

## ABOUT THE PROJECT



### Report from the meeting – in Ploiesti, Romania

Over time, the Penitentiary of Ploiesti suffered many transformations.

In 1977, after the political reorganization of the penitentiary system in Romania, the penitentiary of Ploiesti was dissolved. In 1994, it was set up again in order to create accommodation spaces for about 500 inmates.

The penitentiary is located in the centre of the city of Ploiesti, on a surface of 5155 square meters; it has 7 buildings, one of them being intended for the persons deprived of liberty and the others for: cooking for the inmates, warehouses, work shops, inmates' club, offices for the personal

Ploiesti Penitentiary is specialized in custody of convicted male adult persons, who serve their sentence in open and semi-open regim.

In the penitentiary it functions the department of education and psychosocial assistance. Its aim is to assist the inmates during the social reintegration process.

The department has now 4 educators, 1 educator agent, 2 social assistants, 2 psychologist, 1 sport monitor, 1 technical agent. The department is directed by Magdalena Toma, deputy director Education and psychosocial assistance.

### Activities in Ploiesti Prison

In Ploiesti Penitentiary courses are organized for primary school, and inmates who fulfill the conditions may apply to attend university, universities accredited by distance learning system (Open University). Also, for inmates with special needs specific programs are organized. Thus, the experts of the penitentiary are carrying out therapeutic programs, for inmates with mental illness, program for writing and reading for the illiterate inmates.

The penitentiary Ploiesti encourages the collaboration with the local community and has a number of projects with representatives of nongovernmental organizations. These activities (theater, music band, painting workshops, exhibitions, etc) are carried out both, inside and outside the penitentiary. Inmates are encouraged to engage in voluntary activities for the benefit of other vulnerable groups (children's homes, homes for the elderly, etc.)

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## Teamwork – inmates and partners

The meeting started on 2 March 2015 by presenting Ploiesti Penitentiary, the delegation was received by the project members and by the penitentiary director, Mr. Celestine Brânzan.

The meeting continued with an interactive activity, a discussion between the delegation members and a group of prisoners, on human rights in the European context.

In this activity was carried out a PowerPoint presentation by Mrs. Toma Magdalena, followed by an interactive exercise in groups consisting of inmates and Grundtvig project members - FREE IT- on the most valuable right provided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- The work received positive feedback from both groups, the inmates involved and the members of the delegation. Subsequently, project members visited Ploiesti Penitentiary.



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### Inmates at work in society

The second part of the first day of the meeting continued with a visit to a social enterprise, Salanova where a total of 30 inmates work (in shifts), where different kind of vegetables are sorted and packed and which are then sold in supermarkets all over the country. We had free discussions with the representative of the social enterprise Salanova, who made a brief description of the collaboration with penitentiary along the 3-year contract.



### Cultural identity

The evening of the first day was reserved to activities to promote Romanian cultural identity. The members of the delegation made a visit to the Peles Castle in Sinaia, - the former residence of the Romanian Royal Family.



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### Labor market

The morning of the second day was devoted to an activity in the community, Ploiesti Penitentiary together with Employment Agency organized a Job Fair for prisoners, (Labour markets) in the Public Library in the city.

On this occasion a total of 20 inmates who are going to be released within the next period had the opportunity to meet with representatives of local institutions and of NGOs in order to obtain information necessary for reintegration into society.

These meetings are held regularly, attended by the inmates and representatives of the Employment Agency, Police, Department of Public Health, Probation, Municipality, Child Protection, the Drug Prevention Evaluation Center and School Inspectorate, Ombudsman, NGOs and aim to facilitate the relationship between inmates and institutions that can assist them post detention to increase the chances of social reintegration.

During these meetings the inmates can ask questions, they can clarify certain concerns, can receive informational support needed to access post detention services. Research on the issues of prisoners of Romania and studies on exclusion of former inmates indicate that their needs are: finding a job after the release from prison, lack of financial support, drug abuse, homelessness or a fixed place of residence, lack of identity documents, and issues of family life.

Most of the inmates had an insignificant experience with the educational system, so that in these regular meetings with representatives of local institutions aimed at identifying relevant issues and priorities for the inmates individually.

Besides these meetings, the representatives of the penitentiary facilitate the relationship with local institutions, individually, according to the needs of inmates. This approach is achieved both through phone calls, official letters between the institutions, and individual counseling sessions conducted in the penitentiary.

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Penitentiary Ploiesti is focused on the relationship with the local community and encourages a relationship maintained with local institutions that can contribute to the post detention reintegration. There are also many community activities undertaken in which are included inmates and representatives of institutions / voluntary / NGOs. Besides these activities performed outside the penitentiary, inside the place of detention are conducted activities in collaboration with local community representatives, the management of the institution being one opened to cooperation and to link with the community. Also, are regularly organizing an Prison Awareness Campaigning.

### Conference to promote the Grundtvig project Free - It

In the second part of the day was conducted to promote the project **Grundtvig Conference**.

The agenda included:

- Opening Event and Agenda of the meeting - Ms. Toma Magdalena, deputy director Ploiesti Penitentiary;
- PowerPoint presentation material about Ploiesti Penitentiary inmates and the activities undertaken – Deputy Director Mrs. Toma Magdalena;
- Actual coordinates the execution of sentences and custodial measures ordered by the court in criminal proceedings governed by Law no. 254/2013, including the use of detainees' handmade activities - presentation by the supervisory judge to imprisonment in the Penitentiary Ploiesti, Ms. Mihaela Bunăiașu;
- Presentation of models of good practice in the field of social reintegration vulnerable- presentation categories collaboration with County Library "Nicolae Iorga" Ploiesti - Mrs. director Mihaela Radu;
- Reintegration of former inmates into the labor market - Mrs. Cristina Stoichici - director of the Employment County Agency (AJOFM) Prahova;
- Presentation of the Grundtvig, FREE-IT project - Mrs. Laura Franceschi, Consulmarc Sviluppo Italia, Project Coordinator;
- Presentation EPEA - Mr. Anthony Vella – Malta;
- Education in Greece Prison System - Mrs. Dimitrouli Kalliopi;
- Presentation partnerships prisons run by Târgșor, Ploiesti, Margineni, Găiești institutions / local NGOs impact both in terms of social inclusion and involvement in community life prison.



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This conference was attended by about 75 people, representatives of local institutions, volunteers, representatives of NGOs with whom Ploiesti Penitentiary has common activities, teachers and local media representatives.

The event also was attended by a representative of the National Administration of Penitentiaries, Mrs. Adriana Dinu, being an event promoted also at national level.

Representatives from South Muntean prison, respectively Margineni Penitentiary Târgșor Women's Prison, Găești Penitentiary participated at this conference, being a regional activity.

Târgșor Penitentiary, was represented by Deputy Director Education and Psychosocial Assistance – Ecaterina Preda, who summarized the activities carried out in this prison.

- *Therapeutic Community EVA.* Eva community works since August 2010 and is a program for inmates who have faces the problem of drugs. This program is a method of therapy and self-help as it gives residences the responsibility and helps them feel part of the community.

*Mother and child section.* Târgșor Penitentiary for Women holds a special section where prisoners that are mothers are permitted to take care of their child until the age of one year. This section is provided with a space designed for the right to walk daily which is separated from other areas of the prison.

- Margineni Penitentiary, was represented by Deputy Director Education and Psychosocial Assistance - Camelia Herea, she summarized the activities carried out in this prison.

Thus Mărgineni Penitentiary is the only maximum security prison in South region, being also the regional coordinator of the other prisons in the region.

Initially, in this Penitentiary were imprisoned political prisoners and various priests, since 1840. After 1869, the penitentiary was transformed into common prison. And since 1949 it has been modernized, being built new pavilions of detention and a furniture factory. ILCaragiale Furniture Factory Construction was completed in 1963 and it works over the years as a major training center for inmates in Mărgineni penitentiary and other prisons in the country, in trades such as universal carpenter, lacquering and wooden packer.



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Currently Mărgineni Penitentiary is profiled to imprisonment of inmates deprived of liberty under maximum security, life imprisonment, closed system, as well as preventive arrest. In the sector of detention, there are arranged medical offices, chapel unity and clubs to conduct the education and psychosocial assistance.

The sector activity is provided by education specialists, psychologists and social workers. Persons deprived of liberty are assisted in the rehabilitation and socio-professional inclusion by organizing educational, therapeutic, psychological and social, moral and religious, educational and vocational training.

The main objectives of social reintegration activity aim to improve and to preserve the psychosomatic status of inmates during the execution of punishment, the acquisition of pro social behaviors designed to facilitate the return to their family and community.

Găiești Penitentiary is located in an isolated area of the city Găiești area at the exit of the A1 motorway, 40 km and 80 km from Bucharest Pitești. Initially it worked as a rehabilitation center, having minors and youth custody, and then from December 2012 was transformed into a penitentiary with open system, having the legal capacity of 533 seats. The activities are focused on the relationship with the community and prepare for the return to the community.

The afternoon of the second day continued with a meeting of project members to obtain feed-back on the implementation of mobility on best practices submitted by each participating country and establishing the following activities that are to be implemented.



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