

Grundtvig Project : Effective Induction for Prison Teachers

Desk research: Estonia



Brief description of the Estonian prison system

In Estonia, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for the prison service. Estonia has five closed and one open prison. The total prison population is about 2567 and 114 prisoners are women. 13% of the prison population is foreigners.

Two of the newest prisons are:

Tartu Prison accepted its first inmates on 16 October 2002. The prison employs 402 people, 243 of whom are prison officers. Inmates are educated by teachers from Tartu Secondary School for Adults and Tartu Vocational Education Centre.

Viru Prison in Jõhvi was completed in 2008. The prison employs 359 people, 224 of whom are prison officers. Viru Prison is the first in the history of Estonia's prison service to have a heightened supervision department. There is also a juvenile department, accommodating up to 250 minors. All underage prisoners who have been convicted or who are being held in custody and all young prisoners who have been convicted are held here. The prisoners are educated by teachers from Jõhvi Secondary School and Ida-Viru County Vocational Education Centre.

The number of prisoners and persons under criminal service on Nov 30th 2009

	<i>Harku prison</i>	<i>Muru prison</i>	<i>Tallinn prison</i>	<i>Viru prison</i>	<i>Tartu prison</i>	<i>Central hospital of prisons</i>	<i>Total</i>
Convicted	147	596	453	721	780	25	2722
Arrested	0	0	536	201	126	10	873
Prisoners total	147	596	990	922	906	35	3596
<i>including:</i>							
Minors	1	0	1	31	1	0	34
Women	147	0	41	6	8	3	205
Life sentences	0	0	9	16	11	0	36
Persons under criminal service			4617	1317	2548		8482

Number of short-term and long-term sentenced prisoners:

	<3 months	3-12 months	1-5 years	>5 years
2008	26	326	1316	1018

Prison population participating in educational activities

About 18% of all prisoners (imprisoned persons and persons held in custody) participate in prison educational activities. 25% of imprisoned persons participate in prison educational activities. In recent years the number of all inmates has declined but the number of prisoners participating in educational programs has increased.

Number and proportion of students in prison (2009)		
	Number of prisoners	% of prisoners who study
basic education	181	27%
secondary education	159	23%
vocational education	331	50%
Total	671	100%

Prison education in Estonia

The purpose of providing education is to prepare the detainee for release, by supporting the person's complete development and the increase of coping ability. So-called prison education is a part of Estonian national education system. Educating in prison is organized by the Ministry of Education and Research. Prison education is regulated in legislation including the Education Act, the Imprisonment Act, and others. All the prisoners have a right for education by law. In prison, it is possible to obtain education both in Estonian and in Russian. The minister of education and knowledge executes the specialized supervision. According to the education act school attendance is mandatory until possessing primary education or the age of 17. So studying in prison is voluntary for the detainees.

General education on the levels of primary and secondary school is organized by the areas municipal education facilities. Thereby the school diploma does not show that the student has mastered it in prison. Classes are held in Estonian and Russian. General education can be acquired in all prisons.

Vocational education is organized by the areas vocational education centres or public schools. Due to the fact the school certificate does not show that the student has obtained the education in prison. Vocational education is available in all prisons. Classes are held in Estonian and Russian.

The objective of providing an opportunity to prisoners to acquire education is to ensure that the prisoners have adequate knowledge, skills and ethical principles which would allow the prisoners to continue their education and work after release.

For prisoners an individual treatment programme of prisoner is prepared which shall prescribe the need to provide the prisoner with:

- General education: primary education (first level of education) or secondary education (second level of education) - prisoners who have acquired basic education, at their request
- Vocational education: prisoners shall be provided with the opportunity to acquire vocational education according to their wish and aptitude -prisoners who have not acquired basic education, vocational education or vocational training
- Higher education (third level of education): Prisoners may, at their request, be permitted to study at educational institutions located outside prisons. There are 5 to 7 such cases per year. The permit to study outside the penitentiary gives the prisoner the right to be outside the prison area according to the curriculum in daytime, by evening the prisoner must return to the penitentiary facilities.
- Prisoners who are not proficient in Estonian can, at their request, be provided with an opportunity to study Estonian. Non-Estonians are integrated into the Estonian society by the state language and civic duty courses organized by the prison. The prisoners have the right, if they wish, to make the Estonian language test. From the year 2007 the learning of Estonian is needed.

When compiling the individual schedule to be fulfilled the educational worker or the official from the social office finds out the detainees educational level and the wish or the need to continue the studies. The educational worker explains to the prisoner the possibilities to continue the studies in and out of the prison area. The records of the prisoners educational background and studying in prison are entered to the prison registry.

The organisation of education in prison

Financing of the schools in prisons:

Ministry of Education	Ministry on Justice
Salaries and schooling money for the school staff	School rooms and inventory
Teaching aids (study literature and – applicances)	Utility expenses (electricity, fuel ...)
Administrative expenses	Teaching aids, which ordinary school students get from home (exercise books, pens-pencils, art aids, workbooks, literature, supporting learning)

The acquisition of education is organised during working hours. Prisons will provide the schools with the facilities, take care of them and shall ensure the safety of the teachers and students. At the juvenile prison works a social teacher who advises and supports the youth in studying. In order to improve the cooperation between the school and the prison and to better counsel the detainees in issues of education, the position of an education administrator was created in the prisons.

Hobby education and cultural and sports events are organized by the hobby leader. The studying is supported by the prison library.

Practical training is conducted in the study workshops and in the industrial workshops of the Estonian prisons. The most popular specialities are lumber and metal work, female detainees can learn sewing but gardening, computer operator, soft furniture restorer, builder, small business management and sales executive courses are also held. In Viru prison cookery can also be learned, which is new. In the lumber and metal work and sewing speciality, the practice can be done in Estonian Prison Industry Association, where the detainees who have completed the practice can generally also find a paying job.

The Prison Education system in Estonia was reformed in years 2004-2007

In undertaking of Ministry of Justice and in cooperation with the specialists from Sweden and Finland in 2001 a Phare project „Criminal Prevention – Social Rehabilitation of Inmates” started. Within the project the basis of organizing general and vocational education of inmates was analysed very thoroughly and suggestions for changing it were made.

Within the frames of Phare program and with the help of specialists from Finland and Sweden, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Education and Research worked out the developmental plan of educational system in prisons. As the result of this, on 12 February 2004 the Government of Estonia validated the document „Educational Arrangement in Prison. Developmental plan for 2004 – 2006”. This developmental plan foresees transferring teaching of inmates under the coordination of regional educational institutions, located outside prisons. The goal was to achieve the raise of quality of teaching process and conforming the quality of education outside and inside prisons.

The aims of the developmental plan were:

- liquidating of special vocational schools, working in prisons and organizing teaching on the basis of the educational institutions in the area of prison
- raising the quality of teaching and unifying it
- guaranteeing aimed activities and employment for inmates
- connecting professional education with employment in prison
- Ministry of Education and Research guarantees the quality of teaching
- Ministry of Justice in cooperation with prisons guarantees learning environment
- enabling learning state language for the inmates, who don't speak Estonian language
- facilitating re-adaptation of released inmates with society and changes in it
- creating possibilities for satisfying the needs towards education
- General education for inmates is now provided by basic schools and gymnasiums outside prisons.
- Vocational education is provided by vocational schools outside prisons.

Teaching institutions who arrange the education in Estonian prisons 2009- 2010:

There are 91 prison teachers in Estonia.

Tallinn Prison –The Adult Gymnasium of Tallinn and The Building School of Tallinn

Harku Prison – Keila Gymnasium and The Industrial Education Centre

Murru Prison – Keila Gymnasium and The Industrial Education Centre of

Tartu Prison – The Adult Gymnasium of Tartu and The Vocational Education

Viru Prison- Jõhvi Gymnasium and The Vocation Education Centre of Ida-Virumaa

The specific training given to teachers in prison in Estonia

So- called early birds in teaching Estonian prison schools teachers were the training days held in co-operation with the colleagues from Finland and Sweden in 2002 through the Phare project.

In 2003 the The Rummu Special Vocational School began the first prison education themed Grundtvig project (with partners from Norway, Italy and Germany) “Attention Deficite Hyperactivity (ADHD) among inmates in prison”. This also interested Ministry of Education and Research (Mart Kõrre). The first prison schools teachers meeting in Estonia was held in order to introduce the project action and it was valued. Inspired from the training the prison teachers knowledge days were also started and extra training courses were ordered from the Tallinn University.

The new training cycle was named “Hard conversations- teaching and studying in prison conditions”. Two sessions were held : 40 academical hours in 2004 and 80 academical hours in 2005. Regardless to the interesting titles, most of the lectures turned out to be too shallow, far from reality and were not actually connected to the situation in prison. The main cause- most of the lecturers were not up to date with the prison theme and did not bother to concentrate on the specifics of it and used the same lecture materials that were made for the their students. The pedagoges working in prison would have expected more practical recommendaditons and decided not to keep on ordering the “Hard conversations” training. The fact that there is a lack of lecturers, who are competent enough to prepare and carry out courses in the neccessary level in Estonian Universities, was discovered. There is also a lack of interest in the national level because due to the size of Estonia, the pedagoges working in prison form a relatively small part.

In 2004 some teachers took part of the EPEA conference (before only workers from ministries and rarely headmasters). The Estonian EPEA group of initiatives was formed.

After the training by Tallinn University some lectures were held by Rummu Special Vocational School. Some topics were picked up and the questionnaire was made by the teachers working in prison.

In the autumn of 2005 the training on topic „100% communication“ was carried out by the trainee Marek Koppel (sub topics: stress, manipulation, drugs).

In January of 2006 lecture was carried out in Murru Prison. The topics was how to manage with the conflict situation. At the end of the year there was also an information day (arranged by Rummu Special Vocational School and the Ministry of Education and Research).

Tallinn Adult Gymnasium (TAG) – 05.01.2007 The prison works specialities (J. Kangur)

02.03.2007 Team work speciality in prison learning
(Liigand, Virovere)

ETKA Andras/TAG – 12.12.2008 The prison teachers knowledge day (Tüllinen/ Ministry of Justice – legislation and prison education; Kask – grown- up learning in prison education; Kangur - leading of conflict; Torma – round-table of prison teachers; Meresma – teachers with special needs, project- idea introduction)

TAG – 09.01.2009 working with a hard client

23-24.09.2009 – A Baltic-Nordic Seminar on Education in Prison in Viru Prison.

Ministry of Justice, TAG, Industrial Education Centre – 07.01.2010 „Prison Education co-operation seminary“ in Industrial Education Centre in Tallinn.

Training needs for prison teachers:

- Prison system- different prison types: difficulty levels/ the proportion of security limitations etc.
- Legislation (imprisonment law, bylaws of prison)
- The arrangement of education in prisons in different European countries – based on specific examples
- The recommendation R(89)12, which covers education in prison, from The European Council Ministry Committee for the countries of the European Union. International projects for education in prison.
- EPEA (European Prison Education Association)-the opportunity for co-operation and exchanging information with colleagues in an international level.
- The background of misbehavior. The reasons of youth criminal activity
- The psyche of the detainees, most common behavioral problems and the ways to cope with them in a learning situation. Leading of conditions. Resolving of situations.
- The peculiarities of being a teacher in prison environment. The background of behavioral problems.
- The safety/security in prison. Avoiding provocative behavior. Most elementary self-defense moves
- The requirements for a teacher due to prison regimen
- Different types of personality and relations between them

- The extremes of a personality development. Ideal (mature) personalities vs personality problems
- The possibilities and impossibilities of a persons change/changing
- The psychological treatment of a detainee. Self- establishment during the manipulations of the detainees, behavior during the situation of conflict, usage of voice (also during training incl)
- Recognizing a drug-state on a student and the correct way to respond
- Potential multi- nationality/cultural background in a classroom
- Avoiding burnout
- Prison as a learning environment
- Organizing studies in prison and forming a curriculum that can be used for studies in prison (accepting differences but in accordance with the national curriculum)
- Teaching and up to date teaching methods in prison. Possibilities in preparing an interesting lesson when considering the constraint of the security limitations of prison (Internet. Practical work and business training opportunities). The possibilities for arranging independent studies for a student, preparing exercises. (Could be implemented as a team work in active study)
- Andragogy. Preparing study materials and the structure of a lesson in grown- up studies. Portfolio.
- Carrying out a lesson when considering the different levels and consistency in studying in grown- up studies. Applying an individual curriculum. Combining frontal and individual teaching.
- The motivation to study for a detainee. Supporting teaching for a motivation to study. Developing positive thinking and creativity. Developing emotional and social competency. Assessment in a lesson- avoiding a negative feedback.