

JUNE 12th, 2017

→ DAY 1 | Developing a Common Understanding

After registration, a brief welcome, and initial meetings, the team travelled to Centrul Educativ Buzias. Visits to local institutions allow for lively cooperation and the exchange of promising practices. It was an opportunity for C2 participants to learn about the work carried out at Buzias – a detention centre for young people which focuses on rehabilitation and education. We also met with some of the young people who spoke with us about their own experiences at Buzias.



We were also met during the visit by the participating practitioners from C1 who briefly shared their experiences of the training in Rotterdam and with the pilot activities. They spoke to us about the benefits and challenges of their training, the pilot learning activities, and informal competence development.



Following the trip and our first communal lunch, the training participants were given an outline of the training accompanied with a discussion of the aims and objectives of the

course. This was accompanied with a brief introduction to the project, designed to give an overview of the project as a whole and set the context for the training. This gave participants the opportunity to reflect on their involvement in this type of learning and teaching and their expectations for training week.



Training participants shared information about their own work in a variety of professions – as teachers, psychologists, workshop leaders, probation officers, social workers education managers. As with C1, those attending the training work with a very wide range of prison-based learners and in a broad variety of contexts – young offenders’ institutions, detention centres, male and female prisons and in post-release criminal justice settings.

The day ended with a lively discussion and activities around the terminology involved in the process of VINFL > this was to establish pre-existing knowledge and perceptions

JUNE 13th, 2017

→ DAY 2 | Prison learning and competence-based learning

More project partners arrived for training day 2, so after introductions we were on to a dynamic sharing session. Participants reorganised into their countries and were asked to consider and report on four important questions which would give all participants an interesting insight into their working practices and experiences of prison-related education across the partner countries:

- **Why do you do your job?**
- **What challenges do you face in your work?**
- **Why is informal and non-formal learning important in your work?**
- **What competences are most important for your work?**

These questions sparked a particularly lively discussion about competences and skills – thinking in particular about those competences which participants feel are vital for prisoners and their learning.

To keep the sharing and discussion lively and productive, we introduced a world café focused on three key questions to ask participants about the needs of learners and to think more deeply about the nature of competence development.



Maren presented to the group on the role and importance of competence-based learning within education and learning, with a specific focus on how this type of learning can have a positive impact on prison learners.

To illustrate this impact, Ed from changes and Chances reported on his experience of the VALMORPIS project and – in particular – their competence-oriented learning pilot *Video and Augmented Reality* which took place in Sittard Prison. He discussed with participants how this type of learning activity works in prison and the impact it has upon learners and staff within prison settings.



This is an extremely innovative project. Therefore, it sparked lively discussion around the creative and motivational potential of informal and non-formal learning; the potential for this learning to break down barriers between prisoners, staff, and those outwith the walls of the prison; and the opportunity this type of activity affords learners and facilitators to develop and focus on a wide range of competences.

In the afternoon, participants were given time to develop their own competence-based learning activity. They followed the format used within our C1 training and were asked to think about their own practice and how they could utilise their learning to develop their own practices.

The activities which were developed were extremely wide-ranging. Activities included: a Gaelic-English language project, a socio-historical debate group, a building and renovation project, large-scale event organisation, a psychological workshop using television and video, a series of music workshops, and a series of support programmes with prisoners' wives looking at the issues and impact of incarceration.

The evaluation bullseye of DAYS 1 & 2 shows clear room for progress in the four key learning objectives which we took into account for the remaining three days of programming:

1. Progress towards course objectives
2. Relevance for my practical work
3. Learning of new things
4. Mutual Learning and Exchange



JUNE 14th, 2017

→ **DAY 3 | Working with the LEVEL5 Methodology**

The morning of DAY 3 was reserved for an introduction to the LEVEL5 methodology and exploring how to work with the competence framework and reference system with the participants.

This section was designed to clarify the ways in which people learn and developed the brief context from day one around competences being a blend of knowledge skills and attitudes. The LEVEL5 approach looks at how to measure progress in these areas.



In order to further clarify this approach and move the learning from the theoretical to the practical, one of our participants from C1, Inigo Garrido (who piloted competence-based learning activities with a group of prison learners) spoke with participants about how to undertake this process in reality, using the common language of football to help contextualise the work.

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Alongside this, workshops were undertaken to explore potential and innovative assessment activities, including forms of peer assessment, self-assessment, observation, testing. These workshops were followed by engaged cross-cultural discussion in order to share promising practices and the potential benefits and challenges of particular activities.

He undertook a very practical workshop with participants which focused on reworking a framework to fit different learning contexts. He spoke about the importance of positive attitudes for learners – ensuring that they are involved and engaged in the process.

In the latter part of Wednesday's session, learners were asked to apply this learning practically to their own competence-based learning activities – thinking about how frameworks, rating and indicators could be developed for their own learner groups.

Day 3's evaluation bullseye saw some improvement in all areas – however for two participants in particular showed that some more work needed to be done in the area of mutual learning and exchange.



JUNE 15th, 2017

→ DAY 4 | Assessment in the LEVEL5 Process

The fourth training day started with a visit to Timisoara public adult prison which holds 1200 prisoners.

The participants reported an excellent visit which highlighted many areas of promising practice including a television and radio show, as well as a robust approach to educational provision which separates work-based learning from other more traditional and non-traditional forms, ensuring opportunities for access to all learners for all forms of learning.

Colleagues in Timisoara showed our participants round the prison and gave them an insight into working conditions as well as challenges and opportunities for the future of prison learning.



In the afternoon, following a brief sharing and feedback session, participants returned to the final stage of the validation process and looked at reasoning and rating. Specifically, we considered how to apply these processes learning to measure, record and validate a learner's progress in terms of their competence development. As part of this process we considered a case study to help contextualise this process for participants.



In addition to this, we discussed what options were available to participants for undertaking this process of rating, reasoning, validation and certification with learners and exploring the flexibility of this process.

We looked at the role of the VALMOPRIS certificates and how these *could* be utilised to support learners, improve motivation and offer an opportunity for facilitators to record the learners' progress

and help with goal setting. Inigo also discussed how he had gone about creating these with his prison learners as part of a design brief, which came about as part of our discussions and learning from C1 participants.

Our day 4 Bullseye showed significant progress towards our objectives and an increasing relevance to learners.



To complete the week's training we entered into groups to discuss what the potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of this project and the VALMOPRIS approach to validation might be for learners and practitioners alike. Participants provided the following feedback:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for professional reflection • Adaptability and flexibility of processes • Differentiation – shown in range of practitioners backgrounds and experiences • Clear simple process for measuring and illustrating progress • Shows a learning pathway that can be used by the learner in the future • Focuses on highlighting the positives • The modular project model is beneficial to ‘teacher’ and learner • Validation and an involved process provides motivation and increases self-confidence • This process ensures progress and validation is individualised unlike some other forms of evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes the approach can seem too technical – particularly in the language used • Leans on ‘teacher’ perspective too heavily • Some competences are more complex and can be difficult, even for us to understand • Too many competences? • Reference system can be confusing to personalise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a certificate: process can be acknowledged by institutions/employers • Gives credibility to non-accredited activities • Potential to be applied across Europe in multiple languages • To use the experience and creativity of prison professionals within Europe • Helps with progression – might encourage learners to ‘go further’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough time to develop and put this into practice in working lives all the time • Room for more input from the learner • Certificate not acknowledged by institutions/employers • Focusing on measuring a single competence could forget the whole person • Lack of consistency and attendance from learners could limit progress • Classes need to be flexible and reactive as plans change • What if the learner and ‘teacher’ disagree on the competences to measure?

JUNE 16th, 2017

→ **DAY 5 | Multiplier Event – taking validation forward**

The final day of the training week combined with the E1 multiplier event which saw around 80 participants from Romania, Hungary, Italy and Spain join our C2 participants to discuss and explore the nature of competence-oriented learning and validation within prison and criminal justice settings.

The day was very busy with a great number of scheduled speakers and workshops to allow for a robust and thorough discussion and exploration of VINFL within prisons and criminal justice settings.

The day’s activities were chaired by Professor Joseph Giordmaina, a highly experienced member of the EPEA and supported by speeches from speakers and professionals leading in the area of prison education – the VALMOPRIS partnership set out to disseminate the project – as well as its goals, processes, outputs, and recommendations.



One of the key features of the day was to explore with participants what the future of validation might be within prisons and criminal justice settings.

The day started with a consideration of the challenges and opportunities within prison education and learning in order to set the context for the VALMOPRIS project, in speeches delivered by the Chair, Joseph Giordmaina, and Sorina Togoie of the Romanian Administration of Prisons.

The VALMOPRIS partnership then presented the aims and objectives of the project to attendees, sharing and disseminating our findings and outputs, concluding with our recommendations for the future of VINFL within the sector.



In addition to the impact of the project, we felt it was vital to provide two key contextual discussion points for longer-term sustainability –



1. A representative of our partner organisation Blinc, Loredana Ceccacci, gave an important and very interesting insight into the context and progress of competence-oriented learning and validation, providing vital information about the roles and responsibilities of organisations in light of European policy objectives.

2. Also, Prof. Dr. Peter Ruszonyi – a leading scholar and professional in the field of Correctional Education, discussed the role of professionalisation and training for prison-based staff – presenting promising practices within prison education.

The day was completed by interactive workshops which allowed for sharing of practices and mutual exchange: workshop material proved particularly successful at engaging participants and sparking lively discussion and debate.