

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning in Prison

From a European Challenge
to a Grundtvig Educational Partnership
2005 – 2007

VOICES FROM WITHIN – REMARKS FROM OFFENDERS INVOLVED
IN THE ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING PROCESS.

*“When I went to prison my son stopped going to school...
knowing that I’d managed to sit and pass a professional qualification...
he went back to school.”*

*“ [With accreditation of prior (experiential) learning] I’m preparing for my release, my future, but
I don’t project myself there yet because there’s still a long time to go...
it’s for me, for my own mental attitude, for prison the way I want to live it...”*

“Accreditation was a great breath of fresh air for me for a long time, bringing hope, satisfaction.”

*“ What motivates me about accreditation is the certificate. ...and when I’m doing my accreditation
work I’m happy. It reminds me of working on building sites with my dad and my brother. It brings
back great memories.”*

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FOREWORD

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, begun in France in 1992 and expanded in 2002, is a major development in the method of delivering diplomas and certificates. It means, in fact, recognizing that professional experience provides knowledge and skills and offers confirmation of this in the form of a professional diploma (partial or full) which is the strict equivalent of that delivered by any other channel. It is a method which concerns all types of public.

The Regional Education Authority in Bordeaux has three major ambitions with its “Objective 2010” project, one of which is “not to leave anyone by the wayside.” The Regional Education Authority being the headquarters of a Regional Teaching Unit for learning in a prison environment, those in custody make up a very specific population to whom classic forms of teaching have been offered for many years.

However, getting certain prisoners to commit to the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning was an innovative idea which was implemented for the first time in 2003.

The European project, Gruntwig I “Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in the hands of the law” has enabled a comparison of the experiences in five countries as well as providing guidelines for the development of a process which offers a promising means of reintegration for people in great difficulty.

We would like to thank all those who have taken part in the present project, part of a European strategy for education and lifelong learning with a view to promoting equal opportunity.



William MAROIS

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INTRODUCTION

The present work outlines the stages of a European project designed and implemented around the theme of ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING IN A PRISON ENVIRONMENT. Seven partners (1 Belgian, 3 French, 1 Maltese, 1 Pole, 1 Portuguese) took part in the survey suggested by the initiators of the project, the DAVA (a Ministry of Education body for accreditation of prior learning), the Chief Educational Officer of the Regional Education Authority in Bordeaux, and the Ministry of Education, with the object of trying TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING GIVEN TO THE PROCESS BY THOSE IN CUSTODY WISHING TO OBTAIN A DIPLOMA THROUGH ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING.

In France, the January 17th 2002 Act for social modernization established a right to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning. This enables any person, on the basis of at least three years professional salaried, non-salaried or voluntary experience, to have access to all or part of a diploma, or more generally to professional/vocational certification. The Act established a national commission for professional certification (CNCP), responsible for drawing up and updating the national register of professional certifications (RNCP). This commission is made up of state officials, labour and management representatives, representatives from the Regional Councils as well as other qualified persons. Implementation of the provisions of the Act at the inter-ministerial level required statutory instruments (decrees published in 2002) and then, in 2006 was subject to “*recommendations for the development of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning*” within the National Council for Lifelong Continuing Education. This right applies to any person, whatever their background, their skills, their limits or their difficulties, their present status. It therefore also applies to those in custody (placed in the hands of the law: accused or sentenced, incarcerated or not).

The underlying principle of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is the assumption that one does not only learn at school but that henceforth, everyday life (professional and personal) can be the source of recognizable learning which can be developed. It is in keeping with a perspective of time which goes far beyond the periods of childhood, adolescence and young adulthood, periods commonly called *the period of initial training*. In this sort of process it is difficult to say what part is played by the desire of candidates to educate themselves or transform their lives, and what part by the internalization of multiple messages in a constantly evolving society. The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is therefore part of a *continuing education dynamic*.

In 2003, date at which accreditation of prior (experiential) learning was implemented in the public education service in France, one of the priorities of the Chief Education Officer of the Regional Education Authority in Bordeaux was to *permit and facilitate access to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning by those in difficulty, in particular those in custody*, i.e. incarcerated in long-term detention centres and prisons in Aquitaine. To be able to offer to those in a prison environment the prospect of accreditation in order to obtain a national diploma requires careful consideration and means adapting the system of ordinary law to the prison environment. This was made possible thanks to both:

- financial support from the European Fund, and
- considerable work in partnership with personnel from the Ministries of Justice and Education.

After a period of three years of adapting procedures for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, it was believed important to try to gain a better idea of the psychological effects of this new educational approach in order to better grasp the effort and personal dynamics involved for candidates

choosing the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in order to obtain a national diploma during their period in custody.

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning

With a view to constructing a European job market in 2010, the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 invited member states to think about the construction of a European reference framework for professional certification which would enable comparability and thus encourage mobility of workers at the European level. The transparency of qualifications has progressively suggested itself in the environment of cooperation between European states concerning vocational training as an answer to the problems of securing lifelong professional itineraries. France is fully committed to undertakings at the European level.

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is a process of identification, assessment and recognition of formal, non-formal and informal prior experiential learning:

“Formal learning is the result of a process of traditional teaching provided by structured educational or training bodies - structured in terms of objectives, time or resources – monitored externally within the framework of educational organisation and training and leads to a qualification. In this context, the learning is intentional on the part of the learner.

Non-formal learning is the result of a process of learning which is not provided by educational or training bodies. However it is structured – in terms of objectives, time or resources – and monitored internally. Learning in this context is intentional on the part of the learner.

Informal learning is learning resulting from daily work-related, family, or leisure activities. It is not structured – in terms of objectives, time or resources – and may or may not be organized in a conscious fashion by the learner himself.¹ In this context, learning may be intentional, but in most cases is not, it is fortuitous or random.” (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2004).

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning: The Key to Lifelong Learning

In order to move forward in the action to be taken at the European level, and in terms of Lifelong Learning, member states can no longer dispense with a system of effective lifelong education and training for adults, part of a strategy to ensure that participants benefit from better access to the job market, a strategy that reinforces social integration and that prepares for active aging.

The European Directives for 2010 are organized around five key messages:

- *The necessary development of participation in the education and training of adults, with a more equitable approach.* Although all parties have a role to play, it is up to public authorities to lead the efforts aimed at eliminating obstacles and at promoting demand, particular emphasis being put on the unskilled. It is, in particular, a question of implementing quality systems of information and orientation based more on a learner-focused approach, of providing them with financial incentives and supporting the establishment of local partnerships;
- *Promoting a culture of quality in the education and training of adults.* Member states need to invest in improving teaching methods and materials adapted to adult learners:
 - by implementing measures for initial and continuing professional development of those working in this field;
 - by providing them with the required skills and enabling them to improve these skills;

¹ The use of "he" and "his" and "himself" in this English translation is not gender-specific.

- by introducing mechanisms for quality assurance and by improving services;
- *Investment of member states in the education and training of older persons and migrants and, above all, in effectiveness* by: developing systems adapted to the needs of learners; by increasing public awareness as to the important role of migrants and older persons in society and in the economy;
- *Improvement in data analysis concerning education and training for adults*. In particular, the requirement:
 - to better understand the advantages offered by the education and training of adults and the obstacles which hamper participation in this activity, and to have better quality data concerning service-providers and trainers along with actual content and progress of training courses;
 - *The implementation of systems for accrediting and recognizing non-formal and informal training based on common European principles* for accreditation and recognition, taking fully into account existing experiences and national certification frameworks in Europe.

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning enabling recognition of learning related to professional activities, salaried or voluntary, adds value to knowledge and skills, whatever the place or mode of acquisition, or of their development. But, while skills validation is a European challenge, we are still often only at the stage of inventorying existing systems.

During a survey conducted throughout the European Union, three categories of countries were identified:

- Most of the developed countries emphasized the importance of a legal basis for recognition, although some are still confronted with a fairly significant gap between plans for political action and actual practice. Whereas some countries mention the importance of making the formal system more accessible, there are others which highlight the need to simplify the process of recognition of prior (experiential) learning;
- A second group of countries consisting of those which do not have a national qualification system but with certification activities which follow the formal national education programmes;
- The third group consists of countries which are currently in the process of instituting qualification systems. (Singh, M. 2005 ²)

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning: A New Process of Certification in the Public Education Service

That we learn by experience is not new. What is new, however, is the possibility of obtaining a diploma thereby having that experience validated. For individuals, this is a new, individual, right whose founding principle is based on the formative value of experience, and on the fact that henceforth, competence and knowledge can be acquired outside a training system and be taken into account to obtain certification (diploma, qualification). Since 2003, in the French education system, accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is:

- *A new means of access to a professional diploma*, applicable to anyone who has, for a period of at least three years, practiced an activity in connection with the objective of the diploma sought. Henceforth, professional and technical diplomas at the secondary, or tertiary, level can be obtained four ways: academic school and university training, vocational training, continuing professional development, and accreditation of prior (experiential) learning;
- *A new component in the education and training system*. Professional or extra-professional activity is recognized as producing skills and knowledge and as being a formative experience. It produces the same results as the other means of monitoring knowledge, skills and aptitudes (examinations, continuous assessment while learning);

² Recognition of prior (experiential) learning: joint programme of the French national commission for UNESCO and the Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg, Dr Madhu Sing, *Unesco Institute for Education*.

- *A new link in the educational chain* for the personal and professional development of individuals and for the skills-led management of careers and jobs, in organisations (public and private corporations, territorial communities, associations, etc);
- *A method for evaluating knowledge gained from experience.* It is a different way of appraising and assessing competences from those generally used. It is a question of showing, through the description and analysis of work situations, that the knowledge, skills and aptitudes acquired are those contained in the list of references for certification in the diploma sought;
- *A three-pronged pedagogical process:* candidate information, assistance in drawing up the accreditation project, and implementation of the project, all of which take into account the specific background of the candidate.

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning: Process, Approach, Procedure.

Process.

The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning hinges on the congruence of four types of reasoning:

- *The social reasoning of political policy-makers*, medium and long term. They are supposed to reason in terms of fairness and militant commitment to democratic values (equal opportunity, upward mobility);
- *The economic reasoning of employers*, short to medium term. The issue is the effectiveness of the activity (productivity and financial profitability) and employability;
- *The reasoning of the experts in terms of standardization* where the dimension of time depends on that of the various actors involved. They ensure a normative function, aimed at quality and effectiveness of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, notably at the level of the procedures;
- *Lastly, the personal reasoning of the candidates*, part of a temporal dimension which includes the past, present and future. For them it is a question of validating the itinerary of a lifetime. The process of accrediting prior learning combines various types of recognition, social, professional, and personal. Special weight is thus given to the question of the meaning that such a process might have for a candidate. It takes into account the fact that individuals have the right to educate themselves and that everyone has knowledge. It directly questions the relationship between theory and practice, as well as each person's relationship to knowledge and the relationship of all to power. The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning then appears as a form of learning how to take charge of one's future.

Approach

The approach to certification through accreditation of prior (experiential) learning requires a considerable personal investment on the part of the candidate and real involvement. It is a question of proving that one's professional skills are entirely related to and at the level of the diploma envisaged, through four main stages:

- including the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning project in a more global personal project,
- proving the experience gained,
- choosing the diploma sought with great care,
- putting together a dossier describing the experience gained as related to the diploma sought.

Putting the dossier together includes a number of phases:

- *Identifying competences.* To identify is to pick out. Note the particular difficulty of choosing, amongst all types of situations or activities, those which will best highlight the competences to be validated.
- *Narration.* This involves considerable work of questioning, reflection and decontextualizing, crossing over from the experience to its description, in writing. Experience should not be mistaken for what is acquired through experience. Between the two, some work of translation is required. The language of action is different from that of theory and the passage from one to the other is not self-

evident. Oral language differs from written language which remains the favoured language for analysis, precision and demonstration. In addition it requires *self-management skills, personal attributes and analytical and deciphering capabilities*. These points are closely related to legitimacy, to self-esteem, to the approval given by the candidate to himself and to the recognition of self by him. For the candidates, these are all vehicles for change in their relationships to knowledge, to power, to occupation and to professional identity.

- *Accreditation* consists of analysis and assessment by a panel of examiners, according to certain institutional rules, translating the experience in the file. Assessment is a scene played out between three partners: the candidate, the advisor and the panel of examiners. The status, role, knowledge and stakes for each are different.

The thread of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning thus stretches out along a pathway running from the desire of a candidate to the recognition of his experience by an institution. The desire produces the momentum and energy required to enable the candidate to move from memories, traces left by the experience, to the proof to be supplied in writing.

Procedure

In France, a regulatory procedure enables any person who wishes to go down the road of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning to benefit from assistance through:

- *Information* including detailed presentation of the stages involved;
- *A personalized study of the project* of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning with the object of making the most pertinent choice of diploma;
- *Support* in the form of advice and assistance in putting the file together. Assistance is both methodological and technical, carried out by authorized persons and by experts in the field involved.
- *Accreditation*. Assessment by a panel of examiners enables total or partial accreditation. The panel consists of teachers and professionals, makes its decision after appraisal of the file and a clarifying interview with the candidate.
- *A post-accreditation meeting* to carry out an assessment of the results obtained and define future perspectives to be envisaged.

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning: Adapting the Procedure to the Prison Environment

Enabling access to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in the hands of the law has been possible in the French region of Aquitaine thanks to considerable partnership work between the services of the Prison Administration and those of the Ministry of Education: giving impetus, conducting and co-ordinating, pedagogical implementation, individual assistance and support for candidates, outcome and assessment. Consequently, obtaining a diploma by means of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can be used for one of the overriding objectives in the prison environment: *to promote the social and/or professional reintegration of those in custody.*

In order to develop the system of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in this context, an initial period (2002-2005) was devoted to adapting the procedure and implementing it in the prison environment. It dealt in particular with the essentially individualized phases, longer time for accompaniment and significant social support offered by the various professional actors (teaching personnel, supervisory personnel, advisors, therapists, integration and probation advisers). After this period of adaptation, it was thought necessary to gain a better understanding of the personal dynamics of those who commit to this process, and to ensure professionalization of the actors involved.

When the opportunity arose of setting out these objectives with four European partners who each have different and complementary experiences, the Grundtvig 1 European partnership project was devised to be carried out over a period of two years (2005-2007).

An Educational Partnership Project: “The Process of Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning for Persons in the Hands of the Law.”

The project is an ambitious one: *“To enable those in the hands of the law to be accompanied in the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning with a view to encouraging their social and/or professional reintegration: based on reflections and studies concerning improvement of the personal image and identity of those in custody, and the professionalization of the professional actors involved, within the framework of a new route to certification.”* It is committed to being innovative and in phase with European directives and has a number of purposes:

- To index and identify constraints and disincentives to the development of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in the prison environment;
- To develop reflection on educational and training practices in Europe, in particular as far as validation and recognition of non-formal and informal professional experience is concerned in a custodial environment;
- To develop means of support, assistance and advice adapted to the prison population and to the institution of prison;
- To involve prison personnel in the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning by those in custody.

The five partners taking part in the European project are representatives from:

- the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE),
- the Department of Education at the University of Malta,
- the European Centre for Investigation of Behaviour and Institutions (ECIBI) in Coïmbra (Portugal),
- Rzeszow Prison (Poland),
- the Interregional Delegation of the Prison Administration and the Regional Education Authority in of Bordeaux, France [Regional teaching unit (UPR) and REA Department for Accreditation of Prior Learning (DAVA)]. The DAVA, instigator of the project, is responsible for giving impetus, conducting and co-ordinating the various activities through seminars and meetings between the partners, plus long distance contact.

The expertise to be contributed by the partners includes:

- information relating to the development of accreditation of prior learning in the systems of the various countries, on-going studies on the theme, both at the European and international level;
- training of those involved in teaching in prison (Malta);
- research work concerning the dynamics of social and cultural integration and the importance of social support in orienting the behaviour of those in difficulty (Portugal);
- therapeutic support practices in prison (Poland);
- adaptation of the system of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning to the prison environment, and training of professionals (France).

The partners in this project are committed to :

- discovery and awareness of prison environments and the characteristics of prison populations in each country;
- exchange of practices as regards accreditation of prior (experiential) learning;
- studying a problem with two separate components: *to gain a better understanding of the psychological and social dynamics of those taking part in a process of accreditation during and after a period in custody, and to take this into account in the training of professionals involved in teaching in a prison environment ;*
- implementation of preliminary action research: conceptualisation (methodological approach, development of tools), exploratory survey, analysis of results and areas for development;
- the publication of these results;
- setting up a website to facilitate dissemination of the results.

Several levels of appraisal and reflection have been adopted: better understanding of the person in custody and the approach to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning; raising awareness of professionals whether involved directly or not with instituting accreditation in the prison environment, and work with educational and prison institutions on which the success of the project hinges.

Purpose and Structure of the Present Report

The notions of social reintegration and recognition of experience as applied to those in custody are at the centre of the present report. In particular, it is the interactions between the extrinsic factors (related to the situation of being in custody and to the supposed negative influences) and the intrinsic factors (related to the internal vulnerability of the individuals, the psychological consequence of external pressures) which serve as a general framework to the report.

The thinking is based on a theoretical model of reference in human and social science concerning how a person functions in a difficult situation. Difficult situations are necessarily social but not experienced in identical fashion by the persons concerned. Even when the latter perceive events as being disruptive and extreme, they develop defensive and offensive reactions, individual or collective strategies which enable them to adapt, to solve problems, to assert their identity or their wants, to reduce their stress.

The purpose of the present report is to examine the psychological effects, negative or positive, of the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in custody, and to open up avenues of reflection to facilitate access to accreditation in prison environments in the various European countries.

Part one will present successively the concepts of social reintegration and the consideration given to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in custody in the various countries partnering the project, and place them within the framework of their evolution over time. We shall thus see what meaning is given to the notion of social reintegration:

- in Portugal, in the light of the evolution of legislation concerning criminality and prevention (cf. new Criminal Code, 1982);
- in Poland, through the activities of reintegration aiming to rehabilitate those in custody and which include therapeutic support, work and learning in prison;
- in France, through the mission of social reintegration, as defined by the Code of Criminal Procedure, and carried out by the Prison Probation and Reintegration Service, a body attached to the Prison Administration. This service draws on measures involving health and social management, work and training.

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in custody will show how it can vary depending on the implementation of the Lifelong Learning process in each of the countries:

- in Portugal, the system of ordinary law instituted in 2000 has been implemented in a network of centres for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences. To date, adaptation for the prison environment remains to be carried out;
- in Poland, accreditation of prior (experiential) learning should find its place in the "Strategy for the Development of Continuing Professional Training" approved by the Polish government for the period 2003-2010;
- Malta is on the road to accreditation. The system being investigated is close, in the conceptual phase, to the French system. Its further development will depend on political will.

Part two will be a report on the exploratory survey, the aim of which was to provide the basis for what could become *action research to be carried out at the European level* combining both the development of the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning for those in custody, and a better understanding, at the psychological and social level, of those in difficulty (the situation of those in custody). The survey dealt with the effect of the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning on the subjective representations of social reintegration, on the level of self-esteem, on the raising of values.

People who live through the same event can give it different meanings and thus react differently. The meaning given can be the direct result of personal history, or the product of values that the person has been able to appropriate for themselves or reconstruct. To give a meaning to life events is also to become aware of a person's potential, but also of their limits. It also means taking into account the help that can be expected from others, groups of which one is a member, as well as social and welfare organisations. This search for meaning is associated with other particularly decisive types of quest in the lifelong development of a person: the search for personal identity (which implies a need for continuity, a minimum of inner coherence and assurance); the search for social recognition (based on the inalienable rights of every person to be considered in all their dignity, their right to employment and to training).

Lastly, and in conclusion, themes for development will be identified.

Part One

INVENTORY

**REINTEGRATION AND ACCREDITATION IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXTS
BELGIUM, FRANCE, MALTA, POLAND, PORTUGAL,**

Chapter 1 – REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY

The exchanges during the various transnational seminars have enabled, within the limits of the present project, a comparison of the systems for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning as well as prison systems in place in the three countries (France, Poland, Portugal) participating in implementation of the project. First of all, an outline of the foundations of justice in Europe needs to be given. There seem to be two main orientations: penalizing the offence and/or penalizing the offender. All prison systems have a mission of service to the community and fulfil two requirements, punitive on the one hand by ensuring that criminal sentences are carried out, and preventive on the other hand by protecting the community. But prevention also means providing the means of ensuring better socio-occupational reintegration. Before presenting the views of the three European partner countries, we will examine the European context based on the recommendations by the Council of Europe concerning European prison rules and on the European Directives for Lifelong Learning.

1. THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

1.1. Recommendations for drawing up a European Prison Act

Through the recommendations of the Council of Europe concerning European prison rules and the proposals for drawing up a European Prison Act, socio-occupational reintegration of inmates is presented as being a real priority of penal policy in the fight against exclusion and repeat offending, to develop adjustment of sentences and alternatives to incarceration and, in this context of deprivation of liberty, to give a different meaning to the prison sentence.

The principal obstacles to instituting a real policy of reintegration after custody are the difficult conditions of detention, the poor development of vocational training, the limited offer of work and poor recognition (poor remuneration, almost non-existent labour and social law) in the prison environment.

1.2. European Directives for Lifelong Learning

In 2001, the paper “Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality,” revealed the importance of the role of education and vocational training for adults, for transition to work but also for social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development. It emphasized initiatives which render education and training systems more equitable. Two recent reports note that education and training of adults play a major role in the fight against social exclusion which prevents people from benefiting from the advantages of society and from exercising their active citizenship (2006).

By taking fully into account existing experiences and in sharing information with partner countries, the present project offers its contribution to the implementation of these recommendations and directives. Before outlining the missions, provisions and actions for reintegration into the community undertaken by the prison administrations in two countries involved in the exploratory survey (Poland and France), the ECIBI, Portuguese partner in charge of conceptualising the project, will examine the concept of reintegration and the evolution of the Criminal Code in that country.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXTS: Portugal, Poland, France

2.1. Portugal

In order to understand the mechanisms which revolve around the process of reintegration into the community, which can include validation of training or the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, one first needs to understand what reintegration of a person judicially sanctioned for breaching the law

means, as well as understanding the circumstances of legal regulation associated with this type of process within the context of each country. We thus need to assume from the outset that the fundamental rights of the human being are one of the basic presuppositions of a state subject to the rule of law, but that this is not always recognized. In antiquity, with rare exceptions, condemned offenders were not imprisoned but subjected to corporal or financial punishment. Only those persons who, for whatever reason, displeased those in power were thrown into prison. Beyond the stage where the application of a sentence was perceived as paying a debt to the state, the expression “social reintegration” obtained legal recognition in the 1980’s in Portugal. It was then understood as being “the resumption of a life model based on the legal right of the delinquent.” Consequently, social reintegration must be perceived as a process involving the triad, State-society-delinquent citizen, with the object of creating conditions enabling the latter to live freely in society without committing any crime and also enabling society to be modified (in the sense of eliminating the criminogenic factors it contains).

2.1.1. The problem of social reintegration and the 1982 Criminal Code

At the end of the 18th century important changes in terms of reintegration of offenders took place in penal systems around the world. The prison system, at that time influenced by humanitarian doctrine, abandoned its purely punitive nature.

Executive order n° 26643 of May 28th 1936, establishing prison reform, although drawn up on the basis of the 1886 Criminal Code, demonstrates the evolution of legislation as far as accomplishment of the prison sentence is concerned.

After the Second World War, the priority of rehabilitation and of treatment became imperative, i.e. the pertinence of “treating” a delinquent by operating a change in his behaviour to avoid possible repeat offending. In the 1960’s, an ideological crisis regarding treatment challenged this priority; the understanding of the criminal phenomenon began to be directed at society and not just at the delinquent alone. The notion of prevention emerged.

With the revolution of April 25th 1974, Portuguese society was subject to structural modifications and enacted a new Prison Reform Law (executive order n° 265/74 dated August 1st 1974) along with a new Criminal Code (September 1982).

The 1982 Criminal Code proclaims respect of delinquents’ dignity by adopting a system which, instead of abstract application of sentencing, looks to individualize prison treatment in accordance with the biopsychological aspects of the individual. Consequently the judicial system only uses imprisonment as a last resort because of the harmful effects of incarceration; awareness of society’s responsibility for crime emerges, the individual is no longer considered as being the one and only guilty party. Thus, the sentence passed needs to be accompanied by adequate psychosocial and legal measures to reduce any possible repeat offending. As the need to go beyond the traditional view of imprisonment is confirmed, and the concept of reintegration emerges, institutional measures bind the authorities to enforce sentences depriving offenders of liberty together with other measures which will promote rehabilitation. Consequently, from the perspective of prevention of crime, prison can be seen as a system which can protect society from delinquent actions and implement conditions aimed at ensuring that preparation for reintegrating the community does take place. However, the principal obstacle to the process of reintegration of the delinquent individual into the community is the view that society has of him and this will influence his possible reintegration. It is therefore necessary to work, in and with society, on the concept of delinquency and of delinquent individuals, i.e. make civil society aware that a delinquent must be treated with respect for his human dignity.

It is within this context of a change in the system that the Institute for Social Reintegration, part of the Ministry of Justice, was created (in 1982). The purpose of this institute is to provide a prison philosophy that is both humanistic and *rehabilitating*; it delivers social services in prison and after incarceration.

2.1.2. Social Reintegration in the light of the New Criminal Code

Human Rights are an affirmation of the basic principles of modern societies and a strengthening of the ethical dimension of the State, which confers upon the judicial system the status of primary guarantor for consolidation of the fundamental values of that society, one of which is that of the dignity of the individual human being.

The pre-1982 Criminal Code, with democratic roots as befits a State subject to the rule of law, was revised by Executive order n° 48/95 dated March 15th. Despite this revision, the essence of the 1982 Criminal code remains approved. Its reformulation was due to the need to readjust to the reality of the criminal phenomenon. Liberty, Human Dignity and Legality are the principles which characterize the Portuguese penal system as defined by the 1982 Criminal Code. This system, based on humanistic values, involves the practice of justice based on individualization of sentencing and on the recognition that a delinquent is able to reintegrate into the community. Thus, according to Pedro Arroja, two opposing schools of thought in criminology need to be taken into account:

- one school of thought sees the delinquent as a product of adverse social conditions, which leads to decriminalisation of certain acts. For this school of thought, prison is a place for rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

- conflicting with this is the other school of thought which considers the delinquent to be a human being like any other, who is fully at liberty to act but who must then assume his responsibilities and the consequences of his actions since he is the principal person responsible for them.

Consequently, the first trend results in a society which creates a tutelage, whereas the second holds the delinquent accountable. For this author, the Criminal code prior to 1982 was influenced by the first trend. But the philosophy of the present Criminal Code has moved away from this trend and has moved, albeit moderately, closer to the opposite school of thought.

The increase in individuality in members of society, just as much as the insecurity experienced by a portion of that same society, produces, in the Criminal Code in force, an increase in sentences for crimes against persons and for crimes committed with violence. This reorganisation of the global system of sentencing, for petty to medium crime, calls upon another type of measure, alternative to the prison sentence, opening up the path to social reintegration and control of major crime. The prison sentence will only be applied as a last resort. The changes in the present Criminal Code have been influenced by the insecurity felt within the community.

In conclusion, and after this analysis of the evolution of legislation relating to crime and its prevention, we can assert that the overriding thrust of the present Criminal code is:

- the protection of society;
- the prevention and suppression of crime ;
- the rehabilitation and reintegration of the delinquent.

However, this implies crime prevention in various guises:

- awareness on the part of those charged with applying the Criminal Code;
- operational readiness and linkage with police forces;
- elimination of criminogenic factors through improvement of economic, social and cultural conditions of society and by the creation of mechanisms which make the integration of social minorities possible.

It is thus not sufficient to reformulate the Criminal Code so that justice is more just. The fight against crime implies not just the participation of the State but also that of the community and of the delinquent.

2.2. Poland

2.2.1. Prison: social exclusion but a mission to resocialize

The Polish prison system is based humanism, individualization of responsibility, personal development, the participation of society in the way sentences are enforced, protection of society and the safety of inmates. All prisons are divided into 4 types of units: one for young offenders under 21 years of age, one for first offenders, one for repeat offenders and a military unit. There are three levels of security: closed prisons, semi-open prisons and open prisons. The main missions of the prison service are:

execution of sentence, reintegration, the respect of elementary rights, the protection of society, the safety of those in custody.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion means a state where it is impossible or difficult for an individual or a group, to have a lawful role in the community, to take advantage of public property and social infrastructures, to acquire property and to earn their living in a reputable manner.

Prisoners are among those threatened with social exclusion, whether they have addictive behaviour (s) or not, and they often come from backgrounds where education is not a priority. A significant number of those in custody are a product of the flow of immigrants from countries of the former Soviet Union and from the Roma community; they often have a poor level of general education and are without any occupational qualifications. Some of them have certain practical skills but do not have any work certificates. Isolation in prison often has serious consequences for the person in custody, with the effect of reducing their chances of reintegration into the community, even resulting in the breakdown of social bonds and/or to changes in their occupational status. Those in custody, deprived of the possibility of exercising their profession or trade, lose their skills and abilities. When they leave prison, and are confronted with the problems of reconstructing social bonds, they also feel stigmatised and rejected by employers who are looking for certification, qualifications and experience. The State tries to reduce exclusion and to promote social reintegration. The mission of reintegration assigned to prison is materialized on a daily basis by reconstructing and maintaining the ability of the excluded person to take part in the life of the local community and to have a socially ascribed role.

Rehabilitation involves renewed socialisation of the adult person

The term rehabilitation takes on a particular significance in the Polish context where it includes all educational and training activities and/or therapies undertaken in prisons to avoid repeat offending.

Here it involves relearning knowledge useful for life in the community, transforming behaviours, transmitting cultural standards and models. In the Polish prison system, the object of a custodial sentence is to transform certain behavioural habits into socially acceptable ones, to become responsible and to abide by the law; here the object of the judicial sentence of imprisonment is to reduce repeat offending. Three types of organization distinguish the Polish custodial system: therapeutic, programmed and communal; only the first two undertake rehabilitation or therapeutic activities. According to Polish law, taking part in a rehabilitation programme in prison is not something which is imposed, with certain exceptions. The process of rehabilitation is therefore a right and not an obligation for the person in custody. So that the best results are obtained, activities are individualized. Actions for reintegration as a means of rehabilitation include maintaining family ties and ties with the outside world, therapeutic support, work and vocational training, as well as social, educational and sports activities.

2.2.2. Actions for reintegration in the rehabilitation programme

Therapeutic support

Therapeutic support involves various programmes, depending on the needs of the prison population. Therapeutic activities (individual or collective) manage those suffering from psychological disorders, addictive and/or violent behaviour and prepare inmates for release from prison. An offender may be authorized by the prison director to take part in therapeutic activities outside prison.

Treatment in prison begins by a diagnosis after which individual treatment is prescribed. Diagnosis consists of detailing the symptoms of the individual's negative behaviour (passive) and positive behaviour (active), causes of delinquency (predispositions, motivation), i.e. the source of the asocial and criminal behaviour, and uncovering the positive abilities upon which the rehabilitation process can be based. This diagnosis is acquired through analysis of personality, interviews and discussions, observations of behaviours, psychological analysis, review of the prison record and contact with the family.

This initial phase will establish the profile of the offender from which the treatment will be determined. Often those in custody, despite a well-defined need for rehabilitation, do not agree to follow the treatment. We can mention various reasons for this refusal: effectiveness of the treatment is questioned, there is doubt as to individual potential, lack of self acceptance or will to change one's life (they do not feel ready to act), pressure from the prison administration is too great.

Work in Prison

An offender is obliged to work (unless recommendations to the contrary) and to undertake maintenance of working areas. A work reference is provided upon release. Work is considered to be a factor for reintegration, however it should be noted that few offenders in custody work, the high rate of unemployment on the outside is felt inside. Currently in Polish prisons, there are approximately 90 000 people in custody of whom approximately 20 000 receive remuneration for their work. A person in custody can be employed under any sort of legal work contract. Work is paid for, with the exception of maintenance/cleaning work under 90 hours a month in prisons or in buildings belonging to the territorial authorities; the same applies to public works in the administrations and, with the agreement of the person in custody, to all charity work. Offenders may work inside or outside the prison, with the exception of those sentenced to life imprisonment who may not leave the prison compound. The application is prepared by an "employment inspector" who analyses supply and demand of manpower on a daily basis and looks for the appropriate profiles according to needs. There is a data base to check qualifications, training and vocational experience; the opinion of the educator is also requested for information relating to behaviour, discipline and the personal characteristics required for the job concerned. For needs involving higher vocational qualifications, the inspector consults a specialist who interviews the candidate and expresses an opinion.

Behaviour at work and proper fulfilment of tasks are observed by state employees and technical management personnel who must inform the prison of any negative behaviour; they can also request relocation of place of work, or a change in type of work, or even job downgrading.

Social and Educational Activities

In prison, these will be provided by associations and institutions, notably religious. Cultural activity is listed in decree 67, article 3 of the Polish Code of Criminal Procedure, as preventing repeat offending and as a factor for social reintegration.

Teaching in Prison

In prisons, the education of both sentenced and accused offenders is ensured to allow them access to basic training and vocational qualifications in secondary schools or in vocational training classes; the teaching of those in custody is carried out in prison schools and training centres.

Teaching in prison falls under the law of September 7th 1991 (Official Gazette of 1996, n° 67, art. 329 and later modifications) in respect of the public school system and concerns the specific nature of learning in conditions of isolation as well as implementation of the mission of custody. Teaching is subject to agreement by the prison establishment, with the exception of minors who receive compulsory education up to the age of 18. In addition, it is important to note that apart from those who have put in a application for schooling, the benefit of teaching can also be granted to all those who need it and on the advice of the prison service. A priority for secondary school education is granted to offenders who have no vocational qualifications or who will no longer be able to carry on their occupation after their release, or who are not yet 21 years of age.

Beyond primary and secondary school education, there are part theory and part practical vocational training courses organized in classes either in the prison compound or outside. If the latter, the prison Director delegates the teaching mission to qualified external participants; he can also sign a contract with specialized external establishments.

In Poland, teaching is carried out in 26 prisons and long-term detention centres. At the beginning of the 2005/2006 school year, a little more than 11% of those in custody (9770 out of 86849) entered the school units functioning in prisons, 187 underwent teaching outside the prison. 329 teachers work in

the prison environment or 200 full-time equivalents; 80% of teachers work part-time. At present, teaching in prisons includes 3 primary schools, 10 middle schools, 27 vocational training schools, 11 schools for training professional technicians, 10 general secondary schools and one pre-graduate school. On average, each year, approximately 4 000 offenders follow school education or vocational training. In 2006, 472 vocational training classes were organized for almost 6 thousand offenders. The offer of vocational training classes meets the needs of the local job market.

2.2.3. *The Prison Commission*

Operation and principal missions

The Prison Commission is an executive body which orients offenders to the appropriate prison, defines type of custody, selects individual reintegration programmes (teaching, vocational training, work, treatment, etc.), checks that they are being carried out, assesses the offender's progress and expresses an opinion as to authorization for temporary exit from the prison. This commission operates in every prison and is appointed by the director. It consists of at least three members, all state employees: one from the prison sector, one from the prison population registry office and one from the security section. Depending on the offender record dealt with, the commission can invite advisors, specialists in various fields such as representatives of employer groups, delegates from associations, foundations or denominational organizations. The proceedings are conducted by the prison Director or his representative.

Selection of offenders for individual reintegration programmes:

For *basic schooling activities*, the decision of the commission will be based on:

- level already acquired and level required to begin training at a school or a vocational training centre;
- motivation and predispositions for the studies chosen;
- recommendations contained in the individual education programme;
- recommendations emerging from the psychological analysis (if carried out);
- general state of health (examinations carried out by the prison doctor);
- time to conditional release or end of sentence;
- vocational skills already acquired;
- the need to ensure order and security in the prison.

Offenders are oriented towards schooling activities if the time remaining before release is not shorter than the duration of the school programme (with the exception of those for whom training is an obligation). Agreement is given for all types of education if the time to release (conditional or final) is equal to or greater than 6 months, if the learning programme will permit the offender to go back to school, or if they are really motivated to continue their education after release from prison.

After a favourable decision from the prison commission, the offender is transferred to the prison which offers the type of schooling chosen. Offenders can also attend schools outside the prison, if they met the general conditions for the teaching programme and are not a threat to public order.

For the *vocational training programmes*, the prison commission will give priority to adults (over 21) who are unemployed, or who apply for additional qualifications, and for whom the time to release is greater than the duration of the training programme. The criteria of choice for these classes are the same as for the schools.

For *prison work*, the decision will be taken by the prison Director after consulting the head of the prison section (for educational reasons), the head of the prison population registry office (for formal and legal reasons) and of the security section (for reasons of order and security). This decision is announced by the Director during the adjudicative hearing, after hearing the person in custody. The ability of the offender is checked by the doctor who will suggest (where this is possible) the type, conditions and work times possible. Classification to prison work will depend on the initial occupation of the offender, his training, his interests and personal needs. In addition, criteria of age, gender, sentence remaining can also contribute to decision making, as can security and maintaining public order. Work is granted as a priority to those who have to pay alimony or maintenance support and to those whose financial status, personal or family situation is particularly difficult.

Assessment of the individual reintegration programme: the offender's progress

Here rating is involved, so the offender's attitude, relationship to work, compliance with discipline, regular attendance, punctuality, precision, commitment and meeting payment of alimony or maintenance are all assessment criteria in the process of offender rehabilitation. The commission will also take into account: relationship to the crime committed, regard for order and discipline, maintaining family ties, conduct towards other inmates and warders, and behaviour during reintegration activities. Periodically, a score is proposed by the educator on the basis of information collected from the various professional actors involved in the rehabilitation process and from interviews with the offender himself. This proposal of a score, based on the various data, is presented to the prison commission for acceptance. This rating system takes place bi-annually. The commission announces its decisions and expresses its opinion after having heard the offender in the presence of the referring educator.

It should be remembered that successful rehabilitation is not only "correction of deficiencies" but above all a search for and development of abilities, talents and creative possibilities.

2.3. France

2.3.1. Prison and its mission of social reintegration

From a place of containment, prison has become a sentence in itself. With the Declaration of Human Rights (1789), corporal punishment was abolished and the Criminal Code placed confinement at the centre of the judicial system (1791); prison is a place of punishment and of reform of the convicted offender through work and education. In 1911, the Prison Administration became part of the Ministry of Justice. The missions of the public Prison Service were stipulated in Article 1 of the law dated June 22nd 1987. It assumes two missions: it takes part in the enforcement of court rulings and convictions and in maintaining public security, and it facilitates the social reintegration of those whom the judicial authorities have entrusted to it. Since 1999, the mission of social reintegration has been carried out by the Prison Probation and Reintegration Service; this service, which falls within the jurisdiction of the Département (a French administrative subdivision), is directly attached to the Prison Administration. In open custody, the Prison Probation and Reintegration Service intervenes in each jurisdiction in liaison with the judge responsible for executing sentences and all the magistrates. In secure custody, the PPRS intervenes in each prison institution, liaising with the prison Director and the judge responsible for executing sentences. Its missions are defined by the Code of Criminal Procedure. Through individual follow-up and through group activities, it acts to facilitate reintegration, to ensure compliance with judicial measures and that they are followed up, to report on the progress of the judicial measures, assist judicial decision-making, propose adjustments to sentences, prevent the dissocialising effects of incarceration, maintain family and social ties, prepare for release and reintegration into the community. The mission of reintegration is based on the provisions regarding preparation for release, health, social and educational activities, work, teaching and vocational training.

2.3.2. Provisions regarding social reintegration

Preparation for release is based on mobilizing partnerships so as to propose to the offender registration in the provisions of ordinary law relating to return to employment, access to training, to social rights, health and welfare coverage, and to accommodation.

Health is taken into account in the mission of reintegration through actions undertaken in particular within the framework of preparation for release and adjustment of sentences, health education with partners both internal and external to the institution, prevention of addictions. We will enlarge on the subject of *health management of offenders* so as to be able to make comparisons with the Polish system which includes the therapeutic dimension in its rehabilitation programmes. In France, the health of offenders no longer falls under the Code of Criminal Procedure but under the Code of Social

Security and Public Health (law dated January 18th 1994). It is clear that the health of those placed in custody is in general deteriorated when compared with that of the general population of comparable age. The prison population continues to accumulate risk factors. It is therefore a question of managing treatment for offenders who present recognized psychiatric disorders, addictive behaviours, severe disorders, following-up those imprisoned for sexual offences, as well as developing preventive actions for attempted suicide or AIDS, offering diversified health care, ensuring distribution of medication, etc. Possible treatment strategies are consultation activities, with individual treatment or collective management (therapeutic workshops, group therapy, etc.).

Work, which since 1987 has been promoted as a guarantee of reintegration into the community, can be carried out either in the general servicing of the institution (kitchens, cleaning, etc.), or in production units (public or private). The offender does not have the legal status of a salaried person. Given the constraints on the prison environment (security requirements, configuration of premises, etc.), a small number of jobs are available. At the national level, the rate of paid activity in 2006 was 39.23%.

Social and educational activities in prison are part of the mission of reintegration and a recognition of the right of offenders to have access to the provisions of ordinary law. It is a question of promoting reintegration, developing means of expression and the knowledge and skills of those in custody, of making available quality cultural performances/activities in keeping with external cultural offers and events. Cultural activities for those in custody, is one of the lines of intervention within the more global framework of the course of execution of sentence and reintegration. Since 2002, activities are stipulated in the Code of Criminal Procedure; these include workshops for writing, comic strips, music, the plastic arts, dance, video programming, organization of music concerts and so forth.

Vocational training is carried out by the Ministry of Work and the GRETA network (groups of vocational training establishments – Ministry of Education). It is mainly service sector and building sector-oriented and often takes the form of training modules (25% of offenders take vocational training classes).

2.3.3. *Teaching: an essential tool for reintegration*

Teaching in France is undertaken in all prison institutions. Access to education is a fundamental right (see Articles D450 to D456 of Code of Criminal Procedure). It is carried out by the Ministry of Education in prison institutions and complemented by activities supervised by voluntary associations and correspondence courses. Independently from minors, for whom education is obligatory up to the age of 16 (and recommended up to the age of 18), teaching in prison is defined as being adult education.

A population in difficulty

The academic level of the majority of offenders does not exceed that of primary school. Systematic identification of those who are illiterate, initiated in 1995, shows that one third of the population in custody is in great difficulty. For this population, mastery of the basic skills (written and oral language, arithmetic, etc.) is essential, and these skills can be validated by a general education certificate; others have no diplomas or basic vocational training qualifications (vocational training certificate (CAP), vocational studies diploma (BEP)).

Additional objectives

The object of teaching is to provide offenders with the necessary skills to facilitate their socio-occupational reintegration. Teaching in prison is based on the same requirements and has the same references as in the outside environment. Teaching thus has three main objectives: *an educational objective* of providing support to the person: by ensuring access to the world of written documents, by proposing intellectual activities, by introducing social and cultural exchanges; *an objective of validating training and skills* by aiming at the acquisition of new skills and abilities, by enrolment in

the vocational training system, and *an objective of opening up* to different ways of accessing knowledge by diversifying teaching strategies (workshops for writing, theatre, supported by cultural events, the use of computer-assisted learning, road code module, etc.).

Adapting content and strategy

For a great number of those in custody, "school" represents a feeling of failure, so methods which are particularly pertinent to adults in difficulty need to be found. The answers are to be found in implementing individualized training courses (which enable the person's previous acquisitions and experiences to be taken into account, to prove that they "know things," to convince them that they can still learn, and to respond with teaching activities based on motivation and ability), in sequences based on collaborative learning (i.e. on the quality of interpersonal relationships, facilitating the acquisition of communication skills, the search for information through discussion and reformulation of ideas), or on activity learning, or experiential learning (Methods Dewey, Freinet), in being in a situation of self-assessment (which enables the person to situate themselves, to measure what they have learned and assess the margin of progress), and so forth.

A Balanced Organization

First of all, at the national level, a civil servant from the Ministry of Education is detached to the Prison Directorate to jointly define teaching policy. Then, in each prison region there is a Regional Teaching Unit placed under the supervision of the Chief Education Officer; a Principal from the Ministry of Education coordinates the teaching activities in relation to the reintegration policies of the Regional Prison Directorate. Finally, at local level, in each prison there is a Local Teaching Unit run by a Local Education Supervisor. 425 teachers from the Ministry of Education are involved in full-time teaching in prisons. At the national level, 24% of the prison population takes part in schooling activities.

2.3.4. The Local Offender Reintegration Committee

The principal mission: to follow-up those in custody

The main objective is to review the course of the execution of sentence for each offender, the applications from offenders (regarding classification, affectation, etc.), their difficulties, the problems they may pose: *"It means envisaging a strategy as to how their sentence should develop, taking into account the applications made by the offender. It is a question of giving more meaning to the custodial sentence by implicating the person in custody more in how their sentence is going to develop for the duration of their incarceration. It means defining strategies for management and observation enabling better knowledge of the offender and, from this, providing improved effectiveness of activities with a view to his reintegration into the community. The prison Probation and Reintegration Service needs to play a leading role here"*. (Circular dated November 21st 2000).

Operation

The Prison Administration Directorate recommends the implementation, in all prison institutions of a Local Offender Reintegration Committee, which has three essential missions: regulation, decision and communication. Chaired by the prison Director, it meets on a regular basis (in many prisons the frequency is weekly). It comprises various actors from the services operating inside the prison, which is an ex officio member. In addition to the prison Director or his representative, responsible for running the committee, it consists of reintegration and probation experts/consultants, a custodial officers' representative (e.g., head custody officer), the Local Education Supervisor, the Local Training and Work Supervisor, health executives representing the medical services and the medico-psychological unit, along with any expert/consultant whom the prison Director or the Director of the Probation and Reintegration Service believes might be useful.

How it works First of all, the management of those presenting a risk of suicidal behaviour is examined and preventive action such as placing under special supervision, maintaining this supervision or, the reverse, reduction of supervision, is instituted.

Then, come the applications from offenders concerning allocation to the prison workshops, to general duties, to vocational training and to learning. Opinions are given according to behaviour in custody and to the sentence remaining. Then come the applications for downgrading. Generally these are formulated by the heads of the various services, for reasons of absenteeism, lack of motivation and assiduity, frequently being late or behaviour incompatible with the activity. More rarely, offenders make the application themselves. This committee also examines proposals for the transfer of offenders; these are given taking into consideration the criminal and the family status of the offender, but also contingent upon his possible medical and psychological follow-up and potential commitment to a training project. The offender may also apply to remain in place, stating the reasons for the application.

2.3.5. *The Poverty Committee* (meets monthly, completes the Local Offender Reintegration Committee)

In addition to the professional actors mentioned above, several representatives from charitable organizations, such as the *Secours Populaire*, Red Cross or *Secours Catholique* take part in this Committee. It examines applications for financial assistance from offenders considered to be destitute. The first criteria for allotment is the notion of disposable income under € 15 euros (for the two months preceding the meeting of the committee), the second considers the applications made and/or whether the person has been involved in the various activities proposed by the institution. Lastly, the third looks at the time in custody remaining. Should the person leave in the week following the meeting, they will receive not the € 15, but food vouchers and passes for public transport instead.

These bodies appear as a real and necessary “talking space,” vital to be able to take a step back from daily prison life and to reflect in collegial mode. It means that decisions best adapted to the person in custody will be made.

Chapter 2 – ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING IN PRISON

While accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is a major challenge for lifelong learning at the European level, where countries are often still at the stage of making an inventory of the systems in place, talking about accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison institutions is a minor debate for most of the member states. However, accreditation of prior (experiential) learning has proved to be a tool for the social and professional reintegration of those in custody which is particularly well adapted to this closed environment. So as not to focus on the specifically French experience, while giving ourselves a means of looking at the wider European reality, accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in this context will focus more on the experience acquired by the person in custody rather than on an official document which can (or might) acknowledge it. We shall thus meet contrasting situations from more or less successful projects up and running (France and Portugal), to projects in the more or less distant future (Poland and Malta).

1. MORE OR LESS SUCCESSFUL REALITIES IN THE FIELD

1.1. France – Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning: a recognized experience

1.1.1. Inventory

The founding texts which assert the formative value of experience

From 1934 (access to the state diploma of graduate engineer) to 2002 (accreditation of all or part of a diploma with a professional purpose), the notion of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning has evolved, widening the circle of activities and of the persons involved with each new piece of legislation. Each piece of legislation asserts, progressively, the formative value of the professional and social experience of an individual. By putting into perspective the various pieces of legislation a complementarity appears, or even a cumulative effect for a person looking for recognition of their experience or for a society wanting to increase the qualifications of its population. Diplomas³ and profession-based qualifications⁴ and also, certificates of professional qualification⁵ then become accessible through experience (and not just through initial or continuing education), by methods other than examination. ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING is a truly progressive reform in the French system for adult education. This means that informal learning, acquired through prior experience, is placed side by side with academic learning in a system of formal education.

One of the objectives of learning in prison: accreditation of prior (experiential) learning

In the prison environment, there are firstly the traditional accreditations by the Ministry of Education from the General Education Certificate to the Bachelors degree (3 years of study after the *Baccalauréat* exam), then other forms of accreditation such as the Computer and Internet Diploma (B2i), the European computer skills passport (PCIE), the school certificate of road safety, the road code, the record book certifying general training, and lastly accreditation of prior (experiential) learning. For B. Lietard (1992), the architect of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in France, "*accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is particularly pertinent for those weakened by the*

³ The diploma is a written document generally awarded by an official body, conferring or attesting a right (licence, bull), a title or qualification (noble, professional), a grade (teaching): the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry for Youth and Sports, all deliver diplomas.

⁴ A professional qualification is a professional certification delivered, in the name of the State, by the Ministry of Employment. This certificate attests that the holder has mastered the skills, aptitudes and knowledge enabling him to practice qualified professional activities.

⁵ Created and issued by professional branches, certificates of professional qualification enable salaried persons to acquire an operational qualification recognized by the collective labour agreement or branch agreement to which they belong. For the record, a professional branch includes firms in a given sector of activity which come under an agreement or a collective labour agreement.

failures of the educational system” and is an indication of the evolution of the values of our society; for G. Berger (in Lietard,1993), it is a principle of social justice.

1.1.2. Implementation

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, an innovative system for those in an already difficult situation...

Those in custody are in most cases already in great difficulty and in the majority have no diplomas. However, these are people who may have a certain professional experience. The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning enables this experience to be taken into consideration; it reverses the classic method of teaching by going from experience to appropriation of knowledge. Whereas those in custody often hold their former path in low esteem, as if the offence and imprisonment revoked everything, the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning gives value to the professional itinerary, sends back a positive image of self and gives confidence to tackle new stages, new learning. This pragmatic approach, linked to participative teaching, brings to light real difficulties, requests for knowledge; for this population it is a means of “going back to school” in a positive manner. In addition, this approach, which includes the possibility of accrediting all or part of prison work, enables meaning to be given to the prison itinerary and can be considered, in reference to Howard S. Becker (1985), as “a stage in the prison career” a stage towards reintegration, if not decisive than at least giving structure.

but which requires multi-partner support

Beyond the implementation agreement signed between the Ministries of Justice and of Education, it is support, encouragement and a partnership in the field which the person in custody needs. The category of professional players who may be involved in various capacities is very wide, and they belong as much to the various departments in the Ministry of Justice as to those in the Ministry of Education. Whereas a social worker can, during an interview, enable initial identification of someone who has at least three years professional experience, in an adjusted itinerary a judge responsible for executing sentences can decide to allow the person in custody to continue the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning outside. And whereas a vocational training and work supervisor can intervene in favour of someone wanting to have their work in prison validated, supervisory personnel encourage the process and teachers underpin the learning required.

The system of ordinary law permits an accompaniment in the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, “*a phase of advising the individual in drawing up the accreditation project and of analysing his professional activity.*” (*memorandum n°94-201*). This stage, optional and paying for the regular public is, for those in custody, a necessity and financed from 2003 to 2006 by the European Social Fund. This accompaniment is like a backing, a catalyst enabling adults in difficulty to return to a process of training and therefore reintegration.

...with a predominant role played by the Local Teaching Unit

The work of accompaniment analyses the professional experience so as to translate it into skills and knowledge as defined by the set professional activities for the diploma sought. A detailed description, a precise analysis, a necessary crossing over into writing are all difficulties that require support. The Local Teaching Unit is therefore an essential relay in the accreditation system. Particularly since drawing up the descriptive and analytical dossier of professional practice, which is a requirement of the process, calls upon written and oral communication skills, an understanding of what is real, the ability to reason, verbalize, formulate, analyze, as well as detachment. Self-assessment of vocational activities enables the person to know where they stand, to measure their achievements and see the progress they need to make in view of their expectations, and this is a spur to learning.

1.1.3. Advantages and difficulties of the process

Advantages of the process for those in custody

Live life on the "inside" better: this process enables the acquisition of diplomas which, in prison, are not open through the classic route, notably because of the periods of mandatory work placement periods.

It has a ripple effect: application by other offenders for information on the process and more generally applications concerning teaching, work, vocational training, social and educational activities, etc.

It can also give rise to personal initiatives from within, through new relationships with teachers, social workers or even with supervisory personnel and management staff.

Encourages a bridge between "inside" and "outside": through close work with the judges responsible for the execution of sentences, to the follow-up with the local vocational guidance committees, this approach can result in adjustments of sentence such as, for example, occasional authorization of day-release to meet an external accreditation consultant and thus fall under the system of ordinary law.

In addition, this process can also encourage maintenance of family ties, or even their restoration. Because the procedure requires proof of three years vocational experience, and these documents are rarely in the possession of the candidate, the family must often be asked to find, on the outside, all the necessary documents such as pay slips, work certificates, etc.

Envisaging being "outside": The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning allows the person to project themselves into the future and the post-prison period which can help restore self-confidence (by others, for others, by oneself, for oneself).

Lastly, it is important to note that, for some, professional reintegration was facilitated by the acquisition of a diploma through accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison.

Difficulties of the process for those in custody

The difficulties can be *exogenic*, amongst which are the difficult conditions of detention, not really conducive to putting together an accreditation record book, as well as the obstacle of the proof to be collected.

But they can also be termed *endogenic*, such as memory problems which are psychological in nature, or due to medication, and which hinder the work of contact required to produce the accreditation record book, denial of the experience, poor mastery of written language and yet which is one of the skills certified by all Ministry of Education diplomas (including level V); the process demands a lot of time, just as much time as initial schooling, which can discourage those in custody who have difficulty in mastering the relationship to time.

Advantages of the process for the various actors involved in the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning system

This process, which is innovative in method and in its need for partnership, enables the creation of relations between services which until then were sparse or non-existent, multidisciplinary team work meaning being able to take a step back from usual practice and to benefit from different methods of work, the federation of actors other than teaching personnel around a learning and reintegration project.

Difficulties of the process for the various actors involved in the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning system

According to the actors, the difficulties met with relate either to the context, or to the public, or indeed to the process itself. For some (external to the prison), it means familiarizing oneself with a closed and unusual environment, which has its own rules, its own habits and customs, and to understand a population in difficulty. For others, it may be necessary to get to grips with the principles of the accreditation process, to understand the methods, or to master the tools, depending on the degree of involvement.

1.2. Portugal - accreditation of prior (experiential) learning: at the preliminary stage

1.2.1. Inventory

The system applied in the New Opportunities Centres is based on the model adopted by the ordinary law system which is destined for "adults aged over 18 years of age who have not finished primary or secondary school but who have acquired knowledge or skills through experience in various contexts which can be formalized by scholastic certification." It is based on the Key Skills list. This list is a document which records the competences required by the 1st, 2nd or 3rd compulsory education cycles. It is used to assess the skills acquired by adults in various life contexts. The list of Key Skills is one of the tools in the adult education system.

1.2.2. Implementation by the New Opportunities Centres

The ordinary law system is applied in a network of centres for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) implemented since 2000. The procedure includes an exam carried out by an external panel of examiners with, if necessary, additional training.

The procedure is organized in two stages: Recognition and Accreditation. Recognition of competences consists in a presentation by the candidate, followed and assisted by specialised professionals, of his life experience. These professionals help in collecting proof and in demonstrating skills. It is with the assistance of a set of tools that all the competences mentioned in the list of Key Skills for the certification desired are identified and recognized. The competences identified and recognized during process are then validated in a session by a panel of examiners which will include the person from the Recognition and Validation of Competences centre who has followed the adult as well as instructors in the four key skills.

If the candidate gains validation in the four domains, he will receive a certificate corresponding to the 1st, 2nd or 3rd compulsory education cycle. The certification obtained can also be equivalent to secondary school education. It can be used for all lawful purposes.

1.2.3. The Prospects in Prison Environments

Currently, this same process aimed at developing certification of skills for prison inmates is coming to the fore in prisons in Portugal, but the system for certifying skills is still only at the preliminary stage. We need to outline the historical and structural aspects of the Portuguese prison system to offer a better understanding of the prospects for evolution and reform where accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can be slotted into the present education and vocational training systems. The Portuguese prison system has undergone a number of reforms:

- Legislation regarding the Kingdom's Civil Prisons on the Continent and in Adjacent Islands (1901) sets out the functions, responsibilities and duties of prison personnel, prescribes work for those in custody, determines the method of implementing education (the main aim being the intellectual and moral improvement of those in custody) and defines the reintegration of the offender into the community after his release;
- The Prison Organisation Reform (1936) created two types of prison institutions, those for execution of sentence and those for high security offenders;
- The 1979 Reform introduced aspects promoted by the United Nations and the Council of Europe, which provides for a system of individualized planning of measures for social reintegration. In addition, this reform noted the need to adapt the execution of the prison sentence to the specific needs of socialization of the person concerned. It also comprises a prescriptive component which permits flexibility in the course of execution of prison sentences and security measures.

2. PROJECTS IN THE MORE OR LESS DISTANT FUTURE

2.1. Malta - accreditation of prior (experiential) learning: in search of political will

2.1.1. Inventory

There is no accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison de Malta. In fact, validation of experiential learning has not been formalized in Malta at all. Maltese society is still firmly attached to formal qualifications obtained through teaching institutions, be they academic or vocational. To break

this "tradition" will be quite a challenge. In fact, the first ray of hope emerged at the University of Malta, a few years ago when this institution introduced a new rule enabling admission of mature students into classes opening onto university degrees, diplomas and certificates. Individuals over the age of 23 could apply to the university to present their school or college certificates. Although this did not exactly correspond to the requirements prescribed for certain specific classes, the candidate was always admitted for the reason that, at their age, they had acquired a good degree of life experience and probably professional experience which would facilitate their studies. Based on this new rule, offenders were admitted to the university at the same time as they carried out their sentence. This new scheme was very satisfying and those in custody succeeded quite well in their studies while at the same time showing good behaviour on campus.

2.1.2. Role and Mission of the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC)

In Malta, Legal Note 347 established the MQC in October 2005. The MQC is the Maltese organisation responsible for the "the development, assessment, certification and accreditation of qualifications other than those in compulsory education and degrees." The MQC and the Members of the Council have been answerable to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment since December 2005.

The specific role of the MQC is:

- to establish and maintain a qualifications framework for the development, accreditation and award of professional and vocational qualifications, other than degrees, based on standards of knowledge, skills, competence and attitudes to be acquired by learners;
- to promote and facilitate lifelong learning access transfer and progression;
- to foster the recognition abroad of professional and vocational certificates awarded in Malta;
- to promote and maintain the National Qualifications Framework and establish the policies and criteria on which the framework will be based;
- to approve and ensure the publication of national standards of knowledge, skills, competence and attitudes for each development sector;
- to endorse and ensure the publication of the procedures to be implemented by the training agencies offering programmes of education and training for access, transfer and progression ;
- to ensure that such standards and procedures are implemented;
- to endorse vocational education and training programmes delivered by training agencies;
- to endorse certificates awarded by training agencies;
- to keep and issue official records of certificates awarded.

Working in partnership with people from the academic world, that of commerce and industry, and government, the MQC aims to develop qualifications and support measures of a quality appropriate to the personal and professional development of the individual, to the labour market and to the economic growth of the country. The MQC also ensures that qualifications are as flexible as possible, that they are referenced within the National Qualifications Framework, and that they are in keeping with the context of public and private vocational education and training in work places and in training centres.

The MQC proposes expertise in the following fields:

- institutional development of qualifications,
- restructuring of qualification systems, assessment and examinations,
- the registration of qualifications within the national framework,
- drawing up standards for activities related to qualifications,
- drawing up new models and structures for courses,
- the development of methods of assessment and of new teaching methodologies,
- the ability to contextualize questions concerning qualifications and support measures for quality,
- regular development,
- strategic planning and development,
- writing modules,
- the development and management of examinations.

2.1.3. *On the road to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning*

From what has been mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that Malta is on the road to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, with a system fairly similar to that of France. Although there is no precise indication as to the timetable, we believe that it won't be long.

Taking part in this project enabled the ideas and principles of the system of skills validation to be circulated in Malta at the end of 2006; the reception that it received from the local actors (stakeholders) was very encouraging, all the more so since the MQC's work programme stipulates its intention to hold a forum with representatives from youth and voluntary organizations as well as NGO's to :

- set up a structured dialogue with these representatives concerning questions related to non-formal and informal learning,
- hold regular meetings with these organisations,
- have the accreditation of non-formal and informal learning recognized by industry and employers,
- increase the demand for certification for non-formal and informal learning,
- institute a seminar for national consultation.

The programme also provides for the establishment of a framework for accreditation of informal and non-formal learning which will lead to:

- a policy establishing the framework for assessment and accreditation of informal and non-formal learning,
- publication of a list of certified institutions, organisations and activities,
- integration of informal and non-formal learning into the formal systems of education and training,
- *in situ* monitoring, assessment and development.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training has recommended that a process for skills validation and accreditation of prior (experiential) learning be developed in all member countries of the European Union. This centre works closely with the European Commission, governments, employer and union representatives, researchers, educators and practitioners. It has contributed to the design and implementation of a European framework for certifications. One of its goals is to see a harmonization across Europe of the processes which validate skills and prior non-formal and informal experiential learning.

2.1.4. *Hope for implementation in prison*

As far as the Republic of Malta is concerned, slightly more political will is required for the mechanism of skills validation and accreditation of prior (experiential) learning to be instituted and rapidly become a reality; at that point the task will be to ensure that, when the process is finally implemented, those in custody have immediate access.

2.2. Poland – Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning: an idea looking for expression

2.2.1. *Inventory*

The Polish prison population is very large (approximately 90 000) and diverse. Those in custody have had various experiences in their private and professional lives, have acquired social skills, have knowledge, recognize certain values.

In most cases their level of education is very low. Even though Poland does not have the phenomenon of illiteracy present in the prisons of western Europe, we can surely speak of functional illiteracy, i.e. lack of understanding of texts read; this is a factor which makes training more difficult.

It should be emphasized that those in custody have often experienced academic failure at school, poor results, which means that it is difficult to rally them round. Most of them are at the level of primary education or training, sometimes thanks to their period in prison.

Many of them have very little professional experience. Some have never been in contact with the labour market (despite their age), or have had very long periods of absenteeism in their working lives.

For those in custody, the problem most often met with it that of a lack of social skills such as management of time, self presentation, the ability to discuss and argument calmly; in addition, they often have addictive behaviour, do not know how to resolve personal or professional problems, nor to master their negative emotions or their aggressiveness. However, these abilities are decisive in job

hunting and as important as the contents of the CV. This population, which has difficulty as to where they stand in the job market, is then reduced to minimum income status. Through the repeated effect, these characteristics, which are often the reason they are detained in prison, weigh on their existence in the community. According to statistics, approximately 80-90% of repeat offenders committed their offence when they were under the influence of alcohol.

Prison activity is oriented towards fulfilling the need to reintegrate offenders.

2.2.2. Bad experiences...

During incarceration, those in custody undergo many experiences, some good, some bad, the latter resulting from total isolation in prison. Offenders suffer from the syndrome of “learned helplessness.” (Clemmer, 1940) A prolonged stay in custody introduces doubt, uncertainty; those in custody become incapable of making any decisions, whether they are important, such as the choice of occupation or accommodation, or very ordinary, such as what time to have lunch. Because of the “learned helplessness” offenders no longer take any initiatives because they are afraid of the consequences, are often distressed by space, noise, a crowd. When employed they only obey orders, whereas showing initiative and being able to work unsupervised are appreciated. Prison kills initiative, creativity, the ability to conduct one’s own life and even the idea of responsibility. That is why a return to normal life is so difficult; it requires encouragement, support and a concerted effort from society “outside” in order to help offenders reintegrate the community.

2.2.3. but also some good ones

Positive experiences which contribute to personal development can be gained from learning, from work, from cultural and sports activities and from taking part in reintegration and therapy programmes. Given the context of the present project, we will only deal with experiences gained in the process of learning and work.

According to statistics, most of those in custody begin courses in prison because they want to learn. Of their own initiative, they want to construct a future for themselves, develop intellectually; they intend to work and hope for a better life after they have been released. Some are motivated by practical reasons: the possibility of having an occupation and job outside the prison walls. Others, a minority, do it to be able to take advantage of the privileges guaranteed to those in custody who take part in educational programmes.

The main aim for those in custody taking part in educational courses is to complete their training and prepare themselves for working life. Restoring the self-esteem of participants is facilitated by following courses and gaining diplomas and/or by entering an occupation; these activities and successes teach offenders to calm down, to work on themselves, to acquire some discipline, to accomplish various functions. Thanks to education, they are able to define objectives accepted by society and to appreciate their value.

To complete a level of study means obtaining a diploma or a certificate related to the type of course followed; none of these makes any mention of prison. These documents are proof of the person’s ability while at the same time they open up new possibilities for when that person is released.

The only condition for taking and for completing an educational course at primary level, middle school level, general secondary school level or, a vocational training course is to obtain a pass mark in the subjects taught; the decision to move up to the next level is taken by all of the teachers/instructors at the prison school. The condition for being able to sit the exam for the course organized by the prison is presence at theory and practical classes. The panel of examiners, convened by the prison institution organizing the course, is made up of examiners in the various specialist subjects. The exam consists of both theory (oral and/or written) and practice (e.g. for cooks, this can be the preparation of a dish). Pass marks must be obtained in both parts of the exam to obtain a vocational certificate.

Positive experiences also come from work, a predominant factor in the process of reintegration. It causes positive change in offenders, creates a need for an occupation, encourages acquisition of expertise and enables one to earn one’s living. For some people, work improves precision, regularity and respect for others; it can make them believe that it is work rather than delinquency which should be their choice in life.

Acquiring positive experiences, learning attitudes that are acceptable to society, and having them validated, are the best results of reintegration work carried out in prisons.

2.2.4. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and a coherent strategy for the LifeLong Learning (LLL) programme

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning

In the Polish school system, there is no procedure for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning except, and to a lesser extent, in certain sectors such as medical occupations. However, some elements of the accreditation procedure (access to certain types of training in relation to the experience acquired, vocational skills acquired taken into account for employment, etc.) are implemented by the Prison committee to draw up individualized programmes for reintegration.

The experience acquired by the Polish partners, thanks to their participation in the project, is positive and permits some optimism as to the use of accreditation as a tool for reintegration. For many of those in custody, this could be the chance to improve their integration into the job market. Amongst them, first of all, those whose level of qualification is very low, then those for whom release is too close to be able to follow a vocational training course, those who refuse to go to a prison a long way away to carry out training because they want to maintain family ties, those who, when they were on the outside, practised professions which do not exist in the range offered by the prison. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning would also be a chance for those sentenced to very long incarceration who are not be able to practice certain collective activities for security reasons.

In theory, the application of accreditation procedures within the prison framework in Poland is possible if the legal problems related to a change in legislation can be resolved and if the organisational difficulties related to the accompaniment of those in custody can be overcome and competent instructors can be trained.

A coherent strategy for the Lifelong Learning programme

It should be mentioned here that the Polish state needs to make the validation of formal education, informal and non-formal learning coherent. The “*Strategy for the Development of Continuous Training*” up to 2010, approved by the Polish government in 2003, includes amongst other questions that of the coherence of its formal and informal systems. This document shows that the main obstacle to the creation of a Lifelong Learning (LLL) strategy, complex but consistent, is the dominance of the formal system, reinforced by practices in force long before the political transformations.

From a legal point of view, in the implementation by the administration, in the activities of institutions, and management/labour associations, the idea of LLL is often reduced to formal education for adults. One of the effects of this dominance is the delay in recognition of skills acquired outside formal education, despite the introduction of other elements of the LLL strategy.

Another obstacle to the creation of a coherent LLL strategy is a lack of centralized bodies which could prepare and update teaching programmes, define professional profiles for graduates/diploma holders from various types of schools, and of institutions for coordinating activities related to that definition.

As partner in the project, we need to recognize that accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is an innovative tool for Polish prisons, offering better social and professional reintegration of those in custody. This could also be a valuable means for overcoming and preventing all forms of discrimination and inequality with regard to access to education, training and employment.

3. THE PRISON EXPERIENCE AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING (De Maeyer, 2007)

The title is deliberately provocative.

And yet it is not absurd to ask oneself how and under what conditions a prison offender might reappropriate his skills, abilities, aptitudes and experience in order to envisage a new period in his life, and how the prison experience might be integrated into this process. In other words, how recognition of prior (experiential) learning and, under certain conditions, its accreditation, can take the prison experience into account, prison being an institution for punishment but also for reintegration.

Acknowledgement of the prison experience in the journey that is life is necessary to clarify reality and the prospects that might be open to an offender when he leaves prison.

The question is, what aspects of incarceration should be recognized as being positive for the future? What does the prison experience have to offer, and what role can education play? To ask the question is already to offer a partial answer.

Is education in prison the Sisyphean myth of the twenty-first century?

3.1. Recognition, accreditation and failure

To speak of recognition and accreditation of prior experiences and learning with regard to offenders is to integrate prison into part of the life experience and to take the social context into account.

Many offenders are in prison because the traditional mechanisms of integration and education have failed them, for one reason or another.

The home surroundings, school, the social environment did not fulfil their respective roles. This is just an acknowledgement of the failure, not an accusation against any of them.

It would be a mistake to believe, or to have others believe, that education in prison can succeed where traditional mechanisms of education, for a longer period and with specialised personnel, with more means, in a more favourable context, were not able to. We cannot ask education in prison to succeed where everyone else has failed.

So, how do we integrate yet another failure that is prison in the acknowledgement/accreditation of prior (experiential) learning? Life in prison is not a run-of-the-mill experience.

Time in prison sometimes reinforces social identity. In certain cases, some gang leaders might brag about their time in prison: a sort of recognition of their criminal reputation which means necessarily jumping through certain hoops. But in the great Monopoly game of life, one can observe that some, not too dangerous, offenders get caught up, gaining in prison a reputation that they did not have outside, including in the reference groups they identify with.

So why, at the height of failure, have regard for one's journey? Why have regard for what is felt to be a failure, what has been called a "failure" by others? Why have regard for events which do not seem to be related, and the sequence of which seems to belong more to chance than to necessity?

3.2. Recognition (of acquired knowledge and experiences) as part of the educational process

3.2.1. *Lifelong learning means leaving the provisional status of offender and entering into a longer-term perspective where social judgement will not be added to the prison sentence.*

The individual must be the central focus of the educational process.

He is uppermost in the process. This might seem obvious but errors can occur, the most dangerous being the privatisation of learning where the beginning and end points are not the individual in all his complexity, but whether he will be profitable in the short term, and where his education is viewed as an economic project. Education is a long-term process and in keeping with a vision of society where every person must be able to find their place. We are, of course, not talking about re-education.

If we accept the *concept of lifelong learning*, there are three practical consequences before considering the educational process in prison:

- Lifelong learning is a concept which encounters and acknowledges various experiences, "out-of-school" and vocational training, as well as academic and formal learning. *Education in prison does not therefore start off from scratch.*

Education in prison is not special education for a special moment, but a continuity of the learning experience, received, suffered, built up formally and informally by each and every person. Lifelong learning therefore infers that there is no *discontinuity in learning* or in the time given over to learning, and this includes the prison experience.

Incarceration is part of a continuum of permanent learning experiences.

Acknowledging experiential achievements is therefore not a new invention, but something which should be *self-evident!*

The question is no longer of knowing *whether* learning in prison should be organized; it *organizes itself*, between offenders, for better or for worse! It is up to public authorities to enforce the universally

recognized right to education for all. A nation gains greater stature when it insists that the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are granted to all, without discrimination... and when it organizes things so that this is effectively the case.

Recognizing that experiences can be positive is not something that is customary in the world of prison offenders. Their latest experiences were recognized by society; this was the work of the courts. On the other hand, recognizing that person as a whole entity (and not just reduced to his recent past) will be the work of educators and of society as a whole. To recognize experiences does not mean to admire them, to consider them to be sacred, or to give them a certificate of respectability.

However, you can only recognize experiences if you acknowledge the person. Not recognizing him as being guilty (this has already been done), but acknowledging him as a person who has a right to lifelong learning, whatever that life might be. The same value must be given to all learners and to their approach, whatever their motivations may be and whatever the context of the approach.

Acknowledging the social existence of a person is to recognize his possibility of outlining a future for himself; it is also to have him recognize that some of his contradictions have been too great, both for himself and for society, the common good and the social bond.

To educate is to work on identity; it means acknowledging the learner and not the delinquent

Education enables the work of social deconstruction/reconstruction when two different identities, recognized and who acknowledge each other (educator and offender), are placed in a face-to-face encounter. This will be neither simple nor final, since not all offenders will want to take part in such a process at the outset. For some, education may even appear to be an additional constraint.

Being the central focus of the demand for education

Being the central focus does not just mean being the recipient. It means being the actor. Every person constructs their own education and some have more materials, more examples, and more techniques than others. And we know why.

Constructing his life has generally not been a pleasant experience for the offender. Too often poverty and lack of job security have led to improvisation rather than to recognized social success, career development, or study plans.

What should be learned in prison, therefore, is learning to make decisions, learning how to learn, learning to be, learning to make choices, but paradoxically prison does not provide for this, worse, it forbids it.

To recognize experiential achievements, is to acknowledge the demand for education. We have said that the learner was not the recipient but the actor in the learning process. Through recognition and validation, one encourages the emergence of a demand for education for life, throughout life, formulated knowingly, at least knowing one's own cause better, and knowing oneself better.

This supposes that we acknowledge that an individual has the possibility and the right to make a demand. But this is somewhat contrary to how prison works and not very common for offenders who often come from an environment where formulating an explicit demand for education is rare. We should not be surprised then if the demand is hesitant, conventional, changing, varied, variable. Formulating a demand for education for those coming from a culturally deprived environment is difficult. Education will therefore consist in helping to formulate and in giving support to the formulation of a complex educational demand, charged with history, with ambiguity. To clarify, too, the aims and motivations of the offender.

3.2.2. Lifelong learning is to knowingly (re) construct one's past

Amongst the demands for education from adults, there are the classic demands for additional education: the project is clear and the resources identified. Previous teaching experiences have often been positive and if not, we know why.

As far as prison is concerned, we know that offenders remember that their schooling and formal training were not a success. School was often synonymous with failure. The demand, initially essentially for vocational training, will meet with difficulties in prison: the conditions under which

training is carried out, security, the risk of being transferred from one prison to another, non-remuneration, hesitation by prison authorities and other internal factors will often put paid to training.

Informal training in prison to be appraised

Can prison, as an institution, help the offender to progressively put together a life project, a project for the future? By its structure and the way it is organized, can prison play a positive role in terms of the perspective we support, education for all, throughout life?

Lifelong learning means an option: education is not just training; education involves society as a whole. To educate and be educated by all, on an on-going basis, that is what lifelong learning is all about. I am educated; I can educate myself thanks to my environment. An offender will therefore also be educated by the prison experience. Education in prison is not about re-education.

Lifelong learning for an offender is formal, non-formal, informal learning in prison; it is what the institution – as an institution – will teach him for a certain time.

The time/space for education is fragile but must be preserved. It is a place where something other than prison can be learned; a place where one is something other than an offender. One creates there while learning and learns there while creating. One learns there while training in individual and collective creation, learning about relationships with others, learning about non-violent management of conflict, learning the role of emotion. Learning also to successfully see a project through to its conclusion.

The experience of living in a group where, to begin with, differences are obstacles. Prisons are multicultural places and to learn there, to understand and to accept the differences will most probably be necessary. Not a lot of teaching material is required, but what is certain is that it requires prison personnel to be attentive to this reality, persuaded that the multicultural can be enriching.

Discovering the world of books, searching for information and the pleasure of finding it. For this, libraries need to be transformed into meeting places, where information can be found about health, culture, and rights. Why should the offender and his children not open their exercise books there together, exchange information about their respective learning sessions and compare them?

Some offenders work and prefer to work even though the job is repetitive and not very motivating. Could it not be mandatory for all work carried out in prison to always include an element of training? This type of work does not rehabilitate. It is not real work, for a real salary, under real conditions.

3.2.3. The limits and conditions for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison and its potential

The process of recognition and accreditation of prior (experiential) achievements can only begin if some educational work with the offender is undertaken at the same time. Even though prison is not the best place for this, the process needs to be understood and needs to focus on plans for the future. The *field* of work is therefore not the process of accreditation *per se* but the *person* who is disabled (because deprived of their freedom).

The process is in keeping with a world where the causal link between training, employment and a decent salary is less and less evident; more global reflection is required as to how society functions and *what its priorities are*. Is a society which excludes, and sometimes manufactures dangerous people, a healthy society? What mechanisms have been seriously implemented to offer each person the possibility of choosing his own destiny, while preserving the safety of everyone else? Is this not one of the supposed functions of schooling, of family-life education, of education through the media, of youth and sports groups? Is it inevitable that formal education will regularly produce a group of outcasts? That the system will regularly let people down and cause some to drop out altogether?

CONCLUSION

Recognition and accreditation should not be reduced to a simple bureaucratic technique.

Acknowledging someone's prior experiential achievements is to give an offender back his dignity, not just to trigger off a process of accreditation. Do prisons give their dignity back to an offender? What should be done if the offender has no self-esteem and has no esteem for society? For the process to

make any sense, it is the whole entity of prison as an institution that needs to work on the question of dignity for all.

Recognizing prior experiential achievements, is to offer a vision of the future: it may perhaps facilitate somewhat (re)entry into the work force, the family, a network of friends. At this level, professional training, like the process of undergoing training, would be useful. But in that case what is the sense of the dis-education structurally instituted in prison where one learns nothing at all, not even daily life.

Avenues for cooperation with the working world need to be developed – and of course not simply to offer it a cheap labour force in the form of prison offenders. Union organisations need to reflect upon this because, otherwise, what is the point of having an offender accredited but not actually used to finding himself in a work environment and to accepting its constraints?

Recognizing prior experiential achievements, is to admit that, for everyone, educational tracks should in future be more flexible, whether it be for formal, non-formal or informal education. We have moved from a system of formal schooling to lifelong learning. Previously, the function of formal schooling was to give coherence to the whole of the education system. Nowadays, supply and demand is fragmented as far as education is concerned. The role of the state is all the more important in that by accepting accreditation, it must also ensure ideological consistency.

Recognizing prior experiential achievements as far as the prison experience goes, is to take a different perspective on a life which, by integrating the past (and the offence) is not defined by the space/time of prison. Will prison teach anything other than the reduction of this space and this time? Will prison teach anything other than prison?

Chapter 3 – PRISON CONTEXTS

This chapter presents the contexts of the two experimental sites at the heart of the exploratory survey. The general purpose of this action research was to enable persons in custody to take part in a process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, taking into account the particular environment, i.e. aspects not directly related to the person in question. Work on the relationship between the individual (not forgetting the legal/criminal status of the individual separate from the prison situation and from the pre-incarceration situation) and environment is essential in order to understand the type of interaction which exists between the actors and the specific environments.

The description of the prison contexts takes into account the orientation of this action research, it highlights the task of social reintegration of the person in custody that devolves to prison institutions at the expense of the other principle task of prison which is to ensure that follow-up and sentencing is carried out and that public security is maintained.

1. THE PRISON CONTEXTS OF THE TWO SITES WHERE THE EXPLORATORY STUDY WAS CARRIED OUT

1.1. National Context

1.1.1. Poland

The Polish Prison Administration manages 157 prison institutions in 15 regional districts. As of January 1st 2007, there were 86849 people in custody in various types of prison institutions with three levels of security: closed prisons, semi-open prisons and open prisons. All prisons are divided into 4 types of units: one for youthful offenders under 21 years, one for first offenders, one for repeat offenders and one for servicemen.

1.1.2. France

The French prison administration deals with persons placed in the hands of the law, both in open custody (those not subject to deprivation of liberty) and secure custody (accused, awaiting trial, tried and sentenced), the latter representing 190 prison institutions in 9 interregional directorates and one overseas mission. As of January 1st 2007, there were 60 403 people in custody for 50 588 places available in: 1 centre for adjusted sentences, 13 day-parole centres, 60 closed prisons and 116 long-term detention centres.

1.2. Local Context

1.2.1 Rzeszów Prison

The regional district of Rzeszów manages 9 prisons and long-term detention centres, or 4213 persons in custody of whom 3981 sentenced (at 31.12.07). Rzeszów prison is the largest in the administrative region and one of the largest in Poland. Since January 1st 2006, the prison has been located in the city of Rzeszów (population 180 000). Rzeszów prison is a secure custody institution, closed custody for repeat prison offenders with long-term detention centre quarters. The prison has 982 places; at April 30th 2007, there were more than 1200 offenders (or 120 % overpopulation which has lasted for several years). Offender profiles are very diverse (from offenders in temporary custody to offenders who are insulin-dependent diabetics). It is divided into 11 units: 2 for those with warrant of committal, 2 for offenders with addictive behaviours or mental disorders, 4 for repeat offenders, 1 for first offenders in day-parole or open custody, 1 for offenders dangerous to society or to themselves, and 1 diagnostic treatment centre.

Prison population at April 30th 2007

It consists for 58.9 % of repeat offenders, 37.4% of first offenders and 3.7 % of petty offenders.

System of detention: 64 % of the population are held under the ordinary detention system, 25 % under

the directed action system and 11% under the treatment system.

Type of regime: 80 % of this population is in closed custody, 18% day-parole and 2 % open custody.

1.2.2. The long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan

The interregional directorate of prison services in Bordeaux includes 6 closed prisons and 14 long-term detention centres.

The long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan is the largest in the Bordeaux prison region and is one of the largest in France. It is located in a suburb of the city of Bordeaux (population 760 000).

A long-term detention centre takes in accused (detained while awaiting trial), those whose remaining sentence is under one year, or those sentenced but awaiting transfer to a closed prison.

The long-term detention centre has a theoretical capacity of 419 places; at January 1st 2007, 712 persons were detained including 39 women (or 5.45% - national average 3.7%) and 8 minors (or 1.13% -national average 1.2%).

Over the year 2006, the total prison population reached 2956.

It consists of 3 buildings and 7 units: 2 for men (over 18 years), 1 for women, 1 unit for minors, 1 for young adults (up to 25 years), 1 for short sentences (under two years), 1 day-parole unit and, since 2006, an interregional secure hospital unit.

Prison population at January 1st 2007

46% (or 321) persons in custody were awaiting trial, 54% (or 391) saw their sentences handed down, while 37% of those sentenced were carrying out an unexpired portion of sentence over one year.

The distribution of sentences per offence committed is, with one exception (rape and sexual assault), comparable to the national level.

The average length of detention is 3.5 months.

Half of those in custody are aged between 25 and 40 years old.

2. THE TASK OF REINTEGRATION

In these two prison institutions there are regulatory bodies which establish the course through prison by orienting applications from offenders (work, vocational training, educational courses, etc.) and recommend measures or activities which will ensure that reintegration for those in custody is effective. These measures must enable offenders to prepare for their release and find their place in the community again. This task of reintegration is based on health measures, preparation for release, work, vocational training, social and educational activities, academic teaching.

2.1. Rzeszów Prison

2.1.1. Reintegration measures of the resocialisation programme

Therapeutic support

At Rzeszów prison, 11% of the closed custody population come under the therapeutic system. The great majority of this population consists of repeat offenders (108 out of 114).

For those sentenced, various programmes respond to the needs of the prison population suffering from:

- psychological disorders;
- addictive behaviours;
- and lastly those sentenced for violence, sexual assault and domestic violence;
- and, programmes preparing for *release*, lasting thirty hours, with the aim of acquiring social skills such as resolving communication problems, dealing with stress, resisting group influence, preparing for interviews (applications to social welfare, job hunting, etc.).

Work

The rate of activity is 20% (or 247 people): 78% of them are paid (193), 20% are unpaid (54) but play a part in the needs of the territorial community (retirement homes, sports and recreation centres, animal refuges, colleges and orphanages).

Vocational training

In Rzeszów prison, those in custody can take up vocational training classes to become:

- paver,
- painter,
- bricklayer/stonemason,
- welder,
- locksmith,
- data entry operator.

Social and cultural activities

Cultural activities in Rzeszów prison consist of meetings with personalities, concerts, interest groups, activities such as radio broadcasts and reading. The prison has 11 day rooms, gymnasiums, playing fields, libraries.

24.5% (250 people) take part in directed activities.

Academic learning

Rzeszów prison does not have a school unit but approximately thirty offenders in semi-open custody were able to follow classes in a school outside the prison. Others wishing to take academic classes were directed to the prison in Uherce (Rzeszów district) which has a school integrated into the prison.

2.2 The long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan*2.2.1. Social reintegration measures**Health*

The long-term detention centre in Gradignan has instituted full management of the person in custody in order to meet the specificity of its prison population better. There are two complementary services available: the Regional Medical and Psychological Service and the Ambulatory Consultation and Health Care Unit. Those in custody thus have access to general practice and specialist practice consultations. The RMPS offers 5 types of care :

- for recognized psychiatric disorders;
- for disorders related to addictive behaviours;
- for disorders of a sexual nature;
- specific management of minors and young adults between the ages of 18 and 20;
- lastly, measures to prevent suicide.

Preparation for release

On the one hand, there are health education and access to treatment projects, and on the other partnership measures based on economic reintegration which, on the basis of individual projects, aim to facilitate access to employment and to vocational training.

In 2006, 279 temporary leave passes, 87 placements under electronic surveillance, 134 measures of day-parole and 81 measures of external placement were granted within the framework of adjusted sentences.

Work

The rate of activity is 26.68% which is the equivalent of a monthly average of 150 offenders in paid work for a total of 29 526 days worked in 2006. There are 70 people allocated to general services (cleaning, kitchens, etc.), and 86 to production units.

Vocational training

At the long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan 10% of the population had taken part in vocational training courses.

195 people (36.79%), including 19 women, had taken courses in the sectors of industrial cleaning, building painting and skills awareness:

- 121 (22.83%) benefited from qualification activities with permanent day-parole.
- 74 (13.96%) benefited from (re)mobilisation for employment.

140 of them (71%) had their training courses accredited and received:

- . a record book of skills acquired and follow-up (16),
- . vocational certificate (3 full, 16 partial) or,
- . a course certificate in the case of release before the end of the course (105)

Social and cultural activities

These involve promoting reintegration of offenders into the community, developing their means of expression and their knowledge, drawing up an annual programme of quality cultural performances. Permanent activities (music, plastic arts theatre, video programmes, sports activities), practical courses in art, culture, or social and educational activities (music, workshops for writing, dance, storytelling, cinema, circus.) are also implemented.

Academic learning

The Regional Teaching Unit in Bordeaux supports 20 Local Teaching Units (in the 3 educational districts of Bordeaux, Limoges and Poitiers), on the basis of one per prison.

The Local Teaching Unit at the long-term detention centre in Gradignan is the largest; in 2007 it had 9 teachers, of whom 8 full time.

In addition, voluntary associations carry out reinforcing activities (30.3% of the prison population took part in schooling activities). In the 2006/2007 school year, 673 offenders attended school classes. The majority of teaching was based on acquiring basic knowledge.

Particular attention is given to offenders who are minors (under eighteen years of age) because they are of compulsory school age. In addition, 36 offenders followed correspondence courses and 65 were candidates for a school or university exam: 86% finished a diploma course. 15 offenders gained accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.

Part Two

EXPLORATORY STUDY

**IDENTITY AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING
A PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH TO THOSE IN CUSTODY**

Chapter 4 – OBJECTIVES and THEORETICAL BASIS

In the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process and through the medium of the professional project, *personal attributes* are introduced, how the candidate intends organizing his life and his professional projects, his motivation, his desire for recognition. The profession and the training (prior or desired) as well as the associated *skills*, are all part of *personal experience* taken in all its complexity, over time (past, present and future) and in relation to living conditions. This applies to everyone, whatever their itinerary, their skills and abilities, professional, social or intellectual, their means, their limits or their difficulties. It also applies to those in custody (accused or sentenced). The question of the project and of adaptation to living conditions and to institutional requirements in prison is, however, rather more specific for them (before, during and after incarceration).

1. OBJECTIVES

The present research project, then, had *three overall objectives*:

1. To better understand the aspirations, actions and steps taken, as well as the difficulties of those in custody in their effort to have their skills recognized and in their desire to improve the conditions of their future reintegration into the community.
2. To better understand how the various professional actors involved perceive and encourage implementation and development of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning system. This objective should enable improvement of internal modes for organising information and follow-up of those engaged (or not) in the accreditation process.
3. To implement and promote training of professionals not only with regard to organizing the accreditation process, but also to improving their ability to accompany those volunteering to commit to the accreditation process.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS

To meet these objectives, we proposed the method of self-assessment and self organisation (personal and professional itinerary) through narrative identity (construction of self through what the person says of himself, or hears said of him by others). It now remains for us to describe the theoretical model that was used as the basis for our approach.

2.1. Initial Remarks

The theoretical framework for our studies and for our procedure is based on *complex system models* (Von Bertalanffy, 1968; Le Moigne, 1999; Morin, 2005). Rather than trying to *simplify a complicated model* in the belief that the basis is simple, when “*complexity is the basis*” (Morin, 1977; 377), we propose models enabling the complex systems with which we are involved to be made intelligible (Le Moigne, 1999).

While using theoretical models developed by the ECIBI, we believe it is very important to introduce a non-linear theory covering the notions of rupture, crisis, inclusion-exclusion, for symbolising loss and want, while at the same time taking into account the processes of idealisation, or anticipation of change hoped for. We believed it to be useful, on this particular point, to transpose certain current theories of modern physics - chaos, catastrophe and fractals - into the field of human and social science and to compare these theories with complex system models and with what are called socio-constructivist models (Tap, 2007).

One of the fundamental concepts of these theories is the notion of open system (a concept applicable to social systems). Although prison appears, by definition, to be a closed system, it is

possible to demonstrate that it can only function because of its relations with the outside world. The introduction of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process in prison is of course a good example from this point of view. But these models are also particularly apposite when we wish to try to understand the complexity of a given period of life, of individual or collective conflicts related to difficult everyday situations, to the loss of freedom, to disease, to the death of a loved one, to the difficulty in taking a direction, of choosing an orientation, of living a new relationship, etc.

Let us now come to the purpose of our research project. The act of associating identity (personal and/or professional) with accreditation of prior (experiential) learning needs to be discussed and justified. Identity is the system of representations and of feelings by which a person recognises themselves and is recognized by others, with their particular characteristics and the way in which these characteristics are confirmed, accepted by institutions (family, school, professional environment, etc.).

We can use the example, of major importance in the present research project, of the links and differences between the concepts of ability, skills, and capability. The first two terms are often confused, wrongly we believe. Abilities can be defined as the intrinsic qualities of a person with regards potential and performance, without institutional assessment, and which enable the person to have enhanced standing in the eyes of others, or to have an improved image in his own eyes. On the other hand, the concept of skills can be associated with that of social recognition, confirmation of actual or potential abilities. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can therefore be one form of such recognition.

But we can add here the concept of capability proposed by Amartya Kumar Sen, Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998 for his work on famine, on the theory of human development, on welfare economics, on the underlying mechanisms of poverty and on political liberalism. He proposed the concept of capability, as a determining element in the strategies of human development (Sen, 1985; 1987; 1991; 1999). His works were widely used in the formulation of the Human Development Report published by the United Nations development programme (2005). This report analyses the strategies for reinforcing capabilities, personal and collective, by means of specific sector policies. Their object is to make up for lack of capability, in order to ensure that individuals are equal. Capability, according to Sen, defines the way a person will transform resources of any nature (economic, social, intellectual, etc.) to function effectively. Capability expresses the person's freedom to be or to do at a given time, in a given society. It can also include the ability to be a social actor (Bandura, 1997). In other words, capability expresses the possibility of a person to interact with others in order to improve the capabilities of resources (inner and/or external), to transform them into well being (individual and/or collective) and to thus be able to lead the life hoped for, to give it meaning, according to one's systems of beliefs and values.

It may appear to be incongruous to speak of *capability* or of *personalisation* (Tap, 1988) with regard to those in custody. But, as Robert Badinter, former French Minister of Justice reminds us, *"Every prisoner is a human being and as such shall enjoy all human rights and, if he is French, the rights of all citizens, with the single exception of the rights which have been withdrawn by a decision of justice, or by restrictions imposed through requirements for safety of life and property inherent to prison life."*

As it happens, the concept of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning enables a person in custody to hope that upon release he will recover his personal and professional capabilities, but it also enhances his image in his own eyes in the present through a feeling of being recognized by going through the process itself.

2.2. Identities and accreditation of prior (experiential) learning

Associating the identity of those in custody with the question of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning has a number of consequences which need to be specified.

1. Thought needs to be given to the psychological and social environment resulting from the specific experience of prisoners, before, during and after their incarceration. This specific experience needs, of course, to be analysed with reference to the more general model of any person confronted with a difficult situation.
2. The link between narrative identity, professional identity (former or hoped for), and personal identity needs to be specified, all three closely linked to the development of self-esteem, self-confidence and assertiveness, and also related to the development of values to which a person refers to give meaning to his life, to his situation, to his future.
3. Lastly, it can then be demonstrated that the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process has a three-fold influence:
 - the concept of accreditation introduces the major question of social recognition, of personal value associated with professional recognition;
 - it involves academic and educational recognition of prior learning (recognition of a process, a learning content, a professional and technical culture that the person has had to acquire);
 - it is part of a renewal, bringing dormant or blocked aspirations to the fore, seeing the re-emergence of a professional project, or its construction from scratch.

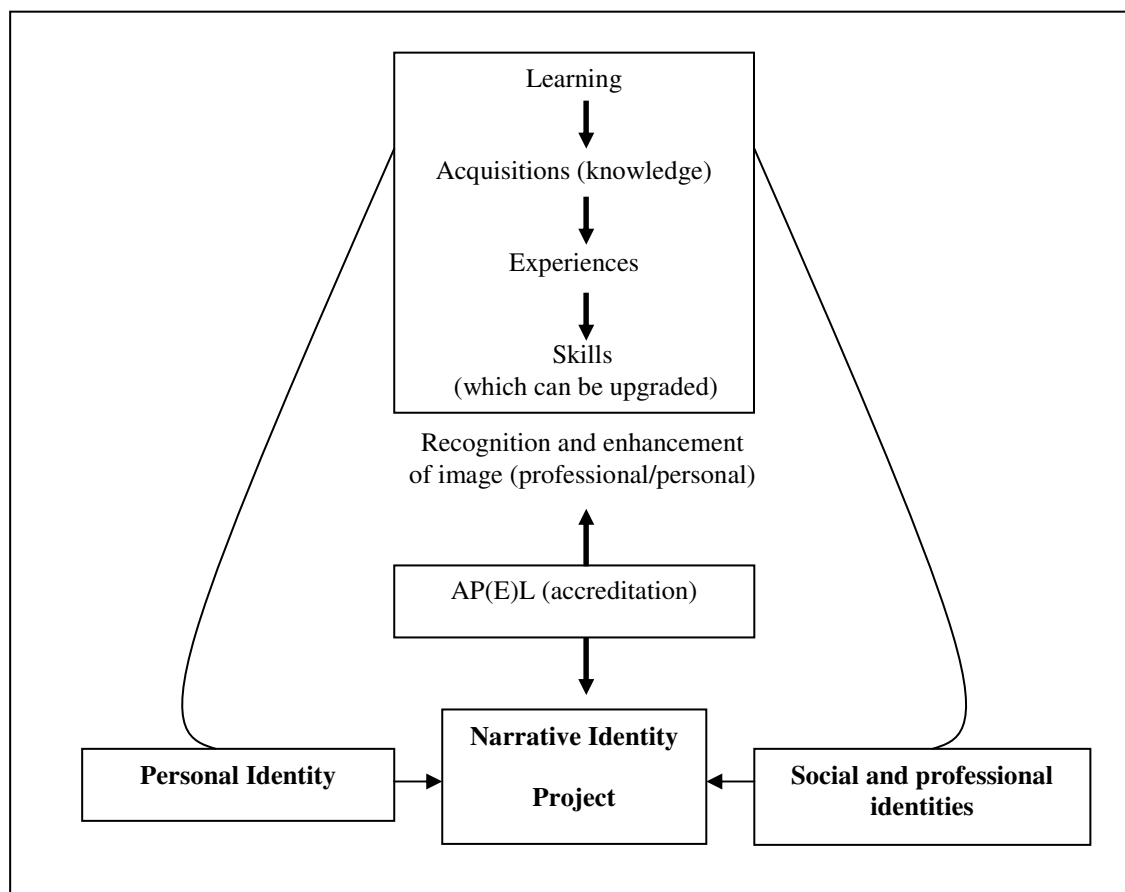


Diagram 1. *The accreditation of prior (experiential) learning project as social recognition and environment for enhancement of image through work*

2.3. Narrative Identity, Story and Project

Personal identity is a system of representations and feelings of self about self (or of others about self). We can call *identization* the process by which a person situates themselves in relation to the period they are at in their life, to their journey. This process is at work in *the way in which a person talks about himself*, for himself at the same time as for others, the way in which a person seeks to make his own life more coherent and stable. To do this, he will construct a *narrative identity*, a

complex mixture of the real and the imaginary, of experience and of the desired (Ricoeur, 1990). But this process, where the emphasis is representational, contributes to the process of *personalisation* (promotion of self as a person, control of and by personality; innovation by the fact of assuming the image enhancing and courageous acts of a responsible person) and the process of *socialisation* (adopting social personas and roles, appropriating and handling standards, values, taking part in collective activities and projects, etc.).

Although psychological structures and processes entail relative habituation and stabilisation, they can also be subject to change, to uncertain regulation or to sudden deregulation. This is the case not only for narrative identity but also for personal identity, for professional identity and for identization. The processes thus established are therefore rarely linear and often subject to disturbance and to structural dysfunction. They depend on the *procedures* used, the *strategies* implemented by the person concerned, the *techniques* he has at his disposal: modes of thought, of action and of reaction, mechanisms of defence or of adaptation, etc. The person, by their attitudes, reactions and strategies, is to a greater or lesser degree, agent, actor, author and director of his own life.

Portrayal of identity is learned very early on in childhood and is based on the dynamic interrelation between *representations and acts, on the way in which we present ourselves to others, construct the image of who we are, have been or want to become*. Identization therefore transits through the narrative. By the way in which we reconstruct our story by recounting it, but also by imagining and anticipating what tomorrow will be. I become what I am from the way in which I socialize, by my experiences, by appropriation of knowledge and know-how, by appropriation of powers and by turning projects and attainments into reality. Through socialization I construct and enrich my own image. But conversely, the construction and reinforcement of my personal identity, and my ability to work, to be sociable, to be autonomous, to manage my own career, my own projects and values, tend to give a different meaning to my place in social networks (family, professional network, etc.).

2.4. Alienation of identity and personalization

Variations in identity (or methods of identization) will depend on the fight against anything (from inside or outside) which alienates the person, so much so that personalisation tends to merge with the difficult liberation of self, or to maintaining a freedom acquired with difficulty or paid for dearly. This liberation will come as much from the fight against oneself (impulse, hate and revenge, etc.), as that against others, or against institutions (dependence and humiliation, etc.). But this liberation of self is not necessarily in agreement with social, moral or legal rules. It can be based on denying the freedom of others. As Malrieu (2003) showed, personalisation as a means of organising acts directed towards a deliberate, calculated end, can be found in anti-social strategies.

Of course, the dimensions of alienation and of personalisation are not entirely contradictory. The same person can develop contradictory feelings in the various environments in his life, and even within the same environment, or with regard to the same relational network, or to the same situation. In other words, a person can personalise here and alienate there, but can also experience contradictory situations which personalise or alienate at the same time.

That said, personality dynamics can be checked, disturbed, become the object of defensive block, of dysfunction and disturbance. In the many studies involving persons in difficulty, we have been able to uncover *five types of disorder*:

1. conflict of identity due to feelings of powerlessness and humiliation;
2. infringement of rules, feelings of guilt, challenging the law and death;
3. presence of stress, feelings of depression;
4. emotional ambivalence, true hypersensitivity, feelings of indifference to others;
5. presence of inward-looking strategies and/or aggressiveness.

2.5. Strategic Approach

Between anchoring and abandonment, through the interplay of many influences, the behaviours, actions and reactions of a person will depend on the meaning or lack of meaning, on the

interpretation that he makes of the situation in which he finds himself without wanting to, or to which he has deliberately committed.

To give meaning, import, enables individuals and groups not only to control the environment in which they evolve, but also to understand the events which affect them, so as to act and be socially visible.

Faced with a totally new situation (crisis, conflict or breakdown), the person will have to abandon his usual programmes. His *style* (conformities and reflex-conditioning, personal frame of reference) is challenged. It is no longer sufficient for his adaptation. No longer being able to play by the usual rules, he will have to take risks, to look for new solutions, adopt or invent strategies in order to adapt.

The flexibility and skill of individuals in developing new strategies, in abandoning those which are no longer effective or pertinent, can lead to successful adaptation. Flexibility can be defined as the ability to adapt, to make concessions, to manage contradictory requirements as well as possible.

Style is based on the person (personal conformity, certitude, “sameness”); strategies are linked to the relationship that the subject has established with the situation (requirements of the situation, uncertainty, newness). This link has meaning for him, positive or negative, in terms of objectives to be sought, means to be found, self-image to be boosted, control to be re-installed.

According to E. Morin, *"The concept of strategy is opposed to that of programme. A programme is a sequence of predetermined actions which must operate in circumstances which permit their accomplishment. If external circumstances are not favourable, the programme will stop or fail. A strategy will develop one or more scenarios. It is prepared from the outset so that if something new or unexpected occurs this can be integrated in order to change or to enhance the action."* (2005, 119).

"Any strategy will be distinguished by the interrelation for the actor (individual or collective), of a finalized internal logic and of creative behaviours. It involves the investment of energy and a dynamic of decision, in the definition of goals (intermediate or final), in the choice of means (real or symbolic), and in following routes which will make it easier to draw up or to execute a project." (Tap, Esparbès and Sordes - Ader, 1995).

Activating the process of strategy entails a dynamic interrelation of three essential and inseparable elements: the *actors* (individual or collective) with their resources, their constraints and their potential, the *situation* with its nature, its constraints, and its stakes, and the *ultimate aim* of the actors.

2.6. Strategies for personalization

These strategies are part of a wider process, the process of personalization (Tap and Vasconcelos, 2004, 22), which includes assertion or defence of identity, present and past (*identity strategies*), a search for recognition of social position (*strategies of positioning and social commitment, in particular professional*), management of the present situation (*coping strategies or stress management*) and orientation towards a future, involving *project strategies*. *Meaning* facilitates the interrelation between the four strategies.

- The object of *identity strategies* is to act on the definition of self, to maintain, preserve or improve self image, to assume an "*internal logic*" through which an individual justifies, invests and controls. Maintaining continuity over time, is to defend the person's identity in what he has been (past), is (present) and wants to become (future). It means staying the same, persisting in one's being, but also evolving, changing, defending one's own identity while maintaining an anchorage, anchoring oneself in time and in space, personal, family and cultural. The process of *identization* leads the individual to continually "*reassure himself*" while retaining a continuity in change and facilitating the path to the future: everything changes, and yet I am "*the same*", "*myself*" and at the same time I "*become*" another and different. The need for *social recognition* underpins the dynamic of identity.

This need is all the stronger when " *individuals feel themselves to be in a position of insecurity, inferiority, exclusion or on the fringe* " (Lipiansky, 1990, 179). Asserting one's identity, also means being involved in the community, undertaking studies, committing to work, to one's family, investing in the goals chosen.

- *Strategies of social positioning* consist in finding or inventing a solution to a crisis or a conflict, by modifying the relationship of the roles played, by committing to new networks, etc. Commitment requires having the courage to face up to one's responsibilities, accepting one's limits and that of the situation or the surrounding world. This can be an act of faith: believing in self, having confidence and/or believing in the other person. To develop a position, is to claim to be a unique individual, to have a role to play, to take one's place amongst others and to assert oneself, to choose, to evaluate. These choices of strategy will depend on the belief and value system but also on the amount of attachment and of support, on the degree of implication or of detachment of the person in his interpersonal relationships, his separations and his transgressions.

- *Coping strategies* enable the individual to control or try to control something in the present situation, to have an effect on it, to adjust to a new situation or to defend himself against any hold or any subservience. The *coping* response will depend on the person's past experience, his learning, his skills, the memory of his failures and his successes, of self-assessment, of his ability to meet the demand. In a difficult situation, an individual can adopt four types of strategy: that of *control*, of *social support*, *retreat* or *refusal*. This range of strategies implemented by the person enables him to cope with the situation, to adapt to it. It is by mobilizing his resources that he will have the energy necessary to confront the situation. But sometimes mobilisation is not enough and the person will need to anticipate and estimate.

- *Project strategies* imply a perception of the situation experienced and a desire to reorganize it, to transform it, to prepare the future. Whether the projects are desired, justified or prescribed, present or future, projects that open up broad perspectives, new horizons... whether they require outside backing or not, they will orient the individual towards his future.

Strategies of identity, of social positioning, of coping and of project are therefore to be considered in their diversity, as means of defence or promotion of self, enabling a person to have or to regain a personal identity.

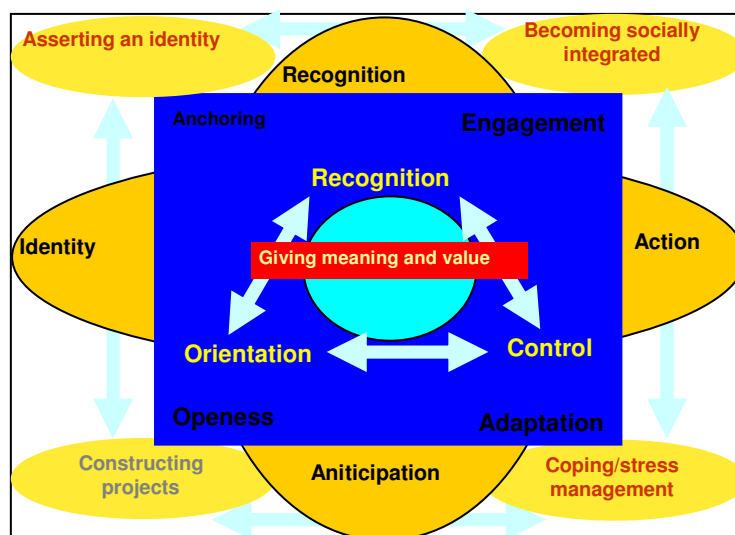


Diagram 2. *Strategies of personalisation*

General Hypothesis

Our general hypothesis is that **proposing commitment to a process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning will provide the person in custody with a means of socio-professional recognition, of rehabilitation of personal identity and a return to more functional values in relation to an environment enabling social reintegration.**

Chapter 5 – METHODOLOGY

The operational model shows accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in relation to social and professional reintegration of those in custody.

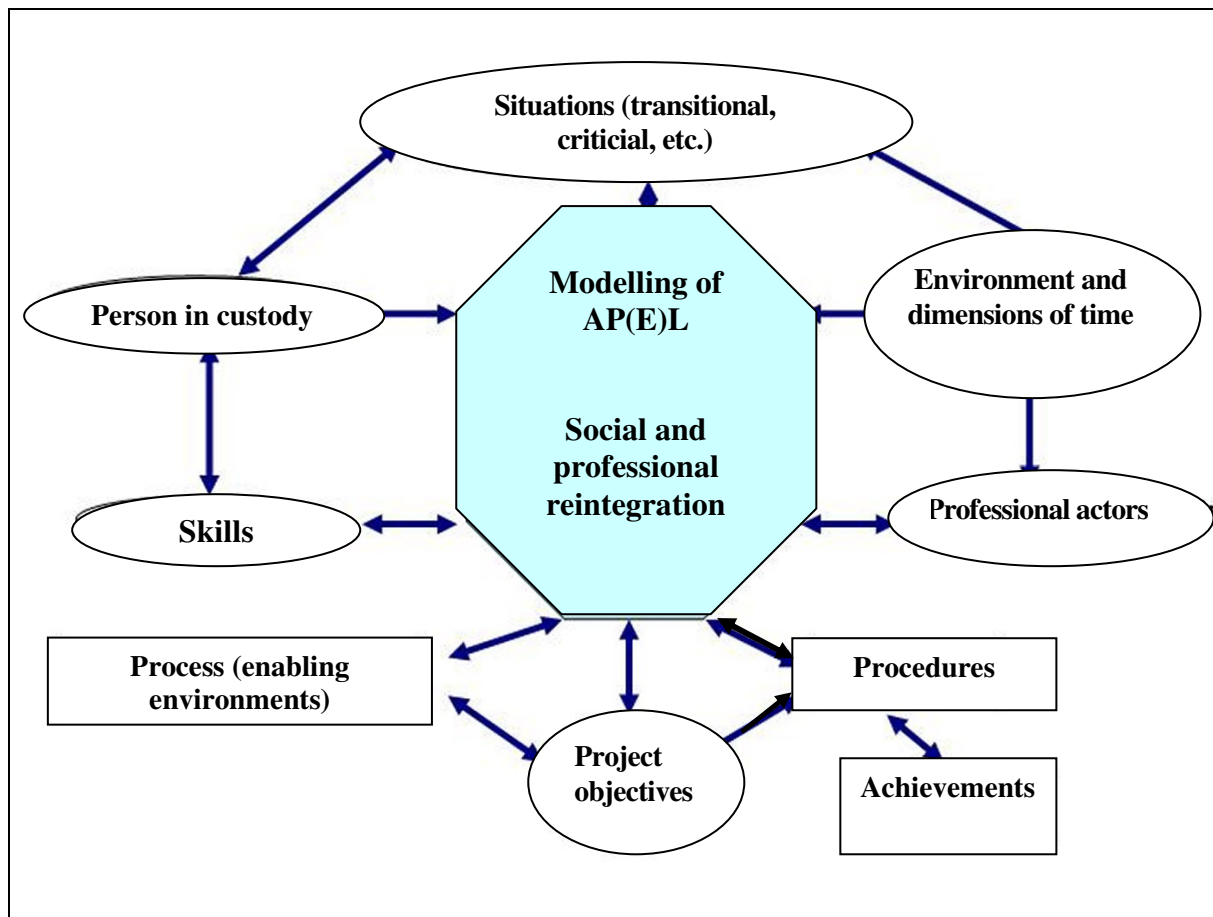


Diagram 3. *Operational Model*

1. METHODOLOGY

The exploratory nature and the purpose of the present research project (introduction of the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning to the prison environment, accompaniment of those in custody committed to this process, training of personnel working in this environment) led us to favour a methodology which was both qualitative and *prudent*, both in the choice of techniques and in the ethical framework of our interventions.

The process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning involves first of all an effort in providing information to those in custody, in providing explanations and in showing one's convictions. Prisoners may decide to commit to the successive procedures because they perceive this or that opportunity (internal or external). Accompanying inmates in their decision-making means that external actors need to analyse their motivations and their ability to adapt, once they have understood the advantages and disadvantages, the openings and the limits offered by the process.

The method therefore focuses on the interrelation between subjective dimensions and objective conditions involved in initial decision-making, or on the attitudes and behaviours met with during the

interviews with candidates and their prison escorts. The main part of the exploratory research work consisted of two interviews during which we used four techniques for self-assessment and for focusing on prior learning, skills and personal attributes, with regard to the knowledge and know-how of the candidates.

2. THE SURVEY

To verify our hypothesis, we undertook an inquiry amongst those in custody committed to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process and amongst the professional actors involved at two sites:

- the long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan, France,
- the prison in Rzeszów, Poland.

The method we used consisted of conducting face to face interviews in two stages and of proposing tests for assessing self-esteem and appreciation of values, along with self-assessment through life domains.

2.1. Personal data and data concerning the prison environment

The model of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (Diagram 3) and its relationship to the social and professional reintegration of those in custody must necessarily be taken into account:

- *prior learning of the person in terms of academic and vocational training;*
- *personal attributes, resources and psychological and social skills* which provide him with the motivation and perseverance to see the project through and give it meaning, to find a satisfactory and lasting means of providing assistance and support;
- *the distinctive features of the prison context specific to each person in custody*, their effects on the process and follow-up of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning;
- *the distinctive environmental, organisational and historical context* which will put the possibilities and limits of the accreditation process into perspective (inside and outside the prison);
- *the specific role and influence of each professional actor* involved in the accreditation process (custodial officers, social workers, teachers, psychologists, accreditation advisers);
- *the training of these same professional actors* and the way in which this could include learning about appropriate techniques, practices, attitudes and awareness with regard to the accreditation process and about accompanying the candidate towards social and professional reintegration.

2.2. Population

Twenty-five interviews were conducted, 10 of which with individuals in custody, all committed to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, and 15 with professionals, all involved at various levels in implementation of the validation system.

POPULATION	Offenders in custody			PROFESSIONAL ACTORS	
PRISON INSTITUTION	NUMBER	AGE GROUPS	DIPLOMAS SOUGHT THROUGH AP(E)L	NUMBER	PROFESSION
FRANCE – GRADIGNAN LONG-TERM DETENTION CENTRE	5	25-45	from vocational training certificate (CAP) to Professional qualification (BTS)	11	Social Worker Head of Custody Probation and Integration adviser Accreditation advisor Assistant Director Teacher Psychologist Local Education Supervisor Local Vocational training Supervisor
POLAND – RZESZÓW PRISON	5	30-45	/	4	Assistant Director Educator Psychologist
TOTAL	10			15	

2.3. Sociological and biographical variables concerning those in custody

In the analysis of the life stories of the prisoners, the variables taken into account were:

- country,
- age,
- professional experience (occupation, sector of activity),
- length of sentence.

3. THE MEANS

Two successive interviews with individuals in custody conducted in France and in Poland with the object of collecting additional data in the second interview. The focus of each interview was different. The first interview enabled the person:

- to talk about themselves, detailing their experience (professional and extra-professional),
- to link the various moments of past life, attribute new meanings to them in the present and for the future (temporal attitudes),
- to show the interaction between prior experience and the possibilities of recognition.

The aim of the second interview, a few days later, was to fill out the data collected in order to understand the person's approach to the project better using the Strat'ago self-assessment test as regards life domains.

3.1. Interview with individuals in custody

The topics were defined after a pre-experimental phase. An interview with an individual in custody, conducted in a French prison environment (*cf.* Appendix 1), enabled the topics to be chosen.

Given that prisoners in Poland do not have access to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, only five topics were proposed during the interviews. However, the reference to narrative identity, the possibility of talking about oneself with regards to family, school and profession or to recount experiences, of enhancing abilities, of wanting to justify skills or to express aspirations and hopes (whether professional or not) in connection with reintegration is just as important as for the French.

FRANCE – Interview Topics

1. *Presentation.* The person was asked to present himself (age, marital and family situation, dwelling place and any further information enabling a fuller presentation of himself).

2. *Engagement in the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process.* How did they come to be informed of the existence of accreditation? Who told them? How did they make the decision to commit themselves to the process? How are things going at present? What assistance and resources do (or did) they have? What are (or were) the obstacles met with and the strategies adopted to overcome, or to go round them? How much was the person's training, qualifications and hopes of accreditation involved in his effort to take part in the accreditation process?

3. *Experiences and memories.* The person was asked to talk about his life experiences, his upbringing, marriage and family, schooling and vocational/professional training, his memories, his fields of interest and life domains.

4. *Relationships* How had the maintaining or breakdown of past relationships reflected on the way in which the person developed their activities and projects? How had relationships in prison (other inmates, custodial officers, teaching staff, medical and social staff) and relationships in the visiting room or in correspondence made easier, or hindered, the accreditation process?

5. *Referral Agents and Values.* For the person, what is the most important thing in their life? Who are the people that count the most for them?

6. *The Future.* The role of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in the reintegration and orientation of the person in their present and future life. What are the prospects open to them?

POLAND – Interview Topics

1. *Presentation*
2. *Experiences and memories*
3. *Relationships*
4. *Referral Agents and Values*
5. *The future*

3.2. Interview with professionals involved

These interviews were conducted on topics relating to the way in which the professional actor was able to follow or to accompany the person in custody committing to the accreditation process. This involved taking into account the professional person's perceptions and means of intervention, depending on his position and his specific duties in relation to the prison, internal or external, but also depending on his attitudes, his involvement, his interaction with the person in custody, before and during the candidate's commitment to the process.

FRANCE – Interview Topics

Eight topics were offered to the professionals that we met:

1. *Perception of the experience of the person in custody;*
2. *Collecting information concerning the offender's prior experience (professional or otherwise). When and how was this information obtained? What difficulties did the person in custody have in obtaining it? What assistance did the professional give in this search for information? What are the administrative, educational, relational, psychological conditions that might facilitate or hinder this search?*
3. *Conduct of teaching and type. Relation to time and to space; where do the difficulties arise and what are the means of reducing them.*
4. *Professional knowledge retained. How to assist in the description of this knowledge?*
5. *Current experience of those in custody. What educational strategies are proposed to facilitate the accreditation process?*
6. *Educational, administrative, social and psychological follow-up of the person in custody. What are the conditions of follow-up and how effective are they? How do those in custody react to this follow-up, according to the professionals? Do the professionals get any feedback after accreditation of prior (experiential) learning has been obtained?*
7. *The professional partners involved in the accreditation process. Who are they? How does the interrelation between the involvement of these various professional people work? How are they complementary?*
8. *Perception of his implication. How does he perceive his role in terms of stimulus or of facilitation, or in terms of hindrances or of difficulties perceived?*

POLAND – Interview Topics

For reasons already mentioned, notably because the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process does not exist in the Polish prison in Rzeszów, the interview structure for Polish personnel was based on different topics:

1. *Introduction of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process in the Polish context: opportunities and obstacles.*
2. *Profile of the Polish prisoner: qualities, strengths or weaknesses.*
3. *Image of those in custody in the general population and in the media.*
4. *Reintegration of offenders and their interest in work and in accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.*
5. *Follow-up of prisoners after their release.*
6. *Position of prisoners in the labour market.*
7. *Working conditions and possibilities of training for prison personnel.*

3.3. Scale of self-esteem

Self-esteem is the way in which a person assesses himself, positively or negatively, in various fields of activity. We propose using a self-esteem scale called *Serthual*, developed at the University of Lisbon by Professor Doutor João Hipólito based on the Rogers scale and that of the new Toulouse self-esteem scale (Tap; Hipólito; Melo; Tecedeiro, 2004). The Serthual scale (*cf.* Appendix 2a, 2b) enables assessment of positive and negative self-esteem based on ten attributes (5 positive and 5 negative, each including 6 statements i.e. 60 statements in all) and obtention of an overall differential index.

Positive Self-esteem	
Positive attributes	Positive Statements
General self-satisfaction (A+): <i>the person declares he has an optimistic and positive view of himself</i>	I am optimistic I have a positive attitude towards myself I am always looking to assert myself in the eyes of others I feel good about myself In general, I have confidence in myself I have a good opinion of myself
Social and normative development (B+): <i>the person wants to do great things in his life and take his place in the community</i>	I will be very pleased with myself if I can do great things in my life I am faithful in friendship I like group activities I believe that everyone should have a role in the community I would like to take part in solidarity movements At work others seek my company
Social and emotional maturity (C+): <i>the person feels responsible and likes making decisions</i>	I am a responsible person Generally, I succeed in making my decisions and sticking to them I am a rational person I am tolerant I feel emotionally mature My employers or teachers are satisfied with me
Physical or intellectual evaluation (D+): <i>the person values physique, ambition and intelligence</i>	I am sexually attractive I am ambitious I am intelligent My physique easily pleases I am proud of my body I am satisfied with my physical performance
Social, academic and professional evaluation (E+): <i>the person appreciates relationships with others and is satisfied with his results</i>	Generally, I like people I am agreeable I work hard I am very sociable I am confident of my future I am proud of my professional or academic performance
Negative self-esteem	
Negative attributes	Negative statements
Denial and self-devaluation (F-): <i>the person belittles himself, does not have self-respect</i>	I feel that no one can really help me I feel apathetic I have the feeling that I don't know how to face up to events I do not respect myself I am a failure I perceive myself to be without hope
Relational tensions (G-): <i>the person feels isolated, believes that others avoid him and mistrust him</i>	Others have doubts about me People get bored in company I have the impression of not doing things as well as others I am not very attractive physically I have a tendency to avoid initiative in a group In a group I often get a feeling of isolation
Anomic disorders (H-): <i>the person does not have many values or reference models</i>	I have few values and personal standards My decisions are not taken by myself I am afraid of sexual relations I am really disturbed I am someone who cannot be trusted I have no value
Emotional tension (I-): <i>the person has little emotional control</i>	I have difficulty in controlling my aggressiveness I am impulsive I get angry very easily I am worked up and tense I use stimulants (coffee, tobacco, alcohol) to feel better I am easily discouraged by poor professional or academic results
Hostility with regard to self (J-): <i>the person is frightened of failure and of confronting difficulties.</i>	I am often preoccupied with myself with regard to what I do My hardest battles are with myself I avoid dealing with crises or difficulties I have difficulty making decisions I am afraid of failing at something I really want I do not feel very sure of myself

3.4. Value Scale

A number of studies have enabled the importance of values for people in difficulty to be identified (Nunes *et al*, 1998; Vinay *et al*, 2003; Nunes, 2001). These authors have developed scales from a list of two hundred and eleven values (personal, social, cultural, professional). We will list the twenty values already selected during a Franco-Portuguese research project (Tap and Vasconcelos, 2004). They permit verification of the way in which people appreciate these different values.

1	Friendship	6	Equality	11	Freedom	16	Quality of life
2	Love	7	Hope	12	Pleasure	17	Religion
3	Money	8	Family	13	Power	18	Health
4	Luck	9	Hygiene	14	Profession	19	Solidarity
5	Dignity	10	Justice	15	Protection	20	Work

The instructions are: *“The following twenty words represent values. Give them a score from 1 to 20 according to the importance you give to each of the values concerned.”*

3.5. Self-assessment using life domains (Strat’ago)

Strat’Ago (Llorca, 2007) is a tool for accompanying individual projects and has been developed to help those wishing to get their project off the ground. It enables the person:

- to set in motion a project dynamic by spotting his resources and activating them,
- to widen his perception of the density and complexity of his network and to reinforce the perception of resources,
- to pick out his style for conducting the project.

The support medium is a circular drawing representing all the life domains (in the form of small circles or stickers) of a person on one page. The central circle/sticker represents the person ("Me"). The other circles/stickers represent various aspects of life. The person is asked to go from one circle/sticker to the next and to describe his situation with regard to the various topics proposed on the stickers (work, leisure activities, training, family, accommodation, friends, the law, health, money, politics, transport, religion). The person can add other aspects in place of the two circles/stickers with a question mark.

By organizing a route from circle/sticker to circle/sticker, the person will be able to take stock of the various aspects of his life and give them a positive or a negative value. The negative points can be transformed into goals to be attained and constraints to be overcome, and the positive points into resources which can be activated.

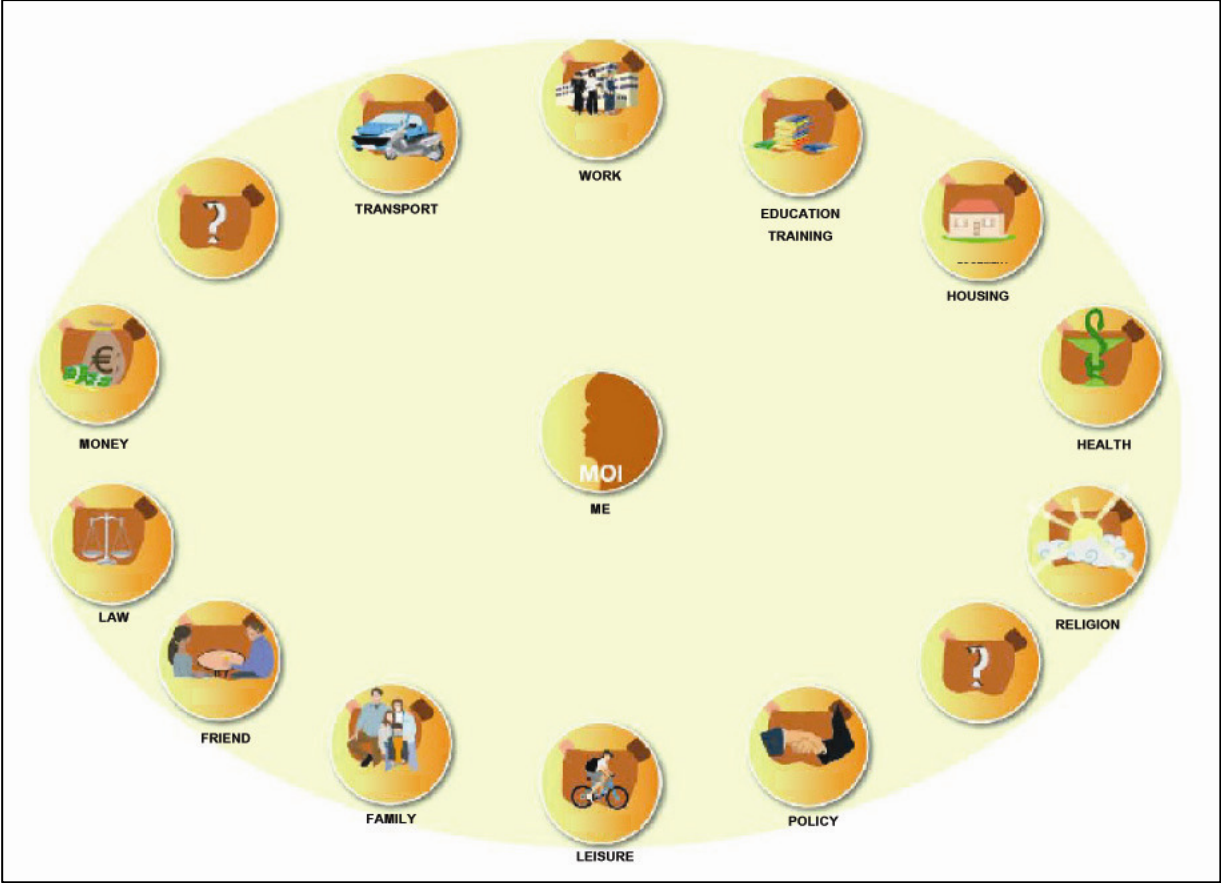


Diagram 4. Strat'ago (support medium)

The instructions are: “You need to go back to the life domains identified during the first interview, to say how others will play a part in these aspects of life, to construct your project strategies, (goals, resources), to formulate objectives and to draw up your plan of action with the help and support of the contacts in your networks.”

Chapter 6 – DATA ANALYSIS

1. THE LINK BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM, VALUES, AND SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PERSONAL DOMAINS

Data collected from the tests proposed during the interviews with 10 people in custody and with 15 professionals enabled us to show a characteristic link between choice of values and level of self-esteem.

1.1. Self-esteem of those in custody: differences according to country

Positive attributes

French prisoners have a slightly higher level of self-esteem, although the differences are not significant, because of the variations in differences according to attributes or to statements. For example, Polish prisoners have higher scores for *physical and intellectual evaluation* (D+) and for *social and emotional maturity* (C+) whereas French prisoners have better scores for *social evaluation* (E+) and for *social and normative expansion* (B+). This latter attribute implies an ability to project into the future. The difference in favour of Polish prisoners becomes significant for statements 17 “*I feel emotionally mature*” and 21 “*I am intelligent*.” The differences in favour of French prisoners concern statements 24 “*I am satisfied with my physical performance*” and 30 “*I am proud of my academic and professional performance*.”

Negative attributes

Polish prisoners have higher scores. However, French prisoners have a non-significant, higher score for the attribute “*hostility with regard to self*” (J-). But the difference becomes significant for the statement “*I am someone who cannot be trusted*” (FR. 4.00; PL. 1.60); whereas Polish prisoners have significantly higher scores for statements 5 “*I am a failure*” and 13 “*I have few values and personal standards*.”

It needs to be remembered, of course, that these positive or negative results, in an exploratory survey consisting of a small number of prisoners, need to be taken with all the usual precautions.

1.2. Values in the two populations

From statistical analysis of the data collected, the values can be classed in four categories:

- Emotional values (religion, dignity, protection, friendship, love),
- Hedonistic values (profession, quality of life, pleasure),
- Everyday values (power, money, work, luck, family, health, hygiene),
- Universal values (justice, equality, solidarity, freedom, hope).

Differences between those in custody and professionals

Overall, the prisoners tend to appreciate Everyday values and in particular luck, profession and work.

The professionals tend to appreciate Universal values overall and in particular equality, justice and solidarity.

Differences between those in custody: French and Polish

The French prisoners tend to appreciate Everyday and Hedonistic values overall, and in particular money, work, profession and health.

The Polish prisoners tend to appreciate Emotional and Universal values overall, and in particular freedom, love, family, protection and religion.

Differences between professionals: French and Polish

The professionals favour the same values. The French appreciate Universal and Hedonistic values overall and, in particular, equality, freedom, pleasure, profession, solidarity, money and hope. Polish professionals appreciate Emotional and Everyday values overall and, in particular, luck, dignity, religion, love, friendship and protection.

The contrast between categories of values is the same for professionals and prisoners alike.

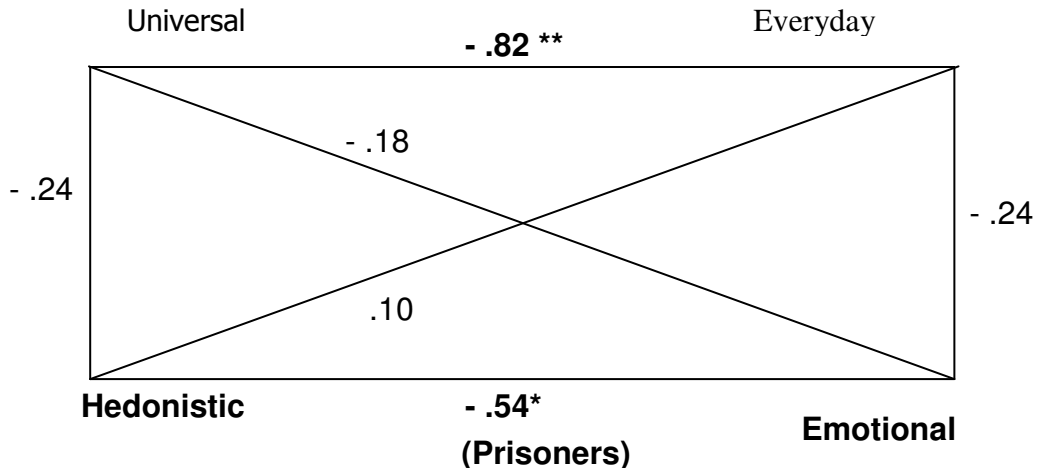


Chart 1. Correlations between value groups - prisoners.

The same calculations made from the answers of the professionals show the same observations (Chart 2) concerning the contrasts mentioned above. However, here we can see that Universal values are not only opposed to Everyday values, but also to Emotional Values, in the answers from professionals.

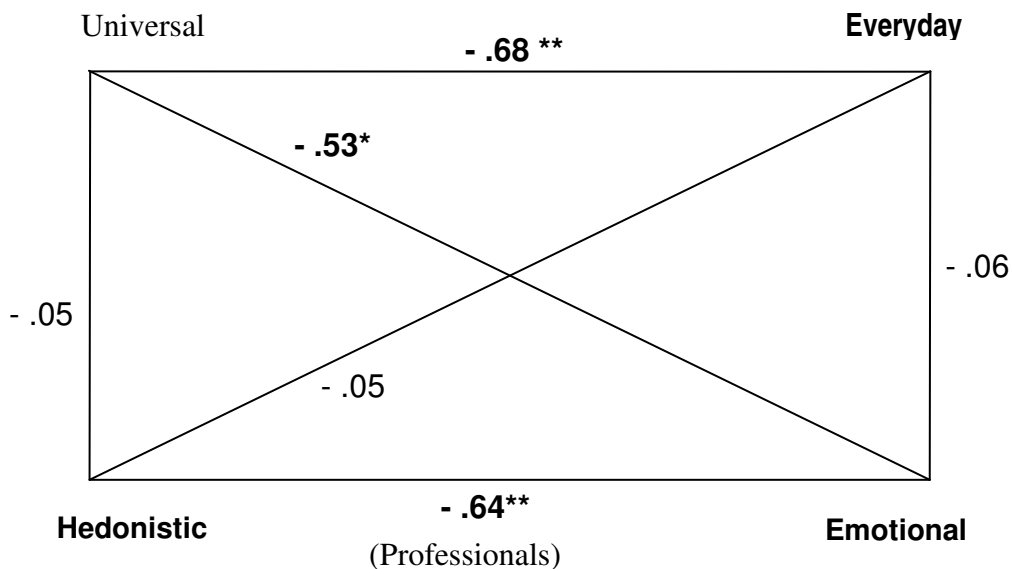


Chart 2. Correlations between value groups - professionals

Differences according to gender: French professionals

The differences between men and women only concern two values: women give particular value to *hope and pleasure*. But overall they appreciate *Universal values* more than the men, while the latter appreciate *Everyday values* more than the women.

1.3. The link between values and self-esteem for offenders

We will limit analysis of the links between values and self-esteem to the comparison between the four value systems (Universal *versus* Everyday, and Emotional *versus* Hedonistic) and the overall scores for self-esteem (positive, negative and final differential).

The links between Universal values (justice, equality, solidarity, freedom, hope) and self-esteem

The links between Universal values, the positive score and the final self-esteem score (positive minus negative) are positive but non significant. Conversely, with the negative self-esteem score, the link is negative but slight. In conclusion, appreciation of Universal values correlates only slightly with self-esteem. However, it can be noted that this appreciation correlates negatively with the attribute J- (*hostility with regard to self*, $-.73^*$) of negative assessment of self.

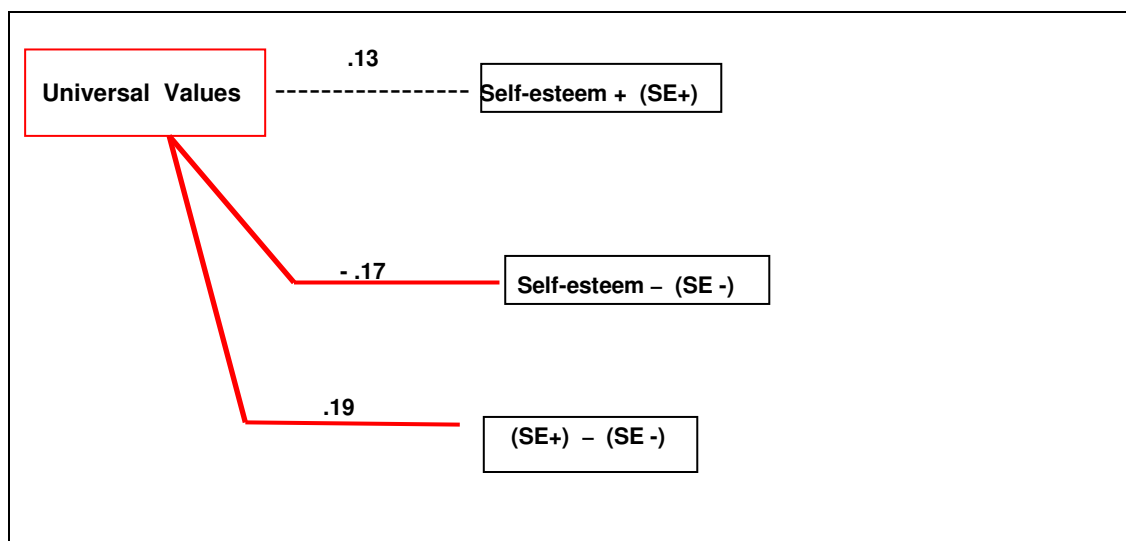


Table 1. Link (slight positive) between Universal Values and Self-esteem

THIS RESULT COULD IMPLY THAT APPRECIATION OF UNIVERSAL VALUES (EQUALITY, JUSTICE, SOLIDARITY) GOES TOGETHER WITH DISTANCING IN RELATION TO INTERNAL TENSIONS AND TO NEGATIVE EVERYDAY REALITIES.

The link between Everyday Values (power, money, work, luck, family, health, hygiene) and self-esteem

The links between appreciation of Everyday values and the positive and differential scores of self-esteem are negative but statistically non significant. On the other hand, it should be noted that attribute C+ (*social and emotional maturity*) correlates negatively and in a significant manner ($-.69^*$) with Everyday values. Conversely, those who appreciate Everyday values more strongly are also those who emphasize the answers to the negative attribute J- (*hostility with regard to self*, $.77^{**}$).

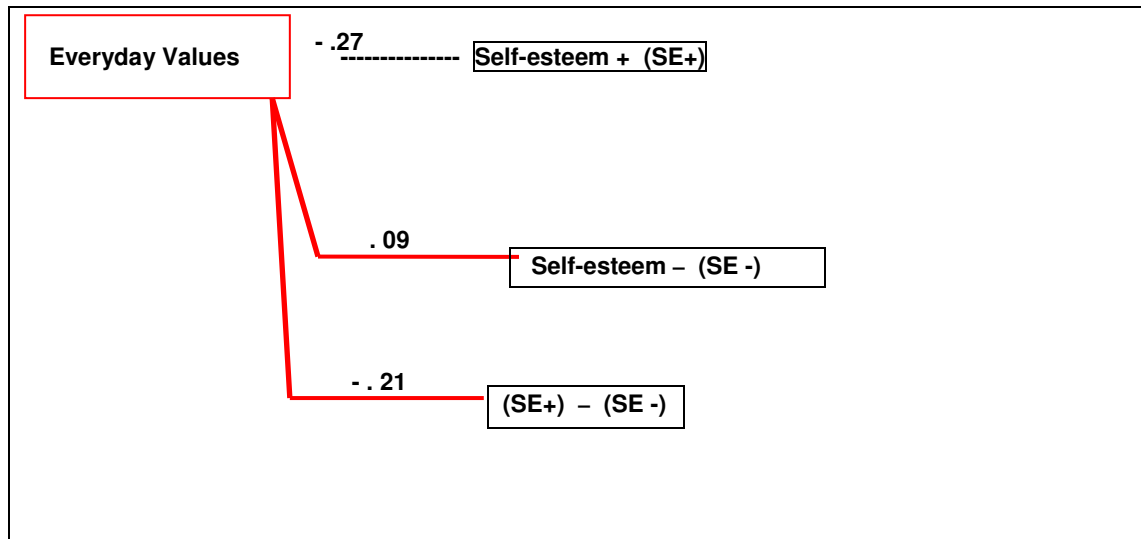


Table 2. Link (low negative) between Everyday Values and Self-esteem

THE CONTRAST ALREADY MENTIONED BETWEEN APPRECIATING UNIVERSAL VALUES AND APPRECIATING EVERYDAY VALUES IS THEREFORE ASSOCIATED WITH DIFFERENCES AT THE LEVEL OF POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SELF.

The link between Emotional Values (religion, dignity, protection, friendship and love) and self-esteem.

The correlation between appreciation of Emotional Values and negative self-esteem is significant ($.69^*$) and, of course, affects final residual self-esteem ($-.53$).

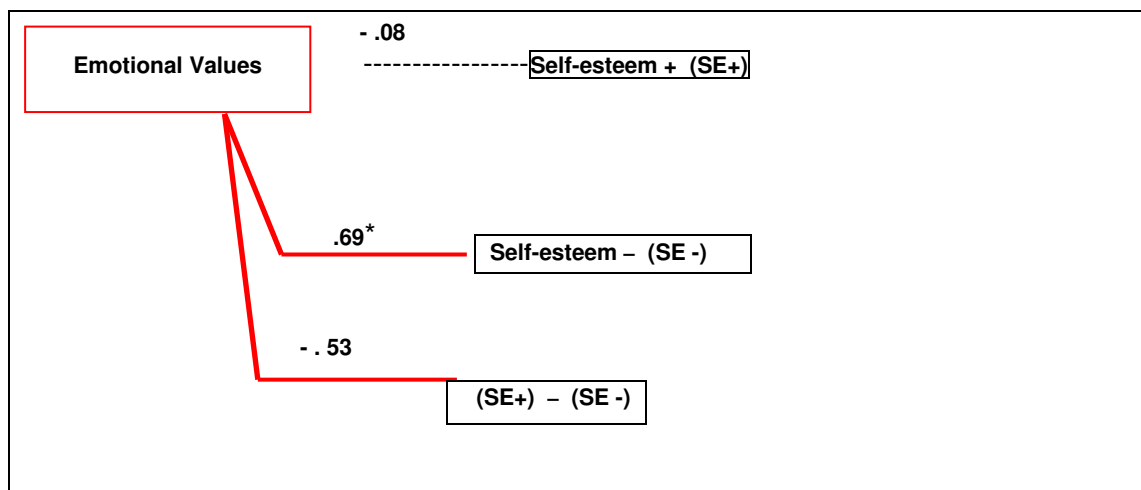


Table 3. Link (strong negative) between Emotional Values and Self-esteem

WE THEREFORE SUPPOSE THAT REFERENCES TO RELIGION, PROTECTION, FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE TAKE PLACE AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF VULNERABILITY, UNCERTAINTY AND TENSION AND ENABLE THE PERSON TO GIVE MEANING TO OR TO COMPENSATE FOR EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES. INDEED, IT IS RELATIONAL TENSIONS ($.70^*$), EMOTIONAL TENSION ($.67^*$) AND ANOMIC DISORDERS ($.70^*$) THAT ARE THE MOST STRONGLY ASSOCIATED WITH EMOTIONAL VALUES.

The link between Hedonistic Values (profession, pleasure, quality of life) and self-esteem.

The link between the scores for Hedonistic Values and the score for “differential (SE+) – (SE-)” self-esteem is positive and significant (.72*) Conversely, those who appreciate Hedonistic Values have a tendency to reject statements of negative self-esteem, in particular G- (*Relational tensions*), H- (*anomic disorders*) and I- (*emotional tension*). This rejection has, of course, direct effects on the low negative self-esteem score. (-.74)

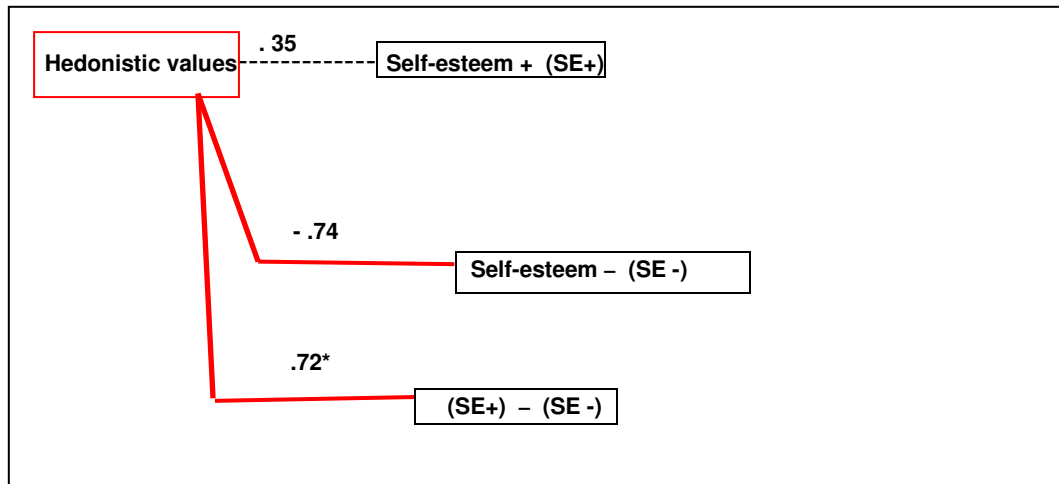


Table 4. *Link (strong positive) between Hedonistic values and Self-esteem*

1.4. Self-assessment of personal domains

Where Strat'Agos was used during the interviews, part of the data echoes the qualitative analysis.

We noted that:

- 4 life domains were negatively assessed: religion, politics, the law and power,
- 4 topics were added: love (by four people), accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (by two people), prison (by one person), all three evaluated positively, and power (by two people) evaluated negatively,
- family, home (accommodation), work, love and health were strongly valued.

The *French* placed a higher value, for themselves, on health, work, friends and money, while the *Poles* placed a higher value on training, accommodation (home), family, the law, religion and love.

The *French* discredited religion and the law, while the *Poles* discredited power.

For reasons of anonymity the names of the interviewees have been changed.

2. NARRATIVE IDENTITY OF OFFENDERS IN FRANCE AND IN POLAND

2.1. Commitment to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process in custody, life domains and project. Five life stories from France.

Right away, **Mr Arnaud** mentions the difficulties met with in prison with regard to thinking or work.

“You need to be mentally strong when there's water running down the walls in your cell. Sometimes, it's cold. As for television, that's a real scam (laughs...)... They make us pay € 30 per person ... If we're three to a cell, that's € 90 a month (silence). Well, I wrote a note saying I'm not paying anymore!”

When the offender has a cell to himself or with one other inmate only, the situation tends to be better. But Mr Arnaud, who has just committed to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, explains the reason for his commitment:

“ I think that above all accreditation will help me get a job, because nowadays they aren't really interested in your experience; they want to know if you have qualifications... because having a qualification means that you have some experience. Someone without any qualifications, you don't know what they can do, what they can't do (long pause)... Work is what allows you to get by in life, earning money (long pause)... Training is useful to find a job... Following a training course to get a qualification, to improve yourself... Everything is based on money. Without money, you have nowhere to live, no training, no health care, no leisure activities.”

But one of his concerns is the disappointment arising from the lack of links with his friends outside the prison, who do not communicate with him, or write to him:

“ A lot of people think they've got friends, but in fact, they haven't got any.... in prison you see [who they really are]: if you receive letters, or if you don't... People don't care... Friendship is not something to be proved, but when you like someone, you think about what they're doing, you at least show some interest in what they are doing, it doesn't cost anything to send letters... or ... (pause).”

At the time of the interview, Mr Arnaud was preparing a vocational training certificate (level 5) to become a bricklayer/stonemason by accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.

Mr Bouchon explains his commitment to the accreditation process:

“I’ve got quite a lot of work experience in my field, but there wasn’t any qualification before, the job itself hasn’t been recognised for long... so it’s a real opportunity... Getting into a training course leading to qualification is a real plus, that can be useful outside... Work is important too, above all to have an income, and for state of mind.”

But life in prison implies difficult living conditions:

« It’s unsanitary ... There are rats as big as cats. It’s really filthy...Once it’s clean it’s ok. The most difficult thing is being imprisoned.”

To combat the negative effects of confinement, you need to take advantage as much as possible of the activities offered:

“I often ask the head custodial officer, I often write to him, almost once a week, to take part in as many activities as possible, so that I don’t stay confined, so that I’m not forgotten ... Here, people get forgotten. You’re left alone 22 hours in a cell and that’s it (pause)... The guards don’t want to know... In prison, I consider training to be a leisure activity because it gets you out of your cell... Reading makes me calm in the evening when I’m stressed.”

He has rather bad memories of school.

“ ... In fact, I was never very studious. I’ve always been a doer.... I couldn’t leave fast enough. So there’s gaps and I have some regrets about that.”

On the other hand, he remembers his former professional activities with pleasure. He reinforces his self-esteem and he thus finds reasons to continue with the accreditation process:

“I like applying coatings, but everything I did, I did with pleasure. I firmly believe in it [work,] whatever the job is I don’t get sick of it,. My best experience, at the factory, was the paintwork put in the oven. Steel security doors were sprinkled with paint and then they went into an oven to make the paint spread ... It was an odd process...I found it interesting, it was good.”

In terms of social life inside the prison, Mr Bouchon gets on quite well with the personnel and with the other prisoners. With regard to the latter, he says:

“ ... There are ups and downs, but there are more ups than downs. We see each other at activities, at exercise time, that means every day. We talk about most everything, our children, things on our minds,... there are some not so nice people in here, but there are others who have worked for a good part of their lives too.”

As to the question about the people who are important to him, in prison, his immediate answer is:

“ The most important person...for me it’s the psychologist... The psychologist... is important during the time in prison... (Health) is important... If you feel down, there’s always something wrong.”

At the time of the interview, Mr Bouchon was preparing a vocational training certificate (level 5) to become a bricklayer/stonemason through accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.

Mr Chaumet

He obtained a BTS (a higher vocational qualification) through the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process. He shows quite clearly how important this qualification is for him, not only for when he is released, but also for his self-esteem when he considers his life:

“As soon as I was incarcerated, I said to myself: I mustn’t waste any time, and one of the solutions was to go back to school. I hadn’t previously been able to go on to higher education, so I was overjoyed at the possibility of obtaining a higher education diploma here, and that was what gave me the motivation to commit to the accreditation process. I found people who were motivated to help and support me... it worked fantastically!... This accreditation process represents the dream I had as a teenager... I was happy to be hopeful and I am happy I got through... Month after month, the sentence goes on but preparing and producing something means hope. It’s also a way of increasing one’s chances of reintegration, because generally speaking, the more qualified you are, the luckier you are to find a job... At the school, the place where accreditation took place, nobody could’ve guessed I was a prisoner, someone who had been let out (for the day)... The accreditation process was a real shot in the arm for me for a long time, offering hope and satisfaction... That was really a great thing, and I had been given a chance. Getting a higher qualification, for me, was a childhood, or let’s say a teenager’s, dream come true.”

In terms of obstacles, he mentions his emotional and family life, related to the visiting room and the post:

“At the beginning I saw my girlfriend in the visiting room; who was to wait for me for ten years and who waited a month and a half. It’s always the same !... I’d rather receive letters than see people in the visiting room because what annoys me in the visiting room is that you’re frisked at the end, you have to take your clothes off... That gets on my nerves... Receiving letters is better.”

On the value scale, he gives a poor mark to family (3/20), which doesn't prevent him from hoping:

“Work is the most important thing for me, it’s what determines how you live. If you don’t have a job, it’s difficult to have a family, (and) if you don’t have a family, you don’t have a life. Everything is related to work somehow... Having somewhere to live is almost like family... Health, work and somewhere to live... these are the three main elements for a stable and reasonable life.... Family is good when it’s united, otherwise you can do without it.”

On the other hand, his present relations, inside the prison, are positive:

“Servicemen are very well looked upon by the other prisoners... They acknowledge the training, the intelligence, and the muscles too, there is no mistake about that...”

He received a lot of help, both locally (the teacher, or his cell mate) and from outside (former colleagues):

“It was mostly material help, the opportunity of going to the classroom on the 6th floor regularly not to say everyday It’s not easy in a prison to have this attitude, as a prisoner. I had the possibility of using a PC and regularly I made this teacher read what I produced, which enabled me reformulate or note the typing errors, or things like that... I was able to move forward a lot thanks to my cell mate because he had a computer and let me use it as long as I wanted to. It’s true that that enabled me to make great progress ... I also got some help from former colleagues.”

Finally, he even gets to the point of considering his life in prison as something positive:

“If I’m in prison, there’s a good reason, but I am disappointed to have been listened to, without having been heard... I regret the reason for my being here, but I’m not unhappy to have come here.... From the very first hour, the very first day in prison, I knew my life was going to have to change and that I had to leave better than when I came in.”

Consequently, what's important in life to him is:

“ ... to keep up my morale, to have a goal, to have the opportunity of feeling reassured. It's like everything, in fact, it's like in normal life: You need to have a carrot that that makes you move forward, ... the possibility of having one's sentence reduced. You need to keep up some sort of social life, you need to have people you can talk to. Above all, and that's the real lesson of prison, which is valid outside too, you need to choose those around you. A dream, yes, a dream, you need to have an objective, you need to give yourself the means of reaching it... I think that it's hope that is the most important.”

This positive attitude comes both from the recognition that others offer him and the effort to fulfil his dreams, those of his teenage years, and the will to rebuild himself and his life. Filling in the scale of self-esteem, he makes this comment with a touch of humour. "Others have doubts about me." :

“ Others have doubts about me?” No. However, I wish they would have more doubts about me...that would give me a break!”

This reaction shows clearly that he sees his own value in the way others see him, but it also implies that he will need to be up to the task, to meet the expectations of others, that he internalizes as being his own expectations.

At the time of the interview, Mr Chaumet had been awarded a professional qualification (level 3) as office manager through the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process.

Mr Eluard

Right away, he mentions the break up caused by his incarceration... The fact that he's in prison.

"I was living with someone but because of my present circumstances, that is no longer the case. She doesn't support me anymore... that's it!"

So, he's going to motivate himself to do activities and adapt himself to prison life:

"I didn't think that the crimes I had committed would involve such a long sentence. From the moment I realized it was going to be a long time, I told myself I had to do something concrete and take advantage of my incarceration to try to improve myself, so that I would not be out of touch on my discharge from prison, so right from then I started preparing for my reintegration."

"When you work, time in prison goes by more quickly. You also get some income which is relatively interesting for prison. It is not much for the outside world, but in prison, it enables some small comforts."

As for his success with the BTS, he mentions the initial difficulties, but then demonstrates how he succeeded in hanging on:

"At the beginning, I wasn't very confident. I didn't really know what I was getting into. I have to admit... it required taking steps, making approaches, having to look back, which was hard,... but it was good, I liked it. It took time to put the file together and then, gradually... the information came back, the memory ... (and then)... We did the job without any qualifications, and that's very creditworthy, it's recognition of work that was done... When you're in prison, it's very difficult to concentrate, especially in this sort of prison. It was hard at the beginning, sometimes I was feeling OK and sometimes I wasn't with it ... not on the ball in relation to what I was doing. However, gradually, I became calmer and I carried out my project correctly... When I was stressed, the accreditation advisor came more to help me.... When you start to prepare a diploma at this level of qualification - then living with several prisoners, and working more inside the building, causes more stress. (In addition) when I started out, I was awaiting trial, I was thinking about my case... the accreditation process was motivating because there was a goal at the end ... What matters is when you manage to build yourself back up again. I got through, that's what's important. In prison, in the classroom, I was stressed a lot, I was under a lot of pressure. But finally it went well. I was ready."

But what makes him even happier is the fact that his son no longer has a negative image of him, as was undoubtedly the case when he went into prison:

"I'll give you a concrete example.... When I went into prison, my son gave up his studies... When he heard that I had managed to get a BTS in prison, he went back to school... He's preparing a commercial qualification and by chance he's sitting the exam next week. I hope he passes.... He wants to get a BTS, like me. So, for me, everything is positive at the family level, it really had a positive result, and this offers real hope."

Professionally speaking, he only has good memories and that enhances his self image:

"Since you have to work to earn your living, I don't mind working. I am able to do many different things. The only thing that matters is finding a way to earn money."

But he comes back to the subject of money again, to convince himself of the need to change his attitude, in particular by reinvesting in the family:

"What was important before, was to make money. I was obsessed by that. I would say that I was addicted to it, like drugs... That's the reason I'm here in prison today. Now, what is important for me is my family... When I'm released I want to be able to spend more time with my family than spend time making money. I'd rather just have an ordinary life, a normal life, that's what's most important for me."

At the time of the interview, Mr Eluard had been awarded a professional qualification (level 3) as salesman through the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process.

Mr Fournier

He immediately mentions the fact that you need to adapt to life in prison:

“You need to get used to it... to prison. As for me, I’ve got objectives so I’m active, not passive... A lot of prisoners have a passive attitude in prison.... Not me.... That’s the reason I took up several activities, to stay active, not passive... What matters is to have goals and that gives meaning to life.”

He is very sensitive to the need to not confuse the attitudes and positions that you can have outside prison with those you can have inside. For example, when it came to answering the self-esteem questionnaire, he says that the statements suggested don’t fit with life in prison and that you can only answer these questions from the point of view of being outside, before and after life in prison:

“If you take “I’m a responsible person”: here, in prison, what can I be responsible for? I’m responsible for nothing! These questions are meaningless in a prison. If I take it to mean now, today, they are meaningless. If I consider from the point of view of being outside, then yes, I’m a responsible person.”

The advantage of the accreditation process is to bridge the gulf between life in prison and preparation for reintegration into the community:

“For me, this accreditation process is very good because we started with the outline...The meetings enabled me to keep things in perspective, and in between I produced stuff. The greatest amount of work was done at school...We worked alone, but with help always possible. In the cell, it’s not easy because at the beginning there were three of us in the cell...(On the other hand) the teacher helped us a lot... If we had a problem, he would come and help us... We did most of our thinking in the classroom, rather than in our cells...The accreditation process is a chance for my professional future, preparing for release, for my reintegration into the community...It will bring recognition...(even though) I was already recognized as a competent worker. My best work experience was related to the hurricane in 1999. As I was an electrician, that was a really great work experience for me, ...communication with people, they were panicking for no reason. I loved it.”

“I am preparing for my release, for my future, but I haven’t got any detailed plans yet 'cos I’ve still got a long time to go in here. It’s for me, for my own mental attitude, for prison the way I want to live it...”

When release is still a long way off, preparation for reintegration tends to get mixed up with a “unsuitable projection.” It should be said that aspiration and hope should not be mistaken for a “project.” A project needs to be planned.

At the time of the interview, Mr Fournier was preparing a professional qualification (level 4) as electrical systems technician-lineman through the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process.

2.2. Adaptation to the prison environment, life domains and projects

Five life stories from Poland

Mr Gerek

He attaches great importance to family interactions and the spatial spread of “family geography,” in terms of “diaspora”. From the notion of “family home” he took us around the world. This spread appeared at the outset with the “*most important childhood memory.*”

“I was five, my mother brought me an atlas... with a globe on the cover. She showed me what the world looked like. From the moment I had that atlas, I knew that I was going to with my life: visit the world. I also knew that to do that I’d have to learn a lot of things.”

The family becomes the crucible of “globalisation.”

“(We were) a big family, all helping each other; I used to run in the garden (I was everybody’s pet), later,... my brother,... a very happy childhood, even if the family was incomplete, 'cos my dad left my mum when I was about a year old...My grandma loved me, grandpa too. Unfortunately he died very early on, he taught me how to learn, so as to be someone important...”

For Mr Gerek, the important people from his past are “*Mum, the two grannies, the granddads too... These people imprinted values that were to be essential in my life. My granddad on my dad's side used to repeat that pride was important, that we should never neglect our values, whatever the price we’re offered [to betray them].*”

[friends] *“...I had a lot of friends...I used to take part in school activities and in the library When I was 13, I replaced the librarian who’d had an accident... I was about in charge of the library.”*

This reference to the library in his past and to books becomes strangely central to Mr Gerek’s adaptation to prison:

“[In prison] I work as a librarian ...This job helped me a lot 'cos I can do what I like best, reading books.”

But a spread-out family means lack of proximity:

“My grandparents really didn’t want my parents to separate... My parents tried living together again... But it didn’t work, ...my father met someone and finally remarried...The family living in the United States , the UK and in Germany helped us a lot and I didn’t have any financial problems...”

Imprisonment has reduced yet again those who maintain links with him these days:

“ At the moment I only trust my mother ...Before, all the friends I used to have a wild time with, or who needed help to find a job in the UK, knew where to find me... Now, they don’t want to know!”

To construct his identity and build up his professional abilities (not accredited) Mr Gerek had to move to England:

“December 28th 1981, I started working (washing dishes) in the UK, in a Greek restaurant. On the 3rd day, I was ready to go back to Poland, but I received my wages for the 3 days: £65 ... the equivalent of what my mother got for a whole months work. So I didn’t want go back any more. I lost 27 kilos, but I put money aside. I had to learn the language. I paid £550 for English lessons. The lessons were from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and then I went to work, finishing at 5 a.m. That lasted 6 months...It was a great time, despite the hard work to be able to pay for the classes, but it was the best period of my life.”

Apart from his family relations, Mr Gerek mentions two male friendships as being important in his life:

“The first was in England, it lasted 8 years. I was 28 when we split up. I know he died in a car crash in Australia. His mother called me up and told me he had died, but he had my photo in his wallet. I couldn’t get over that news...”

This painful memory leads him to talk of his own death and of his way of leaving an impression:

“When I die, I want my ashes to be thrown into the sea, at Plymouth, no ceremony, no Mass, no religious symbols, no mourning... Just songs “The show must go on” and “I will follow the sun.” Traces of me must only remain in people’s hearts.”

The second, more recent, relationship occurred just before Mr Gerek was sent to prison, and led to disillusion with regard to the strength of friendship (as we’ve also seen with regard to love for the French prisoners):

“.. I had a relationship with someone else. He was very important, I think the most important (for me). I don’t think I’ll ever know somebody like that again...He visited me at the beginning, but then he stopped. I thought he’d always be with me, but apparently he thought otherwise. He didn’t want to go on like that. You know, you can’t force anybody...If he can’t wait that long, that’s his choice and his life.”

Mr Gerek mentions his inability to accept pressure: *“Even today, I can’t learn when I’m forced.”*

Mr Helsiek

He lived with his ex-girlfriend, the mother of his second son: *“In prison, I can’t communicate with his mother. She comes back, she leaves me, and finally I told her that we wouldn’t be together when I got out, so she limits my contact with my son!”*

What is the memory that marked him the most:

“ It’s difficult to say.... My mother behaved strangely. She had lovers, I have to say, and there was rowing at home. (One day) a woman came to our place and told my mother to leave her husband alone. That was a bad memory and that’s why I don’t like thinking about my mother. It left its mark to a certain extent. I followed that woman, I must have been about 10. I rang the bell at their place and, crying, told her husband to leave my mother alone, 'cos my parents were rowing because of him. He took me home. I didn’t really understand what was going on. As I grew up, I began to understand.”

« (Once) I tried to commit suicide. But what I really wanted was to gain attention. I hurt my wrist, but so as not to suffer too much. I didn’t want to hurt myself, but to draw attention with the blood. That was because of a girl. I was 15. That’s the only time. My father was more worried than the girl. My arm hurt and I realized it was a stupid thing to do.”

His friends:

“ Friend is too important a word. In prison, it’s difficult to have a friend, real friends. (And yet) I’ve got two. (The first one) is my cell mate. We’ve been together for five years. The other one is in prison in Debica, and will be out soon.”

His prison’s activities:

“I used to read a lot. In prison, it’s difficult to get good books. I’m really lazy, for in all these years I could’ve learnt a foreign language. Today it’s important.”

Paradoxically, his project, once outside, will take him back to the past, to his father, from whom he will seek legitimacy once more:

“When I get out, I would like to see my father’s face, I would like him to be proud of me and the changes in me. I would like to have a family, but perhaps not immediately after release, because I’m tired of women. I would like to have a job, and above all never go back to prison again for you lose too many things there on top of your freedom... for example, the contact with my son, the woman I loved so much. That’s something you can’t get back. You age very quickly.”

Mr Iliouch

He is manifestly still very much focused on family relationships and in particular on his father and his drunkenness. This focus turns to obsession when he gets to the reasons for his imprisonment (his father's murder while he himself was drunk).

With regard to the atmosphere at home: *“There were two variations. One was when my father was not drunk and everything was fine, the second was when my father was drunk and nothing went right. It had always been like that. ...Sometimes, I was beaten. When my father was drunk, he would hit me on the face or kick me. (My parents) were helpful, even too tolerant, for I was threatened with reform school several times in childhood. The Court made the decision, but my parents would never agree. So, I never went there.”*

To a question concerning the moments when he "does not feel good," he answers:

“I do not feel good when someone makes me angry. I am in here for what I am. I can't explain....I killed the person who was closest to me, unconsciously (when drunk), but I hurt people I care for. There wasn't just my father, but my mother's husband and father of my brothers and sister. I don't want to talk about it with anybody. I prefer to think alone, but I can't stop thinking about it...All my problems have been caused by alcohol, the bad things that happened to me because I was drunk. So, I'll stop drinking, since when my mind is clear, I never have any problems.”

Mr Jonak

He recalls his relationships with his family. His relationship with his father was based on abuse. He blames his two brothers and two sisters for having reinforced this. Only his mother and his “grandad” find favour with him.

“You asked who influenced me the most, so I have to say mum and granddad because my dad used to beat me. He drank a bit, and then, when he was still quite young, he had a stroke and became paralysed. He still is. That was when he was still working...My mother was, and still is, very kind. If I did something stupid as a child, she tried to hide it. Dad was aggressive, he liked beating us, especially me, I have to say. I stayed (at home) to help out and if something wasn’t done, I got beaten...I’m a loner. I don’t like people, crowds. I moved away from my sisters and brothers because they always wanted me to lend them money without ever paying it back. They didn’t want to work, just wanted money...When my brother went into the army (I was 17), I sent him money because he needed it. When I went to the army, at 20, he never did that for me.”

His grandad played a major role in teaching him about life, and provided moral and religious support.

“I was very close to my granddad. Yes, he’s the one who influenced me the most. He taught me everything. He died when he was 86, I was 24 then. He always explained life to me, what it was like, how it passed, how to behave. The time spent with my granddad, repairing my bike, or working in the fields, are more important to me than the time spent with boys of my own age. I loved him a lot and the grandad loved me, too, and helped me. He explained how to keep in touch with people, that you need to do good, be kind to others and others will treat you in the same way. My grandad taught me to be kind, and that kindness hurt me several times, but I don’t regret it. I hope it will be rewarded one day. I find the strength to overcome obstacles in my Faith. I pray everyday, and I read the Bible. You find the recipe for life there, especially the essential values: faith, hope and love, but also the courage to put up with everything, calm and harmony with people around you, how to get on well with others, freedom, the strength to fight and to overcome everything.”

Mr Jonak had drinking problems and his many suicide attempts set him apart in prison.

“Being an interior painter exposes you to the danger of addiction to alcohol, because everywhere you work, people offer you a drink, but I know it’s my fault, I didn’t have to drink. When my wife was unfaithful, I drank too much, and then I got laid off at Siarkopol...We’d nothing more to talk about and I started drinking. After my arrest, I tried to commit suicide, I really loved my wife...Today I wouldn’t have done it...In prison, I tried three more times. I’m in here for a murder I didn’t commit, but I am too poor to pay a good defence lawyer. I don’t work (here, at activities), because of my suicide attempts nobody wants to be responsible for me.”

As far as reintegration is concerned, Mr Jonak mainly focuses on his professional skills and on his ability to adapt.

“When I get out, I’d like to take up my trade again: I really miss it a lot much and from what I hear, there’s lots of openings in the building trade. I should be able to get work. I will sell my apartment, rent a one-roomed flat, and start again. Even my wife wanted to take advantage of my kindness, she wanted to do me out of my flat, because the flat belongs to me. I bought it when I was still single. Before the divorce, she used to come here and try to get me to give up the apartment. But I don’t want to give up my home and find myself in the street. I told her no, and she doesn’t come here any more.”

Mr Kocek

In his answers, he developed the following themes:

- The conflicts with his parents (which he feels responsible for, but without feeling guilty), or with his sister, and the importance of his girlfriend, as a positive influence;
- His addictive behaviour, from drugs to alcohol;
- The importance of his job as a cook, both in his life story and in his projects;
- His regrets related to his criminal offences and to the events that led him to prison;
- His projects for reintegration, and his desire to go straight and settle down.

Today, things are better *“the parents are talking to each other. We have lots of contact and good contact. My parents have always been tolerant and protective. When I was going through difficult periods, when my sister and I quarrelled a lot, I stole her clothes and jewels. Sometimes we didn’t talk to each other for several months. We didn’t even see each other at home, and in the street we behaved as if we didn’t know each other. But now, we get on well. She understands I’ve got problems.”*

To the question concerning the important people in his life, he answers: *“Apart from my family, there’s my girlfriend. We’ve known each other for more than 5 years and we’ve been together for 2 ...Now, I’ve only got my girlfriend. I used to have a friend, but he was a drug addict. He was a friend of mine. We could count on each other. But since I’ve been in prison, we’ve lost contact. Friends don’t write. I don’t even want them to write, because they only have one thing to talk about! One of them visited me here, but even my girlfriend told me not to talk to him!”*

With regard to drugs, he says that he started doing drugs when he was 13: *“At that time, from time to time. It was difficult for me to buy them. But (then) I got into the set and they got to know me. It was cannabis. Later on, that wasn’t enough. I started on amphetamines and got hooked. I did two lots of treatment ...”*

His most pleasant memory: *“I don’t know what makes me happy, maybe the state of mind after taking drugs.” “Before my arrest, I changed addictions, I stopped smoking cannabis and started drinking. I used to drink up to 10 cans of beer and just before being arrested I hadn’t stopped for six months...It was a problem for me, and above all, my girlfriend did not accept this behaviour.”*

After school, the professional project. *“My mum always told me I was good at cooking, so I wanted to become a cook and open a restaurant. That was my project.”* He relates with pleasure details about his activities in the restaurant where he was employed: *“In “my” restaurant, we served more than a hundred lunches. We organized weddings and birthdays...I worked with two women cooks and I peeled everything, for it was quick. Then came the frying, preparing the chops...There was a lot of work. They sometimes call my mother to ask when I will be back.” “I was arrested for criminal activity. I will never forgive myself. I don’t know how it happened. I came from work, already drunk, I took a knife, I wanted to steal a woman’s bag, I wanted to cut her bag belt, but I was too drunk and I injured her hand. I was arrested. I only know what the witnesses said. I don’t remember anything. That woman was hurt. I don’t know how I did it. My mum couldn’t believe it. I’m so sorry for that woman. If it’d been my mum. She wasn’t rich either, like my mum. That was the saddest thing of all for me...and the Court decision.”*

In his projects, Mr Kocek constantly associates references to social and emotional life (couple and family) with professional project: this link enables him to develop a wish to fulfil himself in a life that is “full.”

“What I appreciate most in life is loyalty, fidelity, friendship, love. These are the things without which it is difficult to live, family, relatives to whom I can go. It’s not easy, but I can count on my family now, and on my girlfriend...All I want is a family, a good job, and bring up my children so that they become good people...and live a law-abiding life, an honest life.” “When I get out, I intend to take A levels and go to England, or France, to earn money for this restaurant, because my girlfriend is still studying. I would like to work there for a while....I would like to have my own restaurant and serve my dishes. I love Polish cooking, everyone there likes ravioli and stuffed cabbage...If I have enough willpower, I will succeed, with the help of my parents and my girlfriend. And the cooks I used to work with, they will always help me.”

3. ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT FOR PRISONERS FROM PROFESSIONALS

Analysis of the 11 interviews with professionals provides a better understanding of the complexity of the process of implementing accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison, the difficulties perceived and experienced by professionals in the search for information and follow-up strategies, in relation to the activities proposed. It also shows the diversity of positions and levels of involvement.

3.1. Involvement of professionals in providing assistance and support during the accreditation process in France

Accounts from 11 people

Mr Linares

He believes that, at the beginning, it is not possible to know what the potential experience of a person in custody might be, apart from the description written by the prisoner at the time of his commitment to the accreditation process. The work of the local orientation committee will be to classify the person in categories, according to specific criteria.

“The only representation I have of the person is from the written description ...No other means. We have no documents about the previous experience of the person...From what is stated, I ask more technical questions, for example in maintenance, in electricity, or in masonry, etc. It’s also the duration of the previous experience, in whatever field....”

Cooperation between professionals is important. In particular, it facilitates an understanding of the connection between the academic, professional and social data concerning the person, and that helps to situate him better as regards the criteria which must necessarily be present in the file and checked:

“There’s a partnership with the school system... The local orientation committee will class the person, either as regards his vocational training or his school work. We estimate how much work needs to be done. We can thus class those with a low level and let them work.... I go into the workshop every day. I’ll go and see the person who is involved in the accreditation process and ask him how he’s getting on. But he can also come and talk to me. He comes here once a month for a more personal follow-up. We need to make sure no time is lost, this is a detention centre where people don’t stay long, around 4 months, we need to react very quickly, at the local committee level or outside, by making phone calls.”

Mr Minvielle gives us details concerning the usefulness and the limits of his role. He is a go-between, between the authorities and the people involved the accreditation process inside the prison, so his role is to facilitate the coordination of the different actors and monitor the procedure:

“I am attentive to the various needs and applications, in close collaboration with the local education advisor. I may be called upon with regard to specific individual matters and need to talk to the social workers, for instance concerning applications for day parole or adjustment of sentence which then may, or may not, be granted by the judge responsible for executing sentences. The accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process seems to me to be a very interesting tool which is sometimes difficult to put into practice in this type of prison, but it’s a measure that needs facilitation, once the head of the local teaching unit is involved. One of the main difficulties in detention centres is the lack of time; 4 months is not enough to complete the procedure. So follow-up work needs to be organized with the probation and reintegration service in the following six months outside. Then, something can be done.”

The head custodial officers play an important role as mediators between the general running of the prison, management of services and organization of timetables. Those in custody engaged in the accreditation process need to go through them to be granted the daily living conditions and fulfil the requirements of the procedures to be followed in the accreditation process.

Ms Nollean emphasizes her function as a facilitator and co-ordinator.

“At the first meeting on arrival, I try to get an idea of the person’s experience and ask him questions to find out where he’s at. The second stage is to transmit this information to the various partners we have at the detention centre, check out the information and see if the prisoner fulfils the conditions required to then implement an accreditation procedure. I discuss the matter at the next meeting of the local orientation committee...The range is very wide, from experience as a butcher to someone who is working at the university, but with no qualifications. I will then help with the follow-up work for prisoners who go into vocational training (e.g.. industrial cleaning, or painting). I need to take into account the short stay in detention centres, the motivation of the prisoner and his ability to commit to the accreditation process. If he’s motivated, I tell him about the procedures involved, or the prisoner gets the information himself from the posters or from his cell mate, and he will get in touch with me. My two main correspondents are the local education advisor and the local Training and Work Advisor. They check to see if the prisoner fulfils the criteria and his level of motivation. If he fits the bill, he will be placed in a cell for two; the other prisoner may also be doing academic work or be committed to the accreditation process. The prisoner can then take advantage of his time in custody and leave with a diploma recognized by the Ministry of Education...But it’s also true that a prisoner who is occupied is a prisoner who will cause me much less concern while he is in custody. So it works both ways! I also believe that the judge responsible for executing sentences needs to be fully involved in the implementation of the accreditation procedure because in the long run he is the one who will decide to grant day parole for the various external requirements related to the accreditation process.”

Mr Ollier prefers to emphasize the internal conditions making life easier for accreditation candidates: life in the cell, places where they are able to think, the link between technical activities and academic activities, the possibilities for day-release or adjustment of sentence.

“ At the first meeting on entry, I always ask them what work they did outside, whether they have any qualifications, if not, why they didn’t go on with their studies, for those who dropped out of school, whether they’re interested in the accreditation process. We only know what they feel like telling us (the descriptive account). Personal work is not easy when they are two or three to a cell. In the past, for a young adult who is sitting his Baccalauréat., we have been able to put a room at his disposal for three hours. If someone has a skill, for example in cooking, we’ll suggest he works in a general capacity in the kitchens, usually preparing meals, and we’ll also try to organize a slot where he can go back to school. We make sure they have time to do their schoolwork. For the final interview, a day-parole can be granted, or an adjusted sentence, inasmuch as, if the dossier is prepared and has been sent off, that is read as being notice to attend. (Conditions for the interview can then be organised.).

Mr Réjade mentions that

“Often, the first words a prisoner will say is “Yes, yes, I worked for three years.” but when you get down to brass tacks you discover that it wasn’t continuous, or it was moonlighting, or not officially recognized. So you need to take that into account and make sure that he provides conclusive elements with regard to his work experience. When you are almost certain that he has worked for three years and can prove it, you start the procedure with the accreditation advisor. We check to see if he is really able to get all the information needed. Then, we need to get in touch with the family. Next there is a meeting with the accreditation advisor who determines the appropriate professional field and the level of professional activity of the prisoner in relation to the diploma he seeks. After that the teacher tries to spot where there might be any difficulties.”

Mr Verdier emphasizes the importance of enhancing former activities through teaching work. This enhancement need to be verbalized, before the question of writing about them [work activities] comes up. The verbalization will to a certain extent enable re-personalization of self:

“The first teaching activity involves working on the person’s memory and getting it started up again. But you notice that people remember a certain number of things about their professional experience which is often related to emotions, feelings, relationships, rather than types of work and the skills acquired. The first task, for us, will be to help the person verbalize his activities before writing them down. The accreditation process, initially is about what the person has done, his work experience. You then get into a process of individualizing the work experience, especially in detention centres, since each work experience is individual, the memory and description belongs to that person only, who uses his own words to describe it. What seems really important to me, is that it is only process which reinforces professional experience while most of the people in here have a negative view of themselves. This process allows them to enhance their image of themselves, and because it involves telling about it, is not just a dream, it is to move in the direction of another professional project and something concrete. The objective is then to obtain a qualification, a diploma and so forth, and as such that gives meaning to everything that was learnt, to the experience gained, and more generally to the meaning of being in custody.”

The teacher plays an essential part in taking into account, or reorganizing, the abilities of the candidate, in particular because of the importance of writing and drafting in elaboration of the accreditation file, as this will be presented to the committee who make the final decision.

Ms Poinsot emphasizes the importance of learning, or re-learning how to write again. Through this re-learning, those in custody discover new ways of increasing their self-esteem:

“I am going to talk about the women’s quarter only. I contact every person coming in: she can then contact me, at any time. She fills in a form with regard to illiteracy and I find out what her academic level is. Has she had any training? Has she worked? What sort of work? What does she want to do? Does she have any projects with regard to reintegration? I systematically present the accreditation process if she fits the bill.”

Ms Poinso then develops the way in which those in custody will get back in touch with writing, starting with motivation and related to the need to recover self-esteem. This experience is in itself a reinforcement of self by redefining prior activities:

“I show them what we do at the school. Then, I suggest working on their CV’s. I get them to talk about themselves little by little...I try to reinforce the professional experience of those who explain what they did to the others. ...For some, it’s not easy to state what they did, what the tasks were, where they were carried out...Using words to define an activity is already important...(In order to help them) They need time, confidence has to be built up, confidence in me but also in the group. They need to realize that the class group has rules which do not permit verbal aggression, all this takes time to set up. Once confidence reigns, it’s fine.”

Confidence spreads to the teacher, but also to self *“I didn’t think I’d be able to do that...I’m happy..., etc.”*

This satisfaction with self also involves improvement of self-image through telling one’s story, giving a globally positive value to what has been experienced in the past, even if some moments may have been painful and difficult:

“For a person who is not used to writing, who doesn’t construct their sentences very well, I use a chronological grid which is based on the learning period. Roughly speaking, there’s the time for initial training, the time when you’re little, at school. We talk a lot about school and their feelings about school...when they were children... (then) their adolescence ...For women, it’s often the case that their adolescence went by too quickly, straight into a family, from child to mother, so to speak. It’s difficult to convince them that they have professional knowledge, for example one woman had been a cleaner all her life. She knew a lot about hygiene, disinfection of premises, etc. She knew a lot, but had great difficulty in saying it. She thinks it’s normal, that these things are not important... I make them describe things in detail.”

This learning to write again will spark off a desire to do something, to read and to write letters, or to learn to use computers, as Mrs Poinso notes:

“They will then want to work on a computer: amongst the women who got through the accreditation process, the first obtained a professional qualification in Economics, Social and family economics, several others got vocational training certificates in home assistance, assistance to the elderly, in health and social welfare.”

As we have already seen, the accreditation process can involve challenges as far as social relationships are concerned, in particular, those of the family. We have already seen how imprisonment can cause marital or family tragedies.

Ms Simon mentions the importance of reactivating social behaviour, in particular in the family circle, but also the need to enhance self-esteem:

“Often, the people you meet in prison have a strong tendency to devalue their experience and qualifications. When you ask them what qualifications they have, and whether they have already worked, they often say “I did lots of dead-end Mcjobs, or “I temped” and if you ask them to provide details such as dates, periods, they often realize it was for much longer and the level of responsibility was much greater than they thought. They often have a school and professional career that’s a bit disjointed and this makes them think they haven’t done anything. As a social worker at the detention centre, our job is to help prisoners retrieve their papers, either from the family or from an employer. On some rare occasions, I have even had to contact temp agencies to ask them for documents. When you meet someone who says “I haven’t done anything, I don’t have any experience, I don’t have any qualifications” and then you look a bit closer, you find something, it’s very symptomatic of the concept the person has of themselves, of their path, it’s a step towards regaining self-esteem in itself. They say “I had the feeling I hadn’t done anything and within few months, I realize that I do have a qualification.””

Ms Tardivel also mentions the need to promote the personal self-esteem of those in custody, but admits she can’t help prisoners with regard to the accreditation process through lack of information on her part concerning the procedures involved. *“ Often with those who have failed at school or dropped out, they have a difficult relationship with culture with a capital C, they don’t have a very positive image of themselves, so it’s not easy to make a project surface. You need to work on all aspects, including self-esteem, to explain that a project has to be put together. Quite often, it takes us more than three months. We have to suggest specific educational activities or tools to bring the strong points of these people to light. I don’t think we really master this tool fully, particularly in terms of growth [of the number of people involved. I know approximately what accreditation of prior (experiential) experience means, but I don’t know how long it takes to go through the process, build up the file, or what the file contains.”*

In the accounts of the French prisoners, we have seen just how important psychotherapy is and the assistance provided by the clinical psychologist.

Ms Ubu specifies that her job leads her to focus on the mental health of those in custody, more than on their activities and their accreditation projects. But she nevertheless demonstrates just how important the accreditation process can be to a prisoner in launching a new personal dynamic: *“ The people I followed and who took part in the accreditation process were very motivated, had prior experience and the ability to develop these experiences and, in addition, to cling on to these experiences for their own personal development, to bounce back, to start building things in their lives and avoid repeat offending leading back to prison. For those in custody, accreditation is a chance of salvation, firstly because it will give them a better qualification when they look for a job upon release, something corresponding better to what they want, but it is an opportunity to get out of the vicious circle they have got into. Often they won’t go back to school; they could take up correspondence courses but that is really difficult. On the other hand, getting through the accreditation process, that reassures them, makes them truly more confident in themselves, and with that, they have something to hang on to, inside. Very often, work in prison with people who have nothing to hang on to, with regard to family, etc. [is difficult], but as far as self-esteem is concerned, that gives them something to hang on to, something to help them find the resources within themselves. It’s a springboard for their future life. There’s lots of talk at the moment about reintegration, however it’s clear that, unfortunately, they don’t have the tools required to get there and for me, the accreditation process is an essential tool. I really believe that it has been proved to be good for people’s development.”*

Ms Wendling offers a different light in her interview. She mentions, for example, the need to adapt to conditions of life in prison, to the security and associated restrictions. She stresses the importance of a positive approach to going back to school, which would free the person from the hang-ups they had with regard to school as children or as teenagers.

“ One of the drawbacks of the prison context is that we can’t use our computers, there’s no Internet access. You can only take in paper documents. This document needs to have maximum effectiveness, with a minimum of tools and aids to be taken inside. But it’s a first step into the written world, and often potential candidates need help to fill in this first document. The Local Teaching Unit has therefore set up a writing support group to help with writing down the initial elements of experience. It’s a second meeting with an advisor which will refine the search for the right diploma. The people who assist are not used to working on people’s experience. It was after a few work sessions with these professionals that we were able to specify the objectives, and that they were able to help candidates complete the document in a more optimal fashion. I quickly saw that the accreditation advisor was the person most able to give this practical information. After one or two interviews, you are able to grasp what sort of support and assistance the candidate is going to need. We very quickly saw that some people were able to go back to school, by means of the accreditation process, even if they didn’t go through with it to the end. This would enable them to acquire, via the Local Teaching Units, the basic knowledge they were missing.”

Ms Wendling also mentions a question which has been discussed surprisingly little up ‘til now. Why not combine accreditation of prior (experiential) learning with the present experience? When a person has to stay in prison for several years, the 3-year criteria could be taken into account and certain activities in prison recognized in relation to the professional definitions for accreditation of prior learning.

“The first information we get relate to prior experience and we can quickly see that there is also current experience being undergone that could either enrich or provide other possible paths to accreditation. Or, sometimes, an application is directly formulated for accreditation of experience inside the prison. The current experience, new by definition, is often easier to exploit because there is no need to resort to memory and to prior elements. I noticed that the prison context completely inhibited memory. Prisoners forget things they have done in the past. Current experience is therefore easier for the accreditation process. Objectives can also be more ambitious than with a past experience. It’s easier to reactivate knowledge in connection with know-how if you are currently putting it into practice rather than something you did five or ten years ago. If the work sessions follow the course of a magisterial inquiry...it may be necessary to put into words early on a minimum number of things to then be able to go through the accreditation process and clarify them. You are talking to the person as an individual while enhancing the image of his job, so you are enhancing him too, an element of his past life is being given a positive value, that is something rare in prison. It is easy to understand that the relationship with a candidate for the accreditation process in prison is rather different from that with a candidate outside.”

3.2. Assistance and support from professionals for reintegration, training and job hunting in Poland

Accounts from 4 people

Within the framework of the present exploratory study, only four people were able to give us their opinions with regard to the prospect of developing accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in Poland.

Mr Xerek finds the accreditation project in prison “... interesting. It would enable the creation of procedures making recognition of professional qualifications easier through certification and diplomas granted to those having the appropriate knowledge and experience. For those threatened with social exclusion, these procedures could be a chance to improve their position in the job market. Transferring this process into the Polish context is possible. But we should expect legal difficulties because in our education system there is no equivalent. We would have to overcome this first obstacle, both legal and judicial. The second obstacle, much easier to get around, would be related to the institution of a committee responsible for the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.”

After having analysed the characteristics of the delinquent population in prison (defective parental education, strong influence of the ancestral environment and of antisocial networks, addiction to drugs and alcohol), Mr Xerek supposes that “those interested in changing their situation represent about a third of this population. They want to work, to learn, take part in treatment programmes, cultural and sporting activities. They have centres of interest, abilities. They are able to define their objectives and projects for their future lives...Unfortunately, the efforts made for reintegration, changing attitudes, behaviours or values undertaken in prison can be completely annihilated when the offender returns to his environment ...The situation of former prisoners in the job market is not good...If we manage to overcome the judicial and organisational obstacles in introducing accreditation of prior (experiential) learning, some prisoners could see their chances in the job market improve and find employment. I am optimistic and think it would be well worth getting involved and carrying out this project. I estimate that 10% of our population could take part, that means a 100 people.”

Mr Yiouch also finds the accreditation project interesting, because “a lot of prisoners have practical knowledge but don’t have the qualifications required in their professions. They are then in difficulty when they are job-hunting because of this lack of diplomas. Accreditation would enable them to have written proof of what they can do and increase their chances in the job market.”

But he is concerned about the possibility of introducing the accreditation process in the Polish context, given Polish criminal law, combined with the fact that the possibility of accrediting prior learning does not currently exist in the general Polish education system. He mentions a study on repeat offenders who had only received primary education, had weak or non-existent family ties, were often addicted to drugs or alcohol.

“We observe a high rate of socialization within the prison, which means resourcefulness within the prison context, but an inability to adapt outside, which makes their reintegration more difficult. They’ve often been prisoners for many years...(They don’t feel concerned with accreditation) ...I think about 10 to 15 % of the prisoners would be interested in accreditation of prior learning and that rate would be higher for first offenders than for repeat offenders. They have much more knowledge and skills. ...Professional training classes are of great interest, in particular computer classes and those for pavers.” The latter is appreciated because it provides effective skills which are sought after on the job market. We’ve also organized interior painting, cooking classes and many others.”

Mr Zanacek's job is to take care of people with non psychotic mental disorders or handicaps. According to him, the accreditation process concerns those in custody in his department. But the deficiencies they suffer from make systematic and constructive activities or homework to be done difficult.

Mr Zouchi thinks that the accreditation process is useful in the Polish context, but after his experiences abroad, he thinks qualifications are useless if people are not really competent. *“But for someone being released from prison, possession of a qualification can make reintegration and job-hunting easier.”*

3.3. Professionalization of those involved in the process of resocializing inmates

After analysis of the interviews with professional actors, the following questions arise: *How do you know the potential experience of a person in custody ? How do you measure the usefulness and the limits of your role ? Is accompanying a prisoner in this process a question of facilitation ? of mediation ? of coordination between the general functioning of the prison, management of services and organisation ?*

Other queries come to light, such as where and how does one stand in a specific, new professional environment, or how does one acquire knowledge about populations in custody ?

Certain statements come through strongly in the various discussions, such as the importance of cooperation between professionals, the need to facilitate personal reinforcement, to boost the personal drive of the person in custody, the importance of reactivating social behaviours, in particular familial, and also the need to recover a positive self image, the need to go back to school assumed in a positive manner, the value of “doing” that the person in custody had previously.

Lastly, the collection of this data has aroused prospects, that of associating accreditation of prior (experiential) learning with professional skills developed in custody, or that of including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning as part of sentence execution and of envisaging adjustments for release.

Whether one considers the point of view of adapting training to the needs of the person, or that of the need for the individual to adapt to social expectations, to mention *training of professional actors* invites the notion of analysing the need for training. This need can be a necessity, an objective requirement; it can also be the feeling for the need which only exists in the person who feels it. Through the interviews, the exploratory survey has become a tool for expressing these needs: needs borne of institutional contexts, of pedagogical situations, of socio-professional situations. Different actors were involved in the collection of this data, in relation to the place they occupy in the process of preparing those in custody for reintegration into the community. Analysis of the data collected during the survey has provided elements with regard to professionalization of those involved in the process of re-professionalizing and resocializing prisoners (*cf. appendix 3*).

CONCLUSION

The exploratory nature of the present research project regarding the introduction and development of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison, acknowledged two incontrovertible facts: the first was that there has been little work on, or experience of, this type of system, and the second was related to the paradoxical nature of the subject itself. We were therefore very cautious in our exploratory approach because uncertain of the feasibility of the experiment, of its limits, of how reliable the hypotheses and instruments used were. But as we progressed we observed the wealth of data collected and results obtained and this has led us to offer perhaps more speculative interpretations.

The many discussions and numerous interviews, as much with those in custody as with professionals of the prison administration, confirmed the importance of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, and the interest in undertaking research on the conditions, advantages and limits of its implementation.

By way of a conclusion, we therefore need to take stock of the lessons that can be drawn from our work, from the quantitative and qualitative data collected, and take a look at what it offers in terms of prospects for the implementation of future action research in the field of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.

1. Propose that the process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning should be in keeping with the continuation or extension of the educational, cultural and social enabling environment of the prison institution. It needs, of course, to be remembered that this exploratory research project is in keeping with lifelong education for all. Education, in prison as elsewhere, includes "*basic instruction, vocational training, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sport, social education and the possibility of having access to a library.*" (OIEP, 2007). It also means taking into account the development of the person and their social, economic and cultural context.

2. A person in custody does not just amount to his identity as an offender (nor to the acts which have led to his imprisonment). As shown by Amartya Sen (op. cit.), a human being has multiple facets, as much in his affiliations and in his potential as in his abilities or his skills. The danger would be precisely to limit him to that single *isolated identity, to an unequivocal categorisation*. We can see the consequences of this type of limitation today (whether it be in religious, cultural or sexual identity) leading, in particular, to the emergence of violence.

3. Management of offenders by a prison institution can be interpreted in two ways: one oriented towards remedying health disorders and the other oriented towards the development of the person, in relation to his previous and future professional and social activities.

The comparison between the prisons in Bordeaux-Gradignan (France) and in Rzeszów (Poland) clearly shows these two orientations. *Orientation through health* takes account of the reasons for, conditions and effects of imprisonment. It entails therapeutic support and takes into account diseases, accidents and disorders (physical or mental; impulsive acts, attempted suicide, etc.) which those in custody must confront. It helps the offender to fight against addictive behaviours (smoking, alcohol, drugs), depression, or solitude. This orientation widely dominates in the interviews with both prisoners and prison personnel in Rzeszów. On the other hand, *orientation through education, vocational training and work*, involves less reference to the reasons for imprisonment and health and psychiatric aspects, and has a much greater focus on the person in custody, on living the prison experience better thanks to image enhancing activities, or to efforts preparing for a successful reintegration into the community. This orientation was clearly dominant in interviews conducted and information gathered in the long-term detention centre in Bordeaux-Gradignan (France).

4. The reference to the multiple facets of a person's identity is not in contradiction with taking a person into account as a whole. *The two are complementary.* For example, two of the five prisoners interviewed in France mentioned the importance of being followed by the psychologist, of the usefulness for them of the therapy pursued, even though they then went on to focus on the positive nature of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process, on the importance of image enhancement in this approach. Indeed, the psychologist herself considered accreditation of prior (experiential) learning as "the chance of their lives» for those in custody. In passing, the duality of this focus (health or professional success) can be found today in the way all prison institutions, public or private, operate: clinical psychology versus professional enabling environment.

The *processes likely to facilitate accreditation of prior (experiential) learning* need to offer a linkage between the positive and negative aspects of the way an individual functions and the way organizations operate, aspects for recovering health (physical or mental), as well as rehabilitation through activities and assuming responsibility.

6. Motivation and effort required in the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process (France), or in preparing for reintegration (Poland). Prisoners in Bordeaux-Gradignan mentioned the difficulty of making the decision to commit to the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process. This decision was doubly difficult: on the one hand, the person has lost the habit of making an effort, of taking responsibility, and on the other, particularly in long-term-detention centres, the conditions of incarceration and the short time involved make it difficult to adhere to the commitment and be motivated by it. Those in custody in Rzeszów, not concerned with the accreditation process, mentioned the difficulty of preparing their reintegration. When this is the case, the importance of relational networks (parents, children, friends) is observed, but also their limit.

7. Ability to adapt to procedures and to contexts. A major difference needs to be made between adapting to the prison environment and the ability to adapt to the procedures and contexts of training and accreditation. One of the Polish professionals interviewed mentioned what he called prison *socialisation*, characteristic of repeat offenders "*which results in resourcefulness in the prison context, but also inability to adjust to conditions outside which makes their reintegration more difficult.*" The term *chronic institutionalisation* comes to mind (with the question of repeat offending), just as it was used with regard to psychiatric hospitals, for instance. Adaptation to the procedures and contexts with regard to training on the other hand, forces them to focus on the outside and on the future, even if their decision to go through the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process provides them with some material advantages (single cell, or two people at most, for example). Most of those in custody who chose to "go back to school" or to go through the accreditation process, express a desire to profit from prison so as to break the spiral and to find themselves outside with new knowledge and skills.

8. Gaining self-confidence, or the return of confidence in self and in others (or at least certain others, seen as being significant). Mutual trust is required for personal and relational development. This remains true for those in prison who have doubts about their own abilities and are suspicious of others. This dual mistrust is reflected in the way they function, in the perception they have of themselves, their abilities and their skills. The many life stories presented show just how destructive this mistrust can be. Conversely, acknowledgement of his value enables the person to recover faith in his decision-making ability and in his achievements. But we also saw that this return of confidence was not just limited to this or that aspect of life. It enabled the person to recover his *capabilities*, in other words the freedom to give meaning to his life, to rebuild a life project, to turn his rights to good advantage, to develop his own potential.

9. But all this is only possible if the person can (re) enhance his image, through his decisions, his activities and his achievements. This enhancement of self has two effects: a positive transformation of self-image through recovery of self-esteem, but also a reappraisal of values considered to be essential in life. Analysis of the way in which values were ranked clearly showed that those in

custody in France who had chosen to go down the road of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning had a tendency to appreciate money, work, profession and health more, whereas those in Poland, less concerned with the concrete process of work, had greater preference for freedom, love, family, protection and religion. These results, of course, show that cultural differences are involved in ranking, to the extent that the differences between prisoners and professionals in the same country are reduced.

10. The exploratory survey has enabled a qualitative and cautious verification of our general hypothesis. By crosschecking data, we have been able to show that this hypothesis can be retained to guide future, more quantitatively important, research. Our hypothesis was:

“Proposing a process of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning provides the person in custody with a means of social and professional recognition, of enhancing personal identity and of taking on board more functional values linked to reintegration into the community.” Amongst the interesting observations, it should be remembered that there are links, correlations, between the responses regarding self-esteem, values and contexts, and types of activity. The links should enable a better understanding of how an enabling environment for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning comes together, the processes which are at work when these procedures are implemented.

11. All the results obtained show the importance of focusing on narrative identity and on personal potential. Of course, the notions of narrative identity and capability introduce a philosophy of life into empirical data.

But, as a review of the personal journeys of the authors (Paul Ricoeur for narrative identity and Amartyar Sen for capabilities) who put forward these concepts shows, ethics need to be taken into account when conducting research in the humanities and social sciences just as much as in economics, linguistics or anthropology. However, how to go about introducing ethics and philosophy of life into research on complex systems, whether open or closed, still remains to be discovered.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

At the close of this European partnership project, it clearly appears that accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can, in a more or less distant future, help make reintegration into the community easier for those in the hands of the law. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning provides the candidate with the possibility of personal recognition and an improvement in self-image through social and professional recognition. It is based on assessment of professional, social and personal skills together with the psychological resources and development of the person involved, albeit in difficulty.

The exploratory survey focused on studying the psychological resources considered to be central to the identity process of a person in custody: *improvement of self image and determining of social values*. Any person, even in extreme contexts of alienation, of low self-esteem or being branded as marginal, tends to seek out and to defend a positive self-image, to demand recognition of values on the part of others. Any damage to self-esteem can seriously increase a conflict of identity and steer the person into acting-out behaviour or behaviour which challenges authority.

Beyond the present project, the authors of the report believe that reflection arising from comparisons between practises concerning professional training in custody could lead to the practical development of the process in the short and medium term. *The institution of a Europe-wide action research programme* would enable the development of systems for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in countries desiring to do so, along with professionalization of the actors involved, guarantee of a quality approach to the education and training of adults. It is very important to be able to offer the professional personnel involved in the implementation of AP(E)L in a prison environment the chance of becoming agents for innovation and progress in their own professional context. To do this, they will need to be able to work effectively in work groups where critical reflection and ethical concerns will need to be part of the job.

1. Implementation of new systems in Europe

Depending on their ability to implement European Directives, European countries which have not yet developed systems for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning will need support at various levels:

- to increase awareness of political decision-makers as to the momentum for and implementation of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning;
- to draw up, or to adapt, national systems for qualification and certification;
- to ensure that national objectives are consistent, from a practical point of view, with the various stages required for implementation of recognition of experiential learning (formal, non formal and informal);
- to exchange information and analyse the development of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in the various member states.

An accreditation of prior (experiential) learning resource centre " for those in difficulty (in custody, job insecurity, etc.)" within the European agency Socrates, with specific correspondents in each national agency, and run by professionals in AP(E)L, would permit and facilitate pooling of resources and of experience, the reinforcement of educational partnership projects, the organisation of themed meetings and the development of innovative projects.

2. Professionalisation of actors involved

The professional actors involved in accreditation of prior (experiential) learning are pioneers in this sector for the education and training of adults. They have been able to break new ground with regard to practices with no prior experience and no experiments to help them. In the future, it is to be hoped that things will proceed differently, giving weight to experiments based on projects for implementation

of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and processes of professionalization adapted to the needs of the professional actors, according to their position (educational personnel, supervisory personnel, social workers, probation officers, psychologists, judge responsible for executing sentences, etc.). Indeed, the needs expressed during the interviews with the professionals met show just how essential this is and have identified orientations for professionalization at various levels: ideological, institutional, organisational, interactional and personal (cf. Appendix 3).

Training by competences which would be supported by high level academic disciplines based on advances in scientific research; know-how and self-management skills in teaching approaches with priority given to problem solving and project construction; opening of borders to training and employment could concern those already involved in systems for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in prison environments, as much as those who envisage implementing them.

3. Participation in advances in scientific research

The research carried out during the exploratory study was designed and carried out under tight scientific monitoring by partners who are experts in the humanities and social sciences. This was only a preliminary to the full research project envisaged, it should be remembered, from the outset of Grundtvig 1. To be able to pursue and develop the results obtained would reinforce the project and be the means of acquiring scientific knowledge enabling us to understand even better the meaning given to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning by those in custody. Initially, the study could remain focused on the processes of personal and social reinforcement and be carried out in two types of European countries (those where accreditation of prior (experiential) learning exists and those where it does not yet exist but which would like to implement it). Then, the research could be developed around other themes, deal with other problems arising from the work and reflections of the actors in the field.

A Europe-wide action research undertaken on the theme of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning in the prison environment, would enable interaction between those practising in the prison environment and social science researchers, and lead to improvement of both scientific knowledge with regard to the psychosocial dynamic of individuals in difficulty, and the professional practice of those involved. It would also be a source of ongoing enrichment for the training of the actors involved.

Recognition of the commitment to the Grundtvig 1 European partnership project by the representatives of five countries (Belgium, France, Malta, Poland and Portugal) could be shown by encouragement from European authorities to facilitate the development of these three additional platforms.

APPENDICES

INTERVIEW OF PEOPLE IN CUSTODY (September 2006)

APPENDIX I

THE LONG-TERM DETENTION CENTRE IN BORDEAUX-GRADIGNAN - GIRONDE

1. Face to face interview – interview grid

The past

- Childhood – Adolescence - Adulthood
- moments of intense emotion
- important persons (that meant a lot)
- memories
- focuses of attention
- life domains

The present

- activities (professional – other)
- interpersonal relationships (family – friends – others)
- training – qualification – accreditation
- health (fitness – mental health)

The Future

- prospects (short term – medium term – long term)
- preparation for the future

Temporal interactions

- links between facts, life domains, relationships, interactions at various moments in life.

2. Life story of Mr Dupont

Mr Dupont committed to accreditation of prior (experiential) learning with a view to obtaining a Vocational Training Certificate for roofing (a professional qualification diploma in the building industry) during his detention in prison.

“AP(E)L, I’d heard about it from the blokes at work; blokes who I worked with in here. So I went to find out what it was all about and I immediately got interested. I wanted to get on. It’s the certificates in the accreditation process that motivate me.”

Aged 38, he had been incarcerated since May 2003. Sentenced to 20 years, he will soon be up for appeal. Mr Dupont had already served one prison sentence, 12 years ago.

“I’ve been before the Court once already and I’m waiting to be judged a second time, on appeal, for good, if you like. I’ll be given a long sentence, I think 10 years. If I’m lucky I’ll come out when I’m 45.”

What does accreditation of prior (experiential) learning mean for Mr Dupont ?

How does he relate accreditation to the various events in his life? To his own personal story?

His life in detention is difficult for several reasons:

- his relationship with the other prisoners, especially at work.

“I had some problems with work because my job is one of the best positions in the workshops (signalling, a lot of electrical things). Imagine 60 blokes behind you, ready to get at you. So you get a knife in your back and even death threats on your fiancé’s life.”

- health. He has serious back problems.

“I’ve had a graft on my back, and as well as that, I’ve had a slipped disc and compression of the spinal column whilst in here, because of the bedding. I’m due to go to hospital soon and have a general anaesthetic.”

- the context of detention

“In here, there’s a problem of standards. People, with whom you can talk about certain things when you’ve lived a bit, are rare.”

However, during this period, he finds comfort in:

- his fiancé, during visits to the visiting room, through the letters they exchange and projects they are planning together for the future

“I’m lucky to have met up again with a friend whilst being in here; we got close again through correspondence. So now we’re engaged and hope to get married and then set up a home or something, if you know what I mean. She’s a good person and is really helping me to move on.”

- the psychologist with whom he is undergoing therapy

“For some time now, I’ve been getting on with my life. I’ve found myself again if you like, thanks to therapy. I’ve fallen on an amazing woman, who has made me understand the why’s and how’s of how I got to be in here, and the errors I made. She’s a psychologist at the Regional Hospital.”

- sport he does in prison

- training time to improve his level

“In fact, I need to re-learn. I think it’s due to the extremes I’ve had in my life. I need to re-learn all the basics. When I was a kid, I was top of my class; I had a memory like an elephant’s. I’ve managed to write again because I write to my fiancé every day. I still make mistakes but it’s not a disaster.”

- the accreditation process run with the backing of the prison’s teaching staff and the National Education accreditation advisor who provides support.

“Accreditation, I heard the other blokes talking about it when I was going to lessons and at work. I also saw posters at school. So I went and found out about it. I then met Mrs B. who gave me the explanations, very good ones at that. This gave me the motivation and so I went for it.”

Mr Dupont explains the significance he gives to accreditation:

“What motivates me about accreditation is the certificate. I’m going to try and go as far as possible with the accreditation process, obtain the maximum of certificates: CAP, Professional technical certificate, project management certificate.”

But he also evokes:

- an occupation that helps to forget the prison context,
- a way of not being too cut off from reality,
- a means to move forward, obtain something at the end, for the future and for the process of reintegration into the community,
- an aid for knowledge, in order to continue to learn,
- and a great pleasure when he describes, in the accreditation file, the activities linked to his story.

“In prison when I’m doing the accreditation work, I’m happy. I open my books and it reminds me of the building sites. I was lucky to work with my dad and my brother. We were lucky to work all together. It brings back great memories.”

Wonderful memories, an idyllic childhood, a united family, before everything went wrong.

The accreditation process, of course, signifies future prospects.

"I'm lucky to have equipment outside that's waiting for me when I get out, my Dad's equipment, which will mean I can relaunch myself in the building industry. I worry about the future. I'm going to try and go back over the academic basics and go further than the Professional Technical Certificate. I've the time to do it."

His projects, for after his sentence, are:

- to reopen the family roofing business, health permitting,
- to start a family with his fiancé, although he is worried that she may not wait for him.

"I'm worried that my fiancé will not be able to hold out until the end, as it's going to last a long time. It's a constant fear and if it does happen, I hope that my family (those who are still here) will be there for me."

Here are several elements relative to: his family, marital life, training, and memories of his idyllic childhood.

Family context

Today, of his close family, only his father and sister remain. His mother died of a devastating cancer whilst he was serving his first prison sentence. His younger brother was killed in a road accident, three years ago. His grandparents are dead.

"Only my brother and sister are still around. I miss my maternal grandparents a lot, they are both dead."

"My mum died in '94, I was already in prison, I was here 10 years ago. I was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment and she died whilst I was in prison. She'd gone in three months – systemic cancer.

My brother, who'd taken over the family business, was killed by a reckless driver."

And those who are still here

His father, 64, lives with his second wife in the west of France, in the region where he comes from. His older sister, mother of a large family, lost her youngest daughter in an accident. She's suffered from depression ever since.

"I have a sister who lost her little girl, aged 10, 5 years ago; she still hasn't got over it, she's lost it; there are no other words for it. She went to see psychiatrists, who stuffed her with medication and I think they've finished her off. The proof, she was a witness at my trial, and she couldn't remember anything. Acts of violence to which I was subjected to: for example, I was raped from head to toe, and she was the one who took care of me. We were about 14-15."

« My father is very tough. He built for his children and those around him. Everything went wrong for him at the same time. I went to prison; my brother took over the family business and was then killed by a reckless driver six months later.

In the region where he lives, which is where he comes from, he's bought two farms, which needed to be totally renovated. In one year, he's done what most people do in 15. He never stops. Work, that's all he knows. He's wild. He lives in a closed environment – no friends, only family. He's married; he re-married a long time ago. He has a wonderful wife."

Marital life

Mr Dupont has never married but has lived with three different partners, all of whom had children. The three partnerships broke up. Each time, Mr Dupont fell to pieces and took refuge in drugs and alcohol.

"I've lived with three women. Ah, the women with whom I've lived! All three relationships were important to me and they all finished. Each time I found my life collapsed around me. After the first split-up, drugs. I discovered heroin. The second, 10 years ago, I became hooked again, and badly. I messed about and bought drugs in Holland. I was caught and spent 2 years in prison. In 96, I met last partner. I'd sorted myself out on the drug front, I completely stopped. I was clean on all fronts. With her, I partied with friends who came by each evening, drinks every evening. One day, I poured myself a drink: three ice cubes and I served myself a whisky when I was alone; it was then that I said to myself 'you're an alcoholic'."

Today, as we have already mentioned, Mr Dupont has a fiancé, who he met at the beginning of his sentence. They have plans for the future, meet three times a week in the meeting room and write to each other every day.

Learning

Although he trained to be a chef when he was young, the majority of Mr Dupont's professional experience is in the building industry where he acquired his skills from his father during his childhood, in the family business.

"My mother never wanted either myself or my brother to do a building apprenticeship. So we found ourselves in a hostel, where we learned how to cook.

However later, when I was working, in the building industry, I realised that I'd learned a lot when I used to go up on the roofs with my father and watch him work."

Childhood memories

Mr Dupont had a happy childhood, in the north of France, with his parents, sister, brother and maternal grandparents up until the age of 10.

"We had an idyllic childhood. We had a property that was perhaps worth between 2 and 3 million French Francs at the time. It was a former sugar factory. When my parents bought it, there were just the four walls, no roof, nothing. They completely rebuilt it themselves. I remember scaffolding around the house when I was little; my mother made the cement and concrete and then passed it up to my father in buckets. We had horses and ponies. My father made me a pond so that I could fish."

"My father had a business in the North, he had 12 lads, it was really successful."

However, in 1978, his father had a serious accident whilst working on a site in the west of France, where he had gone to put a new roof on the paternal grandparents' house. He was immobilised for many months, 200 kilometres from his home. During this time, Mr Dupont's mother squandered the family estate and became addicted to alcohol.

"When my maternal grandmother retired, my father went to put a new roof on her house, and fell from a height of 12 m. It was the third time. He stayed in a hospital 500 kilometres away from our home for 2 years. I remember. During this time, my mother partied. My brother and sister didn't have a clue. I did, and rebelled. I took her car keys so she couldn't go out. One day I found her in a bar with three men, I won't go into the details.... It was a party, yet another party. Then my father came remember the day that he came back; he came out of the ambulance in a wheelchair. I said to him, 'Dad take me away'. He knew nothing. But I'd seen the bailiffs who'd just been to the door. 'Dad, there's nothing left'.

His parents separated, Mr Dupont went to live with his father in the region where the latter grew up, and the two other children stayed with their mother.

For Mr Dupont everything went wrong:

- the break up of the family,
- the estrangement from his region of origin

"All of Mum's family stayed there: workers, poor people but with a large heart, Northerners. I had had a great childhood and then suddenly I found myself cut off from my family."

- the adaptation to a new social environment

"I was between 10 and 12, I'd come from the North, from a county with the most country bumpkins in France. We suffered. We were the punch bags of the estate's young because our clothes were 5 years out of fashion. We spoke with a terrible accent. We were bullied and humiliated. We had to pay for a right to enter the town, if you know what I mean. I had to pay to have friends."

His father, who could no longer work as a roofer, opened a bar on an estate. Left to his own devices, at the age of 13, Mr Dupont left school. Eight months after dropping out of school, an investigation was carried out by the local social services and the decision was made for him to go into a 'protected' children's home, until he came of age.

"A home, that was the problem. I had never had anything to do with delinquency. A home for unhappy, badly-treated children; in fact a school of thuggery, mischief, drugs."

At the age of 18, Mr Dupont began his working life, in the building industry. He then did various jobs in this sector, especially roofing. He had the opportunity of going on a contract to the French West Indies for two years, to fit out some shops.

"When I found myself alone at work, I realised that I knew my father's trade. I'd learned everything and I'd known how to do the work, since I was really small, when I used to watch my father, when I went up on the roof with him."

However Mr Dupont felt he had only acquired limited skills and lacked self-confidence. He had a great problem with self-confidence.

"My father was so good at his trade that neither I nor my brother felt we were the same standard as him. I suffered greatly because of this. I had no self-confidence. I think it was because I was frightened of my father."

3. Recapitulation of the initial question

- the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process will enable his experience to be recognised by an official certificate.
- Accreditation becomes a means of improving self-esteem: in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, through the professional skills he has acquired.
- Accreditation is a means of implementing a future project even if it can be only be fulfilled in the long term.
- Accreditation is above all a LINK between the temporal moments of his life: past – present – future. In fact:
- accreditation is in the present
- the process involves what has been acquired in the past
- in relation to what he wishes to do in the future.

The accreditation of prior (experiential) learning process carried out by Mr Dupont seems to be:

An ENQUIRY into the SIGNIFICANCE to be given to his life through:

- an awareness of his potential and his limits
- an anticipation of his future
- a mobilisation of energy so as to be able to cope with his sentence
- improved self-esteem and self-image
- a feeling of being able to have some influence on a difficult situation.

An enquiry into PERSONAL IDENTITY through a need for:

- continuity in time
- minimal internal coherence
- positive thinking, self-esteem.

A way of coping with the dramas and difficulties in his life, an ability to overcome the ordeals, to resurface, reconstruct and forge ahead.

The possible help from others (family and non-family support).

APPENDIX 2 a

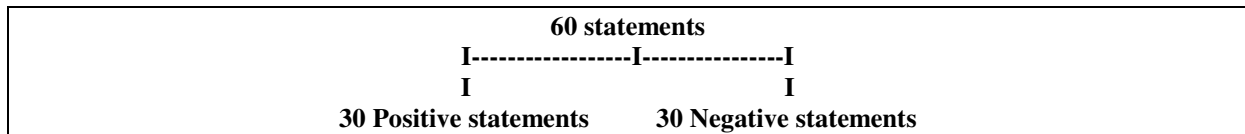
S.E.R.T.H.U.A.L. Scale

(1 = Not significant ; 5 = Very significant)

1	I often ask myself questions in connection with what I do	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am a responsible person	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have few values and personal standards	1	2	3	4	5
4	I have difficulty in controlling my aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
5	Generally, I like people	1	2	3	4	5
6	My hardest battles are with myself	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am optimistic	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am sexually attractive	1	2	3	4	5
9	I feel that nobody can really help me	1	2	3	4	5
10	Usually, I manage to make my own decisions and stick to them	1	2	3	4	5
11	I don't make my own decisions	1	2	3	4	5
12	I feel apathetic	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am impulsive	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am a rational person	1	2	3	4	5
15	I feel that I do not how to face events	1	2	3	4	5
16	I am tolerant	1	2	3	4	5
17	I am ambitious	1	2	3	4	5
18	I avoid facing crises or difficulties	1	2	3	4	5
19	I have no self-respect	1	2	3	4	5
20	I have a positive attitude towards myself	1	2	3	4	5
21	I always seek to affirm myself in the eyes of others	1	2	3	4	5
22	I have difficulty in making decisions	1	2	3	4	5
23	I am a failure	1	2	3	4	5
24	I am pleasant	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am afraid of the sex	1	2	3	4	5
26	I am afraid of missing or not achieving something I desire a lot	1	2	3	4	5
27	I am a good worker	1	2	3	4	5
28	I think I am emotionally mature	1	2	3	4	5
29	I am very confused	1	2	3	4	5
30	I am not very sure of myself	1	2	3	4	5
31	I am intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
32	I feel hopeless	1	2	3	4	5
33	I cannot be trusted	1	2	3	4	5
34	I am very sociable	1	2	3	4	5
35	I do not have any values	1	2	3	4	5
36	I become angry easily	1	2	3	4	5
37	I am physically attractive	1	2	3	4	5
38	I feel good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
39	Other people doubt me	1	2	3	4	5
40	I will be pleased with myself if I manage to do important things in my life	1	2	3	4	5
41	My employers/teachers are satisfied with me	1	2	3	4	5
42	I feel restless and tense	1	2	3	4	5
43	I am faithful in my friendships	1	2	3	4	5
44	I am proud of my body	1	2	3	4	5
45	Generally, I have self-confidence	1	2	3	4	5
46	To feel better, I use stimulants (coffee, tobacco, alcohol,etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
47	I like group activities	1	2	3	4	5
48	Bad school / professional results discourage me easily	1	2	3	4	5
49	I have a good opinion of myself	1	2	3	4	5
50	People get bored in my company	1	2	3	4	5
51	I think that all people should assume a role in society/company	1	2	3	4	5
52	I would like to take part in solidarity movements	1	2	3	4	5
53	I have faith in my future	1	2	3	4	5
54	At work, others seek my company	1	2	3	4	5
55	I have the impression that I don't do things as well as others	1	2	3	4	5
56	I am not physically attractive	1	2	3	4	5
57	I tend to avoid initiatives in a group	1	2	3	4	5
58	I am satisfied with my physical performances	1	2	3	4	5
59	In a group, I often experience a feeling of isolation	1	2	3	4	5
60	I am proud of my professional /academic performances	1	2	3	4	5

SERTHUAL SELF-ESTEEM SCALE : ATTRIBUTES AND STATEMENTS

APPENDIX 2 b



A + B + C + D + E = Positive Score Max : 150 Min : 30

<p>A+ = General self-satisfaction Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 7, 20, 21, 38, 45, 49 The person declares he is optimistic and positive with regard to himself ; he has a good opinion of himself, feels good about himself, has confidence in himself and needs to assert himself.</p> <p>B+ = Social and normative development Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 40, 43, 47, 51, 52, 54 Wants to do great things in his life and take his place in the community, wants to take part in a solidarity movement, likes company, group relationships.</p> <p>C+ = Social and emotional maturity Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 2, 10, 14, 16, 28, 41 Feels responsible, likes making decisions and sticking to them, rational, tolerance, emotional maturity, satisfies his superiors.</p> <p>D+ = Physical and mental evaluation Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 8, 17, 31, 37, 44, 58 Has an agreeable physique, is proud of his body and its development, is sexually attractive, ambitious and intelligent.</p> <p>E+ = Social, academic and professional evaluation Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 5, 24, 27, 34, 53, 60 Pleasant, appreciates others, hard worker, sociable, is confident of his future and satisfied with his results (professional, academic).</p>
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(F-) + (G-) + (H-) + (I-) + (J-) = Negative Score Max: 150 Min: 30
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<p>F- = Denial and self-devaluation Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 9, 12, 15, 19, 23, 32 Perceives himself to be a failure, a no-hoper; no one can help him; he does not have any self-respect, is apathetic and cannot confront events.</p> <p>G- = Relational tensions Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 39, 50, 55, 56, 57, 59 Believes that others avoid him, feels isolated; not very active in a group, not very physically attractive, perceives himself to be worse than others, others mistrust him.</p> <p>H- = Anomic disorders Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 3, 11, 25, 29, 33, 35 Has few values or personal reference models, is afraid of sexual relations, is really disturbed, he cannot be trusted, he believes himself to be without value.</p> <p>I- = Emotional Tension Max : 30, Min : 6 Statements n° : 4, 13, 36, 42, 46, 48 Cannot control his agressiveness, is impulsive, quick-tempered, nervous, tense, has addictive behaviours, discouraged by his results.</p> <p>J- = Hostility with regard to self Max: 30, Min: 6 Statements n°: 1, 6, 18, 22, 26, 30 Suffers from insecurity, aboulia, frightened of failure, does not like what he does/has done, internal battles, cannot confront crises or difficulties.</p>
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The differential score for self-esteem is then calculated using the formula [SDES: positive score – negative score]

GLOSSARY

PROBATION

KEY WORDS	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
PROBATION		Placing a sentenced person under the supervision of a probation officer, outside the prison, under certain conditions.	
<i>ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT</i>		Sentences which are carried out outside the prison, under certain conditions.	
CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE	France	Conditional discharge is an alternative to carrying out a sentence in prison, providing the prisoner meets certain conditions, for a duration of between 18 months and 3 years.	<i>Article 132-41 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Portugal	Generally, the conditions for conditional discharge are the following: the sentenced person must be under 25 years of age when he committed his crime and the suspended sentence must not exceed one year.	<i>Articles 43 and 54 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Poland	Conditions very similar to those in France.	
COMMUNITY WORK	France	Community work consists of undertaking unpaid work for the benefit of a Local Authority or an accredited association. The duration varies from 40 to 210 hours. This sentence can only be pronounced with the consent of the person in question.	<i>Articles 131-8 and 132-54 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Portugal	Consists of undertaking some work.	<i>Article 58 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Poland	Conditions very similar to those in France.	
DEFERMENT	France	A deferment can be pronounced when rehabilitation of a prisoner is in progress and the crime is on the way to being indemnified. The person is under conditional discharge until the decision is made.	<i>Articles 132-60, 132-64 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Portugal Poland	No equivalent.	
SOCIAL AND JUDICIAL FOLLOW-UP	France	Social and judicial follow-up means that a released prisoner is to be given help from social services and monitored to prevent repeat offending.	<i>Article 131-36-1 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Portugal Poland	No equivalent.	
PLACING UNDER COURT SUPERVISION	France	Placing under Court supervision consists of imposing certain duties on a prisoner released for a duration corresponding to the reduction in his sentence. This measure affects those sentenced to a minimum of ten years.	<i>Article 731-1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure</i>
	Portugal	No equivalent.	
	Poland	Conditions very similar to those in France.	

KEY WORDS	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
<i>REDUCED SENTENCING</i>		All sentences which involve imprisonment.	
PARTIAL RELEASE	France	Partial release permits a sentenced person to leave the prison compound for the purposes of employment, to follow a training course, for medical treatment, or to take part in family life, with future reintegration in mind. Partial release can only be pronounced in the case of sentences not exceeding one year.	<i>Article 132-26 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Portugal	Sentence which cannot exceed three months and which cannot be replaced by a fine, or other sentence. It consists of imprisonment during weekends and cannot exceed 18 periods, each lasting between 36 and 48 hours.	<i>Article 45 of the Criminal Code</i>
	Poland	In open or semi-open centres, a prisoner is permitted to work outside the prison compound, with more or less restrictive measures: with or without a guard, but he can also work without surveillance. He can undergo training or have access to medical assistance outside the prison. He can take part in sports activities with cultural or educational groups outside prison.	
EXTERNAL PLACEMENT	France	External placement permits an offender to stay in a private structure for the purposes of employment, or to attend classes or training course, or to take up temporary employment, all with a view to future reintegration.	<i>Articles 712-6 and D 136 of the Code of Criminal Procedure</i>
	Portugal Poland	No equivalent.	
ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE	France	Electronic surveillance allows an offender to have a job, attend classes or a training course, or to take part in family life, all with reintegration in view. The offender must give his consent.	<i>Articles D126 and D135 of the Code of Criminal Procedure</i>
	Portugal		<i>Law n° 122/99 August 20th 1999</i>
	Poland	Also in Poland but only for first offenders and those with a prison sentence not exceeding one year.	

KEY WORD	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
<i>REDUCED SENTENCING</i>		Continued.	
PAROLE	France	Those who receive prison sentences can benefit from parole once they have carried out half to two-thirds of their sentence if they show a real effort to reintegrate. They must prove involvement in employment, learning activities, or have a temporary job, show goodwill with regards reintegration. They can also take part fully in family life, or undergo treatment, or pay for the ill treatment of victims.	<i>Article 729 of the Code of Criminal Procedure</i>
PAROLE	Portugal	This procedure applies to those condemned to sentences exceeding 6 months. In all circumstances (half, two-thirds or five-sixths of the sentence), the period of parole is equal to that part of the sentence remaining, but can never exceed five years. It is the last step in a sentence, towards the reintegration of a prisoner	<i>Articles 61, 62, 63 and 64 of the Criminal Code, articles 90 to 100 of Decree n° 783/76 of October 29th 1976</i>
	Poland	Depending on the offence and on the prisoner's behaviour, he can be partly discharged once half, or two-thirds, or three-quarters of the sentence has been accomplished.	
	France	Leave of absence allows a prisoner to leave prison for a period of 1 to 5 days. The aim is to prepare reintegration into the community, to maintain family links, or to allow him to accomplish tasks where his presence is needed.	<i>Articles 723-3 and D142 of the Code of Criminal Procedure</i>
	Portugal	Leave of absence can be suggested by the Prison Director or can be requested by the prisoner in writing. The aim is to make reintegration easier.	<i>Articles 34 to 38 & 86 to 89 of the Criminal Code, law n° 783/76 October 29th 1976</i>
	Poland	A prisoner can be allowed to leave prison for a maximum of 14 days to prepare his reintegration, in particular to look for a job, or somewhere to live. This permission can be granted to any prisoner whose behaviour meets the necessary requirements (from a legal point of view). This permission is given by the Prison Director.	

KEY WORDS	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
<i>IMPLEMENTATION OF PROBATION</i>			
PRISON PROBATION AND REINTEGRATION SERVICE	France	<p>Missions The Prison Probation and Reintegration Service is responsible for implementing reintegration and prevention of repeat offending. It is in charge of the follow-up work of support and probation</p> <p>Competences Implementation of monitoring and enforcement of Court decisions (deferment, probation, community work, judicial monitoring) Implementation of help to be given to encourage reintegration. Carrying out enquiries on behalf of judicial authorities, to facilitate their decisions. Individual reception and follow-up of prisoners. Seeking ways to individualize execution of the sentence to make reintegration easier. Promote the development of adjusted sentences and sentencing and ensuring follow-up (parole, semi-liberty, electronic surveillance, external placement.)</p>	<i>Decree 99-276 of April 1999</i>
THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION INSTITUTE	Portugal	<p>Missions The Social Reintegration Institute is responsible for promoting human rights, for reintegration and for the prevention of repeat offending. It also promotes the development of measures and sentences that do not deprive offenders of liberty, and actions inside prison that favour reintegration, in particular for young people under 18.</p> <p>Competences Involved in defining criminal policy, particularly in the field of reintegration Provides technical support to courts. Collaboration with General Directorate of Prison Services in the field of parole, which implies follow-up work as well as probation. Execution of sentences using electronic surveillance. Management of education centres aimed at the reintegration of young delinquents.</p>	<i>Law n°48/95 of March 15th 1982</i>
	Poland	No equivalent.	

ACCREDITATION

KEY WORDS	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
SUPPORT	France	Advisor provides candidates for accreditation with support and assistance in writing up Books 1 and 2 of the accreditation file, giving framework and method. The candidate is the main actor of the accreditation process.	
KNOWLEDGE	France	The sum of knowledge and know-how a person masters in a professional or social field. In the context of accreditation, it refers to prior learning. Personal, social and professional experience is supposed to be the source of knowledge, separate from academic knowledge.	
	Poland	Opportunity of being awarded a diploma through accreditation of prior learning	<i>Law 2006 of the Criminal Code and the Code of Education</i>
COMPETENCES	France	The sum of knowledge, know-how, skills, abilities and behaviour required to complete an activity.	
ADVISOR	France	Skilled person who provides information on the accreditation of prior learning process. He analyses the professional career, the degree of autonomy and responsibility to suggest the most appropriate diploma according to the candidate's social and/or professional experience.	
ACCREDITATION FILE (BOOK 1 - BOOK 2)	France	The file consists of two books: - Book 1: accreditation application with regard to diploma sought. The candidate presents: . his professional career and the activities he carried out (proof to be provided), his training. If the career meets the necessary conditions, the Education Authority allows the candidate to fill in Book 2. - Book 2 presents the experience of the candidate where he describes his professional career, organisation of work, jobs, tasks and activities carried out.	
INTERVIEW WITH THE PANEL OF EXAMINERS	France	An interview with the panel of examiners enables: - the candidate to explain and complete the information present in the file. - the panel to check the candidate's statements. Either the panel or the candidate can request the interview, lasting for 20 to 45 minutes approximately.	
EXPERIENCE	France	Activities, situations, problems, facts and encounters that a candidate is able to analyse and describe.	
PANEL OF EXAMINERS		The panel is convened and supervised in line with current legislation. It is composed of teachers and professionals (half employers, half employees)	

KEY WORDS	COUNTRY	DEFINITION	LEGAL REFERENCE
LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION	France	The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority monitors vocational diplomas: - level V: mainly vocational qualifications - level IV: A levels as well as other vocational qualifications - level III: Higher vocational qualifications - level II: Higher Art Diploma In total approximately 700 diplomas.	
	Poland	In Poland, there are four levels of qualifications: - level 1: Qualified manual worker (basic level) - level 2: Highly qualified worker (professional level) - level 3: Technician in ... - level 4: Engineer in ...	
LIST OF REFERENCES (CERTIFICATION, PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, EXAMINATION)	France	Official document inventorying the knowledge, professional competences and activities required to obtain a given diploma.	
	Poland	All training programmes are presented in a formal, official document.	
ACCREDITATION	France	Act which states that the requirements have been met. -The accreditation implemented by the panel of examiners indicates: . the potential interview with the panel, . the decision of the panel. - The panel can accredit: . the full diploma . part of the diploma, in which case the candidate can sit the rest of the exam (in the usual way), or ask for another session of accreditation in order to pass the remainder of the diploma, . nothing.	<i>Act of January 17th 2002; article L335-5 of the Code of Education</i>
ACCREDITATION OF WORK EXPERIENCE	France	Accreditation of work experience means that candidates are not required to sit part of the exams for a diploma. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is now included in the Code of Education and enables a diploma to be awarded. The condition is that candidates have to provide proof of three years work experience, either salaried or on a voluntary basis, as long as that experience is within the field of the diploma. Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning is the most visible part of a wider process that questions the traditional way of awarding diplomas and should be placed in the perspective of the general movement of education and lifelong learning.	<i>1992. Law on the accreditation of work experience. 2002. Law on Social Modernization (Official Gazette of January 18th, 2002)</i> <i>2003. Circular of the Ministry of Education on the implementation of the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.</i>
	Poland	Opportunity of sitting the exam by dint of prior professional experience. For the actual exam, the topic will be the same for all candidates in a given field. The panel of examiners consists of those teaching practice and theory. There are no professional people.	<i>Law 2006 of the Criminal Code and Code of Education.</i>

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STATUTORY TEXTS

Europe

European Social Fund. Objective 3: *European programme subsidized by the ESF which intervenes financially in all the regions of the Union (with the exception of the regions which are part of Objective n°1) to support adaptation and modernisation of policies and systems for education, training and employment.*

1989. *Recommendation n° R(89) 12 of the of the Council of Europe's council of Ministers.*

2000. (March). European Council in Lisbon.

2001. *Communiqué on Lifelong Learning.* European Commission

2006. *Joint Report on social protection and social inclusion; Effectiveness and fairness in education and training. systems.* Communication from the Commission.

France

1789. Declaration of Human Rights.

1791. Criminal Code

1911. Financial law of July 13th 1911. *The Prison Administration becomes part of the Ministry of Justice.*

1934. Act of July 19th 1934.replaced by that of 1984 n° 84-52 dated January 26th *promoting access to programmes of higher education by waiver for all those not having followed the traditional initial training route but who can prove professional experience, personal prior learning. This text also proposes teaching waivers but without granting part of the diploma.*

1987. Act of July 22th 1987. *The missions of the public prison service public are stipulated.*

1992. Act n° 92-678 of July 20th *provides access to professional diplomas through accreditation of prior professional learning with conditions of experience (five years' professional practice; the diploma is obtained by partial credit of papers for an exam but the requirement to sit at least one paper in the traditional fashion.*

1994. Act of January 18th 1994. Public Health and Social Security Code.

1999. Decree-law of April 13th 1999. *The mission of social reintegration is carried out by the Prison Probation and Reintegration Service.*

2000. Circular of November 21st 2000 *concerning involmnet of social workers belonging to the prison and reintegration.*

2002. Act n° 2002-73 of January 17th for *social modernisation.*

2003. Circular n° 2003-127 of August 1st. *Organising accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.*

2006. CNFPTLV. *Recommendations for the development of accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.*

Malta

2005 (October). MQC established.

Poland

1991. Law n° 67-057.329 of September 7th 1991.

2003-2010. *Strategy for the Development of Continuing Professional Training.*

Portugal

1886. 1st Penal Code, replaced in 1982. Decree Law 48/95 of 15/03/1982.

1901. Regulations regarding the Kingdom's Civil Prisons on the Continent and in Adjacent Islands

1936. Decree-law n° 26643 of May 28th. *Prison Organisation Reform*

1974. Decree-law n° 265/74 of August 1st. *Prison Reform.*

1979. Reform introduces UN and Council of Europe orientations.

1982. Institute for Social Reintegration, part of the Ministry of Justice.

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEP Brevet d'études professionnelles
vocational studies diploma

BTS Brevet de technicien supérieur
Professional qualification in...

CAP Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle
vocational training certificate

CEICI Centre Européen d'Investigation sur les Conduites et les Institutions
ECIBI European Centre for Investigation of Behaviour and Institutions

CHR Centre Hospitalier Régional
Regional Hospital Centre

CLI Commission Locale d'Insertion
Local Offender Reintegration Committee

CNCP Commission Nationale de Certification Professionnelle
National Commission for Professional Certification

CNFPTLV Conseil Nationale de la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie
National Council for Lifelong Continuing Education

DAVA Dispositif Académique de Validation des Acquis
Regional Education Authority Department for Accreditation of Prior Learning

LLL Lifelong Learning

MQC Malta Qualifications Council

RNCP Répertoire National de Certification Professionnelle
National Register of Professional Certifications

RVCC Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences

SMPR Service Médico-Psychologique Régional

Regional Medical and Psychological service

SPIP Service Pénitentiaire d'Insertion et de Probation

Prison Probation and Reintegration Service

UCSA Unité de Consultation et de Soins Ambulatoires

Ambulatory Consultation and Health Care Unit

ULE Unité Locale d'Enseignement

Local Teaching Unit (run by a Local Education Supervisor).

UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPR Unité Pédagogique Régionale

Regional Teaching Unit

VAE Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning

VAP Validation des Acquis Professionnels

Accreditation of Prior Learning

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