Project S.T.E.P. – Supporting distance Training and Education in Prison

Call: Erasmus+ KA2
Deadline: 29/10/2020
Dates: 01/04/2021 – 01/04/2023
Lead partner: LINC Onlus

Scheda progetto

General objective: support and enhance the use of digital tools and distance learning in prisons

Specific objectives:
- Collect European good practices
- Propose guidelines for digital and distance learning in prison
- Train educators and prison staff in the organization of courses activated with distance learning methods

Abstract

The covid emergency that hit the world at the beginning of 2020 has imposed radical changes in our society. Most aspects of everyday life have undergone changes caused by this emergency: from the emotional to the working sphere, there has been no area that has not to deal with restrictions, changes and new organizational structures. The area of training, of course, was one of the most affected, forced to respond quickly to a situation in which part of the skills and tools have proved obsolete. Of course having to face this crisis represented an opportunity to accelerate modernization processes, but it is undeniable that this situation has also exacerbated social inequalities and the difficulties of particular contexts of society: among these, certainly the prison context is the one that has suffered the greatest backlash.

In the penitentiary system, access to training is of enormous importance both for the quality of life during their stay in institutions and for the possibilities that people can access once their sentence is over. As explained in the summary report created for the European Commission by GHK, a high percentage of prisoners in the EU have a rather low level of preparation and training and these low qualification levels have important negative effects on the job prospects of prisoners close to release, a condition identified as one of the key factors for relapse.

Access to adequate and quality training was a central challenge for the penitentiary system in the pre-Covid era, with the explosion of the health emergency and its repercussions these issues have become of vital importance. In fact, issues have emerged that can no longer be postponed: access to the internet and digital education, the preparation of prison staff, the basic digital skills of trainers and learners, are aspects on which to focus our efforts, being essential tools to guarantee the right to training and therefore to an effective rehabilitation process.
The STEP - Supporting distance Training and Education in Prison - project aims to support and enhance the use of digital tools and distance learning in prisons. To succeed in this aim, we believe it is necessary to support educators and prison staff in the acquisition of adequate skills for the implementation of these tools.

A fundamental first step to succeed is to adopt a common methodology through the collection of European good practices in distance learning in prison and comparing the response that different contexts have given and are giving to training needs. With the STEP project we will therefore build a comparative research between at least 4 European countries, proposing short vocational paths hops in each penitentiary institution and monitoring the organizational and management methods of these paths in vivo. This research will lay the foundations for an analysis of the

Strengths and Weaknesses of each intervention with the aim of building guidelines for the enhancement of distance learning in prison and ad hoc training courses for prison staff and for the civilian personnel working in institutions. The Step project will be divided into 2 years and 2 phases:

Phase I: Inmate training and comparative research
- Analysis of the training courses in prison in the partner countries
- Distance learning course for prisoners in each partner country
- Construction of a grid of observation and comparison of the paths: analysis of virtuous organizational processes and of the criticalities encountered
- Collection of good practices

Phase II Guidelines and training
- Guidelines for the enhancement of distance learning in prison
- Training for prison staff and civilian staff working in institutions