

Partner Countries – Desk Research Exercise (VINFL)

***please note, the aim of this template is to collate information on VINFL in national and prison contexts from **already completed research**, such as policy and academic papers. The purpose of this form is not to collect original research – the teacher survey will begin this process.*

Partner Country:	Romania
Organisation:	Re-education Centre Buzias
Representative:	Florin Serpe – legal representative Alina Zamosteanu – project responsible

Provide an outline of the **prison system** in your country (maximum 500 words)
- You should include information such as: global prisoner numbers, estates, and trends.

The National Administration of Penitentiaries is a public service responsible for the enforcement of detention regimes and for the rehabilitation intervention, human's dignity, by facilitating responsibility and social reintegration into society of the persons in custody and by contributing to the increase of community safeguard, public order and national security maintenance.

The National Administration of Penitentiaries applies the Strategy of Romanian Government in the fields of its competence by the enforcement of penalties or measures involving deprivation of liberty under the conditions that ensure

- ✓ Respect for the fundamental human rights of the person in custody;
- ✓ Sustained effort for social reintegration of persons in custody in free development of human being and in the value of each individual;
- ✓ Professional ethic;
- ✓ Attachment's mission and roles undertaken;
- ✓ Respect for professional deontology and for quality work standards;
- ✓ Compliance with the principles of the rule of law and equality before the law;
- ✓ Orientation towards the individual Balance between the individual and the community needs, in terms of law enforcement;
- ✓ Concern for efficiency and effectiveness of activities;
- ✓ Providing a sequence of measures which target social reintegration;
- ✓ Diversifying the range of measures which target social reintegration;
- ✓ Openness towards community Awareness for finality of social reintegration, return to the community of inmates.

The inmates and boarded persons execute imprisonment punishments and educative measures in the subordinated units of the National Administration of Penitentiaries:

- 19 half open and open prisons;
- 14 closed and maximum security prisons;
- 1 prison for female offenders and 7 wards for female offenders in other prisons; - 2 detention centres;
- 2 educative centres;

- 6 prison hospitals.

Population on 31.12.2015 – 28.334, out of whom:

- 25.055 convicted (88,43%);
- 2.453 pre-trial and first instance convicts (8,66%);
- 522 sanctioned with internment measure in a detention centre (1,84%);
- 304 sanctioned with internment measure in an educational centre (1,07%).

Percentage of re-offenders, as reported to the overall population: 2009 (44,82%), 2010 (44,93%), 2011 (45,87%), 2012 (45,78%), 2013 (45,78%), 2014 (43,00%), 2015 (40,33%)

The activity of the National Administration of Penitentiaries and its subordinated units is directly coordinated by the Minister of Justice.

The management of the National Administration of Penitentiaries belongs to the Director General, who represents it in relation with the Ministry of Justice and other central and local public administrations, authorities, central and local organizations, as well as individuals and legal entities.

Exerting the managerial act, the Director General is assisted by three Deputy Directors, which involve and represent the penitentiary administration, on the basis of the mandate expressly conferred by decision of the Director General.

National Administration of Penitentiaries Role

As a public service, the National Administration of Penitentiaries contributes to defence, public order and national security by taking measure of ensure guarding, escorting, supervision, enforcement of detention regimes, having a special social role due to its punitive -educative functions and social reinsertion of the persons under custody.

This role becomes visible in the social context, especially when incidents take place, emphasizing the importance of how activities related to serving of punishments involving deprivation of liberty are organized and coordinated, on how the guard, supervision and escort of persons in custody are ensured.

Outline arrangements for **prison education** in your country (maximum 500 words)

- You should include some information regarding the accessibility of education, opportunities, class sizes, resources, challenges.

In the educational year 2015-2016, 2,459 inmates are enrolled in training courses for secondary school and University. Students in the prison system account for approximately 10% of the overall population, a significant percentage, taking into account the totality of activities detainees can be included in, as well as the general prison population and objective conditions for the realization of educational process. One-third of the schooled inmates participate in courses within the program Second Chance – a special program for those who have outgrown the age of schooling for compulsory general education. The percentage of minors deprived of liberty attending training activities, related to the overall population is 64% (201 from 316 minors interned), decreasing slightly compared to previous years. The decrease is explained in the context of a reduction in the period of internment in the penitentiary system, due to the modernization of the legislative framework and its orientation towards non-custodial measures.

In the Prison Romanian System the general approach intend to diversify the Offer of activities and programmes of education, psychological assistance and social support available within the prison system, while maintaining the concern for the implementation of a uniform practice at the level of the subordinate units:

- # Legal education programme;
- # Programme „Training support inmates for persons deprived of liberty in an existential impasse”;
- # Specific psychological assistance programme for alcohol adiction – Alcoholics Anonymous type;
- # Programme for adaptation to conditions o deprivation of liberty – revised edition, covering the topic „The national mechanism to prevent torture in places of detention”.

Regarding the youth, the educational methodology and approach is adapted according the specific period of age.

Education and schooling

The recuperation of the young offenders is built around the instructional and educational process, ensuring the continuation of the schooling and professionalization for every youth in accordance with his/her possibilities – correction of the undesirable behavior, development of the skills and aptitudes that should allow social reintegration.

Objectives

- Ensuring elementary education;
- Restructuring of the young offender’s personality by observing also his/her development rhythm;
- Ensuring an optimal professional and schooling orientation according to the young offender' skills and aspirations;
- Development of the functional competences essential for the social success: communication, critical thinking, taking decisions, conflicts solving;
- Development of the capacity of active integration in different groups: family, professional environment, friends, etc.

Schooling-professionalization: Ensures the access to all forms of training and education, both on horizontal and vertical direction:

- Primary education: day courses, elementary writing courses,
- Simultaneous education;
- Gymnasium education.

The young offender have also the possibility to continue high school studies from the community.

Educational intervention

Objectives

- To develop a responsible autonomous and independent behavior, social competences and abilities;
- Enriching the general knowledge level;
- Development of hygienic and sanitary and self-housing skills;
- Manual qualification by occupational therapy and development of a positive attitude towards work;
- Balancing of various components of the young offender’s personality for behaviors and attitude restructuring.

Educational programs are developed daily by educators, on obligatory and optional modules.

Recent study and policy recommendations in your country (maximum 1500 words)
Is there a national strategy for the validation of informal learning (VINFL)? If so, how well developed is this?
Has there been any pre-existing research carried out on the value of informal learning in education?
Does VINFL form part of training for teachers?

Romania has been adopted the resolution 2006/C168/01, regarding the recognition of informal and nonformal learning value for the youth.
<http://www.gnac.ro/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/04/Rezolutia-Consiliului-si-reprezentantilor-guvernului-privind-recunoasterea-valorii-educatiei-non-formale-si-informale-in-randurile-tineretului-european-2006.pdf>

There are a lot of researches regarding the informal learning especially developed within EU projects that promotes:
-the use of CV Europass and Youth pass

Theoretical studies regarding informal learning were developed:
http://www.tinact.ro/files_docs/educatia-nonformala-si-informala.pdf
<http://iec.psih.uaic.ro/ciea/file/2010/31%20Jurcan%20Georgeta.pdf>

and theoretical approaches in order to raise the awareness regarding the importance of the informal learning:
<http://trainermarianaiacob.weebly.com/blog/educatia-formala-nonformala-si-informala>
<http://www.asociatia-profesorilor.ro/educatia-informala.html>

In the same time, a blog for teachers has been developed:
<http://iteach.ro/pg/blog/mariana.patrichi/read/32476/educatia-formala-nonformala-si-informala>

Validation of the informal learning

In Romania, we can discuss more about the information regarding the validation process and the importance of this process. In this respect many resources, on-line and off-line are underlining the necessity of the validation of the informal learning:
<http://www.nonformalii.ro/stiri-articole-testimoniale/articole/europa-fata-in-fata-cu-validarea-invatarii-nonformale-si-informale>
<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/ro/tags/validarea-invatarii-nonformale-si-informale>

The Romanian Education Law 1/2011 underlines that the students that graduated the formal/informal/nonformal courses can be evaluated and a certificate with a complement will be issued:
<http://www.tinapse.ro/home/pentru-cei-care-cred-in-voluntariat-educatie-nonformala-si-tineret/documente-de-suport/legea-educatiei-nationale-articole-si-metodologii-regulamente-care-sustin-initiativa>

Are you aware of pre-existing research that has been carried out into **the need for and potential benefits of VINFL, particularly in prisons?** (maximum 1000 words)

A lot of researches have been developed in prison regarding the staff and inmates' needs. During an EU projects (European Partnership for an Inclusive Society – ESF, 2010-2012) a Study of Best Practices in Europe for assisting young offenders has been developed. Within this Study the validation System used in Spain has been described and as a project follow-up, the Romanian Prison System adapted this “validation” tool for the Romanian prisons.

Validation of informal learning in prison:

- a credit system is used for each activity, such as: educational programs, leisure programs etc. (e.g. specific programs, such as psychological intervention programs will receive 30 credits, general programs, such as health education will receive 25 credits)
- standards regarding the program/activity accreditation (approval) were developed by National Administration of Penitentiary
- criteria for skills evaluation were established

This credit system is used at national level in Romanian Prison System, more as an motivational tool (the participants will receive some benefits) and less as a validation or certification tool.

Give examples of **good practice in informal learning activities/projects in prisons and community justice settings** (maximum 1000 words)

From Zero to Zorro Project

The Project „From Zero to Zorro” it has been developed by the Re-Education Center Buzias in collaboration with a Romanian NGO. The aim of the project it has been the development of generic skills, such as discipline, team work, as well as specific skills, such as technical skills.

The duration of the project was June-September 2014, involving as target group 45 young offenders, which have been involved in practical and theoretical activities related with auto-mechanics.

One of the specific activities of the Project has been the construction/putting together the pieces for an off-road car, involving 6 young offenders. The pieces were donated by different NGO's and the project has been coordinated by a professional (mechanic).

During 3 months the young offenders learned not only how to use the technical skills, but, also, how to be integrated in a real work environment. At the project end, the off-road car has been presented at the national Show Car in Bucharest. The car has been appreciated and the work has been rewarded. Using the funds collected, Re-Education Center Buzias set up a sports ground for the young offenders.

Meridianos Photo Workshop project

The project has been developed through a collaboration between National Administration of Penitentiary Romania and Meridianos Association Spain (the biggest

association in Spain that is implementing the public-private partnership inside the prison system).

A workshop has been organized including all the technical resources necessary for editing (software) and photo printing, as well for video recording.

The activities were developed during June-July 2015, involving 5 young offenders, coordinated by 2 educators from Re-Education center Buzias and 1 educator from Meridianos Association Spain.

The aim of the project targeted two layers:

1. Prison educators, which were trained in specific techniques and which developed and educative tool, in order to be used in the daily work with the inmates
2. Young offenders, which, at the end of the project had new acquired skills: general (e.g. discipline at the working place, team work etc) and specific (related with the photo workshop, photo design, video recording and editing). These new skills could be useful in order to facilitate the social insertion after release.

The activities have been valorized in September 2015 during the International Conference **Let's Walk, Let's Talk Together!**, organized by the National Administration of Penitentiary Romania and Meridianos, Spain in Bucharest. During this conference an exhibition has been organized reflecting the young offenders' work and it has been presented by the young offenders, invited to this Conference.