the 21st century for groups of volunteers to meet and share best practice and hope that this will result in change. The EPEA needs to produce and disseminate professional and credible information. It needs to engage in targeted advocacy. It needs to provide practical resources for researchers and policy makers. It needs to provide state-of-the-art training and development. It needs to raise the profile of education in prison to a new generation of educators. It needs to be actively involved in improving education in prison, not only offering a platform to practitioners. To fulfil its work as an effective advocacy NGO in the 21st century, the EPEA needs a strong financial and institutional capacity. For this, it needs a strong membership. In turn, this means that the EPEA needs to offer something of concrete value that makes it an attractive choice for current and potential members.

[299] *Vision 2025: a 10-year strategic vision adopted by the EPEA Steering Committee*, November 2015. Vision 2025 is available on the EPEA website.
[300] *ibid.*, p.1

> So, whilst there is no need to change the purposes of the EPEA – its original constitutional purposes are as fitting now as they ever were – it is perhaps necessary to re-categorise the purposes of the EPEA to provide a clearer strategic overview. Accordingly, we can see the original purposes of the EPEA falling to three very distinct; but mutually reinforcing categories.
>
> - To contribute to the promotion and enhancement of education in prison across Europe and internationally.
> - To provide valuable services to prison educators and other stakeholders in education in prison.
> - To develop and grow as a robust and sustainable organisation able to achieve its goals and objectives.[301]

As authors of this history, we are aware that because of our close involvement with the EPEA in its first two decades we may not be seen as fully objective in relation to later matters. However, it would be remiss of us not to express our reservations in relation to Vision 2025. While we see the document as having some merit, such as its commitment to the EPEA's original aims and in offering a framework for action plans, we do have concerns about several aspects of it. Firstly, while the above the re-categorisation refers to 'education in prison', it does not reiterate the commitment to a particular kind of holistic education, available as a right to all in prison, which is so strongly emphasised in Council of Europe, EU, UN and earlier EPEA documentation.

Moreover, it is not apparent to us that Vision 2026 has, in fact, been used as a touchstone in the way Vision 2006 provided a focus for the EPEA's planning and working via multiple action plans and reviews. It would appear that, having been written and adopted, it may just have been left to 'sit on a shelf'.

While Vision 2025 is highly ambitious in its strategic objectives (possibly to the point of being very unrealistic), it is written in a highly managerial language that is particularly vague and often lapses into cliché. Too often, the reader is left wondering 'what exactly does that mean?' Further, despite numerous references in Vision 2025 to increasing membership participation, its production did not, as far as we are aware, involve any input from the membership beyond the Steering Committee. This deficiency contrasts, for example, with the process by which Vision 2006 was compiled, which was discussed and ratified at the General Council meeting in Budapest in 1997. It contrasts too with the process leading to the revision of the Constitution in 2007, which engaged membership very extensively prior to the formulation of proposals for change.

Further, this democratic deficit in the process of producing Vision 2025 was accentuated by the structure of the EPEA, "optimised to meet the requirements of the 2025 Vision", put forward in the document. This proposed structure envisages as many as seven *co-opted* officers on the Steering Committee, almost equal to the number of elected officers and Regional Representatives.[302] And we are puzzled by what appears to be strange confusion in

[301] *ibid.*, p.3-4.
[302] *ibid*., p.27.

the document between the Council of Europe and the European Union, each of which have distinctive, even if largely complementary, roles and institutions.

We are especially concerned by a key assumption underpinning the document, based on an understanding of what constitutes the 21st Century context: "People don't need organisations to network – people can create their own networks, can meet using free telecommunicating facilities and exchange data at the speed of light".[303] The Covid-19 pandemic has indeed shown us the vital importance of on-line facilities in communicating and learning, and indeed in living our lives. However, just as clearly, it has demonstrated how virtual communication can so often be a second-best option. If the EPEA is to achieve its mission of giving strong support to those trying to advance genuine education in prisons, it has to be more than a social media group. Giving help in reality, and not just virtually, is all the more essential in today's world, given the changed penal climate that now exists in many countries. It is to this less benign penal climate, and its limiting impact on opportunities for learning, that we now finally turn.

PENAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE NEED FOR THE EPEA

The EPEA, as it aims state and as is clear from earlier discussion, advocates a certain concept of education. This view of education is drawn from the adult education tradition and aims to facilitate the development of 'the whole person'. All members of society, including those held in prison, are seen to have *a right* to this education. Indeed, for men and women in prison, education can offer even more. Some fifty years ago, an English prison educator called Ray Stirling, wishing "to drop the pretence of reformation", saw the task of education in prison being "to help individuals to survive and, indeed, to grow and to bridge the gap between custody and non-custody as a continual process in time, utilizing the learning resources of the community 'inside' and 'out'". He argued against the idea that the education of people in custody was just a 'tool for a job'.[304]

This view of education is essentially that of the Council of Europe in both its adult education and its penal policy documents, including *Education in Prison* (1990), and the *European Prison Rules* right up to the 2020 version. It is the view of Vernor Muñoz, special rapporteur on the right to education for the United Nations, who saw education in prison aiming at 'the full development of the human personality', as we noted in Chapter 4. It is the view advocated continually at EPEA Conferences over the years and most lucidly in the EPEA's 'What We Stand For' statement, which was produced through VEPS in 2008 and which was quoted in part in Chapter 7. The same holistic concept of education underpinned the EU's Grundtvig projects for those serving sentences, as well as the reflection on the Council of Europe Recommendation on Education in Prison written by James King for EuroPris in 2019. Most importantly, those working to facilitate learning in prisons across

[303] *ibid*., p.3.

[304] W. R. Stirling, 'The role of education in the penal system', in Louis Blom-Cooper, *op.cit.*, p.154. The phrase about education being a 'tool for a job' was taken from a Home Office policy document produced in 1969 called *Education in Prison*. A fuller quotation from Stirling in relation to this phrase is given earlier in this chapter.

Europe, as well as learners in prison themselves, know from experience that this approach works best.

Why then are there so many limitations today placed on this wide, deep and strong concept of education? In so many European countries and prisons now, in defiance of experience and European and other international policy, education is not regarded as a right, but as a privilege. The wide curriculum is often reduced to a focus on work-training or other courses presumed to 'address offending behaviour', a tendency we saw in the previous chapter in relation to the Netherlands and England. Moreover, rather than being seen as a right possessed by all in prison, and as a means to personal development, education becomes regarded by authorities primarily as a 'rehabilitation service', as it is currently regarded by the Irish Prison Service. Education can often now be 'targeted' only at a minority, and a great many in prison will now have little or no access to education.

Such weakening in the scope and role of education within prisons is very evident in a great many, but clearly not all, European prison systems. It is a pattern that has emerged unevenly over decades, beginning perhaps in the 1990s. It is, to a large extent, related to a profound shift in penal policy thinking and practice associated with the emergence of a 'culture of control' and other neo-liberal values and attitudes that are outside the scope of this book. Suffice to say that a changed perception of the person held in prison - to what extent are they seen in a socially-inclusive or socially-exclusive manner? - and in the role or purpose of the prison profoundly impact on the situation. Clearly, seeing someone one-dimensionally only as an 'offender' conflict with awareness of 'the whole person' or the full personality. And, if risk, punishment, control and a primitive view of 'security' are the overriding concerns, then caring, supporting, nurturing, encouraging and reintegrating become marginalised in practice, whatever the lip-service paid to these values.

These more punitive attitudes in many countries stand in stark contrast to the penal policy thinking that was the backdrop to the formation of the EPEA and that was especially dominant in the 1970s and 1980s. We described this wider historical context in earlier chapters. In particular, the outlook and attitudes of many of those who led prison systems in this period were radically different to what we find more recently. They, or at least a leading group of them, were very clear that prison damaged people and so should be used 'as a last resort'; they saw the task of imprisonment as 'minimising the detrimental effects' of prison, and doing whatever was possible to help with 'resocialisation' and resettlement (and they saw education having a major role in these processes); the 'reality' of prison led them to scotch the idea that prisons could 'rehabilitate' in any meaningful way.

This earlier penal context was vastly more benign for the provision of adult education in prisons, and education in turn greatly complemented this progressive penal policy. Indeed, many of these earlier progressive leaders of penal systems – such as Brydensholt, Neale, Tulkens, Rentzmann, Lang, Langås, Moczydlowski and many more – saw education as a valuable means of challenging and changing negative penal cultures and contributing to the development and integration of those in prison. We have noted already how it was these Director Generals and prison leaders in similar roles, through the Council of Europe's CDPC, who took the initiative to establish the Select Committee which produced *Education in Prison*, envisioning in their terms of reference for this committee a very wide and holistic concept of education. Likewise, the principle that the regime activities of education and work

should be regarded as equal in status and payment (now firmly embedded in both the European Prison Rules and the Recommendation on Education in Prison), came originally from the leadership of prison systems in Europe, the CDPC. Clearly, they saw education as having enormous potential and a major role within regimes.

As we have seen, prisons and prison systems are often not so supportive of education in many countries in recent times - although it has to be said that, in other countries, the environment remains very positive and supportive for those promoting learning along Council of Europe lines. The purpose of education in prison is sometimes now diverted, at least officially, to "the pretence of reformation" (as Stirling called it), and the learning opportunities available to people in prison can at times be seriously narrowed or hollowed out. Despite such 'penal climate change', many (perhaps most) of those who work trying to promote learning in prisons are guided by deeper awareness of what education can offer, and by more humane and more human rights-based values. However, in these less benign prisons, there will tend to be tension between the adult education and traditional Council of Europe values on the one hand, and the punitive and demeaning setting.

So, the support and developmental opportunities the EPEA was formed to promote among educators in prison through European co-operation is needed more than ever, and especially in those countries which have taken something of a 'punitive turn'. Because those in the latter places are often less supported within their own prisons and prison systems, it is all the more important that the EPEA reach out and make connections with these educators. We have already expressed our concern about those countries that have 'dropped off' the EPEA's map – links with them need somehow to be re-established so that the teachers and other facilitators in the prisons can be reached and involved.

The less supportive penal climate we have described in some countries makes us reflect on how it would be if there was no EPEA to advocate for good education and to present an alternative vision of education in prison, and indeed a different view of how prisons should be. We feel the EPEA has a major role to play in inspiring and encouraging educators working in prisons, and enabling them to feel part of a wider movement which is trying to play its part in helping those men and women who are kept in prison develop their potential and live more fulfilling lives. EPEA members can support each other in playing their small part in making criminal justice systems more humane, and envisaging a better and more inclusive society.

Making and continuing such connections will be as difficult in some ways as it was in the Europe of thirty years ago, but the need is as great as ever. Hopefully, prison educators throughout Europe can continue to support each other, give each other courage in the face of what is often a difficult job and vindicate each other's efforts to help those locked up in prison to survive, learn and grow. It was for this simple but difficult task that the EPEA emerged some thirty years ago. The need for such an organisation, and the importance of supporting educators within prisons, is as important as ever.

APPENDIX 1

Steering Committee meetings, 1991 – 2010

1991, 13 May: Inaugural meeting. The first Steering Committee was formed at the gathering of all Liaison Persons who were present at the 3rd EPEA conference, VHS Bergen Folk Highschool, The Netherlands.
1992, April: Further Education Staff College, Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, England.
1992, November: Scottish Prison Service Training College, Brightens, Falkirk, Scotland.
1993, June: meeting held in Stockholm, in the house of Agneta Bergendahl, Swedish Liaison Person; accommodation in the houses of her and the other Swedish Liaison Person, Anita Johannisson, and their neighbours; held weekend prior to 4th EPEA conference at Hotel Sjudarhöjden, Sigtuna, Sweden.
1993, December: Irish Prison Service Training Centre, Beladd House, Portlaise, Ireland
1994, May: meeting held in Givenich open prison, Luxembourg; accommodation in the homes of prison staff in the vicinity.
1994, November: VHS Bergen, a Folk Highschool in Netherlands.
1995, March: Further Education Development Agency (FEDA), Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, England.
1995, October: Further Education Development Agency (FEDA), Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, England, part of 5th EPEA conference.
1996, March: Prison Staff Training College, Lunde, Denmark.
1996, October: Hotel Säröhus, Särö, Gothenburg, Sweden
1997, April: Hotel Ibis -Pont Couverts, Strasbourg, France.
1997, November: Hotel Agro, Budapest, Hungary, part of 6th EPEA conference.
1998, May: Stakis Ingram Hotel, Glasgow, Scotland.
1998, October: Park Hotel, Sliema, Malta, combined with a one-day conference and a Liaison Persons' meeting.
1999, April: Benedicts Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland.
1999, October: Titania Hotel, Athens, Greece, part of 7th EPEA conference.
2000, April: Park Hotel, Bergen, Netherlands.
2000, November: Benedict's Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland
2001, April: Augustin Hotel, Bergen, Norway.
2001, November: Leeuwenhorst Centre, Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands, part of 8th EPEA conference.
2002, April: Butler House Guest House, Kilkenny, Ireland.
2002, September: Hotel in Paris, France.
2003, March: Hotel in Valletta, Malta.
2003, June: Quality Hotel Skjærgården, Langesund, Norway, part of 9th EPEA conference.
2003, November: Hotel in Valletta, Malta.

2004, April: Hotel Ibis Praha Smichov, Prague, Czech Republic.
2004, September: Steering Committee officers' meeting, Oslo, Norway.
2004, November: Hotel in Strasbourg, France, combined with meetings with Council of Europe officials.
2005, March: Residence Boyana, Sofia, Bulgaria.
2005, May: Residence Boyana, Sofia, Bulgaria, part of 10th EPEA conference.
2005, October: The Training School for Prison Officers, Birkerød, Denmark, combined with a meeting with Alan Smith of the EU Commission on Grundtvig projects.
2006, March: Steering Committee officers' meeting, Oslo, Norway.
2006, June: Centre International de Sejour Kellerman Hotel, Paris, France.
2006, November: Hotel in Athens, Greece.
2007, March: Augustin Hotel, Bergen, Norway.
2007, June: Dublin City University, part of 11th EPEA conference.
2007, November: Hotel Beranek, Prague, Czech Republic.
2008, February: Strasbourg, France, the SC together with the Virtual European Prison School (VEPS) visited the Council of Europe. Reference: EPEA Magazine Issue 34 p.4]
2008, October: Meeting Brunstad in Stokke, in Norway, combined with FOKO conference.
2009, October: Cyprus **(**Reference: 12th EPEA International Conference *Liberation through Education* CYPRUS, 29 October-01 November '09, p.4)
2010, November: Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

APPENDIX 2

Liaison Persons (LP) meetings, in addition to General Council meetings held at EPEA conferences, 1991 – 2014.

1991, May: Inaugural Liaison Persons meeting, in **Bergen, the Netherlands**, as part of 3rd EPEA Conference. The first Steering Committee was formed at this meeting.
1998, October: Meeting in **Sliema, Malta**, combined with a Steering Committee meeting.
1999, October: **Athens, Greece**, as part of 7th EPEA Conference.
2001, June: Meeting in **Paris, France**.
2002, **November*]*, Budapest, Hungary**
2003, **March*]* Malta**
2004, February: Meeting in **Budapest, Hungary**, combined with a Grundtvig Project meeting
2005, May: 7th Liaison Persons meeting, **Sofia, Bulgaria**, part of 10th EPEA conference.
2008, May: Meeting in **Sofia, Bulgaria,** combined with a PAN meeting.
2010, November: Meeting in **Amsterdam, the Netherlands**, combined with a Steering Committee meeting.
2011, Meeting in **Manchester**, combined with a Steering Committee meeting.
2012, March: Meeting **in Malmö, Sweden** (Reference: EPEA Newsletter 41, Spring 2012)
2012, November: Meeting **in Vienna, Austria** (Reference: EPEA Newsletter 41, Spring 2012)
2013, October: Meeting **in Paris, France** (Reference: EPEA Newsletter Winter 2014)
2014, March: Meeting **in Bucharest, Romania** (Reference: EPEA Newsletter Spring 2014)

APPENDIX 3

Key messages resulting from EU support for Prison Education[305]

- Prison systems emphasising reprisal rather than rehabilitation, are out-of-phase with democratic ideals: "People should be sent to prison as punishment, not for punishment!"
- Prisoners – including those with special learning needs –have a right to education just like any other citizen. This principle should be implemented in all countries.
- "No-one is only a prisoner". Education and training can help to develop the prisoner's full personality and greatly enhance his or her self-esteem.
- Prison Education should consequently espouse a holistic approach embracing basic and general education, social and personal skills, artistic and cultural creativity as well as practical and vocational training.
- Vocational training should be relevant to modern employment needs and strike a balance between generic skills and adaptation to local / regional labour market requirements.
- Prison Education should be seen as an integral part of education and training in the country at large, and as similar as possible to education and training 'outside'.
- Prisoners are a heterogeneous group. A learner-centred approach to Prison Education should be adopted, with flexible course provision, a focus on learning outcomes, acknowledgment and validation of prior non-formal and informal learning, and effective guidance and counselling.
- Links between the prison and the outside world, during a prisoner's sentence as well as post-release, should be acknowledged as a key factor in determining the success of rehabilitation strategy, also as regards education and training.
- Effective reintegration depends crucially on multi-faceted cross-agency cooperation, which should therefore be strongly supported: "Education and training cannot do it on their own".
- New technologies offer exciting new ways of broadening and individualising learning opportunities in prison. Their use should be expanded and optimised, supported by the necessary further training of educational and other prison staff.
- Every effort should be made to improve the learning environment in prison, notably by sensitising governors and officers to the importance of education and training and taking education and training needs into account in the transfer of prisoners.
- Teaching staff engaged in Prison Education should be provided with the necessary initial and further training required to assist them in assuming the role of learning facilitator and to equip them for the specific challenges – social, psychological and pedagogical – of working in this field.
- Further efforts should be undertaken to demonstrate the economic – as well as social – benefits of investing more in Prison Education, as part of an integrated package of measures to reduce the rate of re-offending.
- Research on Prison Education (within educational research as well as research on detention and reintegration issues) should be greatly expanded, to address more aspects and cover more countries. Cost-benefit analysis should be one of the priorities.
- In many countries the funding of (better: "investment in") Prison Education should be significantly enhanced as a proportion of budgets in both education and justice.
- Transnational sharing of innovation and experience should be intensified in both practice and policy, through sustainable partnerships and networks and improved dissemination and mainstreaming of project results.
- EU funding is vital in underpinning this process and should be greatly increased in order to achieve an ongoing strengthening of European cooperation in Prison Education.

[305] Alan Smith, *The European Union and Prison Education – Cooperation, innovation and support: A historical review of the first two decades* (Bonn, November 2019). Available at https://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/Smith-Alan-The-EU-and-Prison-Education-A-historical-review.pdf
(page 36)

"On a Bench under a Copper Beech tree" Kevin Warner, Asbjørn Langås, Pam Lorentz, Henning Jørgensen and Gail Gassner – the group that came with the idea of forming an Organization for Prison Education in Europe.

The authors of *The Emergence of the European Prison Education Association* understand the importance of writing the EPEA's history. Not only have they helped write the story of the EPEA thus far, they have made a substantial contribution to its development. With this book, they remind us of the essential work of the European Prison Education Association, as it continues to provide solidarity and support to educators and learners on their pedagogical journey.

Dr Cormac Behan, SFHEA
Chair, European Prison Education Association

It's impressive the amount of work you all have put into the 'history', I enjoyed reading every bit of it. I love also that you haven't shied away from being critical of the changing direction it seems to be taking.

Anne Costelloe
Former Chair of EPEA

What an impressive work you have done with this book! It is an important book and a very interesting reading. ….. the book can open for further discussion concerning the EPEA and their way to work, today and in the future. …. It is also about the importance of education and the role of education in the society and in line of that, also in prison.

Lena Broo
Former Chair of EPEA

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