



EDITION 1 – FEBRUARY 2014

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The FREE-IT project focuses on the training of operators who, in different EU prisons, activate VET initiatives targeting convicts, in direct response to the impact of the economic crisis.

The project intends to provide them with additional tools for inmates employment promotion, detecting local enterprises existing demand for skills and predicting future ones.

## 10 Partners, 9 Countries, one goal: assist prison operators in promoting inmates employment

The FREE-IT project focuses on the training of operators who, in different EU prisons, activate VET initiatives targeting convicts, in direct response to the impact of the economic crisis.

The project approach considers:

- **Effectively welcome, guide and orient** convicts, identifying their skills and talents and motivating them to training
- Provide a reference point in prisons, closely working with local **career centres**
- Combining **inmates skills and talents with emerging labour market needs**, thus matching and anticipating labour market demands
- Promote the identification and upgrading of prisoners **innovative, creative, artistic skills**, which will provide added value to micro and craft enterprises
- Promote the **social recognition** of inmates skills and job profiles

## The project specific objectives:

The projects intends to:

EXCHANGE PARTNERS' BEST PRACTICES related to the identification of skills and competencies needed by prison training operators to effectively promote working opportunities for convicts, according to the local market situation.

PROPOSE A PORTFOLIO OF COMPETENCIES TO BE ACQUIRED BY PRISON OPERATORS to allow them better prepare training activities and contribute to ensure concrete outputs in terms of placement for convicts.

DEFINE POSSIBLE GUIDELINES FOR PRISON TRAINING OPERATORS, allowing them to better prepare training activities and to ensure their effective "follow-up" in terms of placement



[www.freeitproject.eu](http://www.freeitproject.eu)



## THE PARTNERS

Partners come from 10 different Countries, and almost all of them have experience in training in prisons or with disadvantaged groups.

Their co-operation is a well-mixed blend of different skills and competencies, which highly contributes to the effective achievement of the project results



## The partners: let's know them more in details!

### **Consulmarc Sviluppo srl – project co-ordinator - ITALY**

Consulmarc Sviluppo srl was born in 1979 to provide companies with innovative services for internationalization, knowledge support, human resources management and employment.

In 1991 it opened its office in Brussels, participating in the networks promoted by DG Enterprise and in EU projects: to do so, the company created its EU Projects Division, working on non formal training, VET, employment promotion, environment and sustainable development, accessibility, tourism, intercultural dialogue.

[www.consulmarc.it](http://www.consulmarc.it)

### **Cooperativa Sociale "Il Cerchio" ONLUS - ITALY**

Il Cerchio Social Cooperative was born in 1997 in Venice. Through its activities it contributes to the achievement of community interests, as well as to the promotion of the values of solidarity and social integration, also through sustainable development.

Il Cerchio operates to identify, analyse and fight every kind of marginalization, discrimination and civil and social rights violation against individuals and communities. Its main target groups are inmates and former inmates. The associates are employed in activities located both outside and inside Giudecca Female Prison

[www.ilcerchiovenezia.it](http://www.ilcerchiovenezia.it)

### **Education Unit, Cork prison - IRELAND**

Cork Prison is a closed, committal prison for adult men. The population is approximately 240. It is one of 14 prisons in Ireland.

The Education Unit offers courses ranging from Basic Education to Open University studies. The teachers are employed by a Local Education Authority, under the Department of Education.

The Education Unit philosophy is based on the idea of Second Chance Education, encouraging the students to take responsibility for their own learning. We see Education as a great force for change and the opportunity for them to fulfil their potential.

[www.corkvec.ie](http://www.corkvec.ie)

### **Åsane School of Upper Secondary Education - NORWAY**

The school is a vocational school with approximately 450 "ordinary" students. The school is responsible for all formal education in the prison departments in the Bergen area.

Educational offer includes Mechanics, Restaurant and food subjects, Construction, Arts, crafts and design, General theoretical studies, Internet-based courses, Physical education/training, ICT, Music, Theatre, Entrepreneurship, Basic (elementary) education, Technical school, Facilitation for studies at college and university

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### **European Prison Education Association – Malta Branch - MALTA**

The EPEA-Malta Branch was set up in 2006. The Branch is a no-profit non-governmental organisation registered according to the local laws. The current Chairperson and Secretary have been active in education in prisons since 1995 and members of the EPEA since 1997. Both Branch officers served on the EPEA Steering Committee for a number of years. The setting up of the Branch meant that the individual and collective effort of its members in the development of education in prisons was officially acknowledged by the Ministry of Justice and other relevant institutions in Malta.

[www.epeamalta.org/index.html](http://www.epeamalta.org/index.html)

### **Austrian Prison Service - AUSTRIA**

The Austrian Prison Service ("Vollzugsdirektion") was established in 2007 as the subordinate authority of the Austrian Ministry of Justice. It is the operative supreme authority in professional divisions and affairs of the public services law. The Administration Department of Penal System of the Ministry of Justice is responsible for strategic divisions. The Department of Care and Services is responsible for the organisation and structuring of care of the prison regime, juvenile and female inmates, inmates under psychiatric treatment) and prisoners on remand.

<http://strafvollzug.justiz.gv.at/>

### **CIRE, Centre d'Iniciatives per a la Reinserció - SPAIN**

CIRE, Centre d'Iniciatives per a la Reinserció, is a public body that depends on the Department of Justice of the Government of Catalonia. The Catalan Department of Justice entrusted CIRE with the social and labour reintegration of inmates. CIRE offers them vocational training and paid productive work in prison. The main aim of CIRE is to give a second chance to people serving a sentence. The most important business associations, chambers of commerce and trade unions do collaborate with CIRE and work together to connect prison to the working world.

[www.cirecat.org](http://www.cirecat.org)

### **Centre for Education and Culture Trebnje - SLOVENIA**

The Centre for Education and Culture Trebnje is a public organization, established by the Trebnje municipality to promote and develop adult education. The Centre offers a comprehensive range of education programmes: elementary school for adults, secondary education programmes, non-formal education. Recently, increasing attention has been given to various projects which develop and encourage lifelong learning among different target groups especially socially disadvantage people (elderly, rural residents, Roma community members, unemployed...)

[www.ciktrebnje.si/](http://www.ciktrebnje.si/)

[www.freeitproject.eu](http://www.freeitproject.eu)



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## KNOWL - Social Enterprise for Education & Lifelong Learning - GREECE

Knowl is a social enterprise aiming to expand the knowledge capital and make the 'knowledge society' more inclusive.

It is innovative because it brings together the academic, entrepreneurial and research communities at an interdisciplinary level and develops integrated pedagogical models encompassing a wide socioeconomic spectrum.

Knowl provides education and training in a wide range of topics, by exploiting the expertise of educators, academics, instructors, consultants and diverse social actors from various fields like lifelong learning, entrepreneurship and business, creative and cultural industries etc.

<http://knowl.gr>

## Rideout - Creative Arts for Rehabilitation – UNITED KINGDOM

Rideout is a small NGO based in Stoke-on-Trent, UK. Since 1999 the company has established a strong reputation for developing innovative arts-based approaches that tackle issues related to crime and social justice.

The company's work is split between projects that focus on work with prisoners where the aim is to challenge and assist participants in moving away from criminal lifestyles, and programmes that engage the wider public in discussion and debate about the form and function of criminal justice

[www.rideout.org.uk](http://www.rideout.org.uk)



[www.freeitproject.eu](http://www.freeitproject.eu)



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

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## THE PROJECT KICK-OFF

During the project kick-off meeting, partners came to better know each other, to ensure a good and effective start of their mutual co-operation

## The project kick – off meeting – Italy, 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013

On the 28th, 29th and 30th October 2014, partners met in beautiful Venice, to start the activities of the Free – It project.

During the first day of the meeting, **partners visited Venice Female prison, in “La Giudecca”** Island. The Director welcomed all to the Prison, then the prison staff and member of the “Il Cerchio” Cooperative guided partners to visit the prison, and the several laboratories where women inmates are employed in, including:

- an industrial **laundry**, providing services to renowned Hotels and Restaurants in Venice like Hilton and Cipriani,
- an organic vegetable **garden**
- a laboratory of organic **cosmetics**
- a **tailoring laboratory** producing cloths and dresses and co-operating with “La Fenice” theatre

Partners asked questions and discussed with prison operators, expressing their interest for the activities developed in the prison.



The second session of the meeting focused on the introduction of the project aims and expected results. During the afternoon session, a **press conference** was organized, with the participation of different local stakeholders:

- Vice major of Venice Municipality – Mr Simionato
- Director of Regional Office for Inmates – Ms Venezia
- President of Venice Surveillance Tribunal – Mr Pavarin
- Director of female prison in Venice – Ms Straffi
- Hotel Hilton and Harry’s Bar – Mr Cipriani

All of them greeted the project starting and express their will to follow its developments for further co-operation.

In the evening, partners enjoyed a **concert at the “La Fenice”** theatre, organized by “Il Cerchio”. The proceeds will be used to satisfy basic inmates needs



[www.freeitproject.eu](http://www.freeitproject.eu)

## THE PROJECT SECOND MEETING

During the project second meeting, partners start exploring more in details the issues at stake, focusing on HOW TO ESTABLISH constructive relations with convicts, as a pre-condition to training

On the second day of the meeting, partners **introduced themselves** and their activities, then discussed some issues related to **project management**:

- Website creation and updating
- Standard templates for project management, including agendas, reports, newsletter templates
- Meetings calendar

Then, they identified the actions to be performed up to the next meeting, to be held in Malta in January 2014.

### The project second meeting – Malta, 11-13 January 2014

Between the 11th and the 13th January 2014 partners met in Malta, to continue their co-operation within the project and...why not, enjoy a “preview” of Spring!

The President of the hosting partner, the European Prison Education Association Mr. Anthony Vella, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He augured that the participants enjoy the visit, the country and have a successful project meeting. Then, he introduced the concept of “**best practices**”: the presentation addressed several points including: a definition and understanding of what we may take ‘best practices’ to mean, the need to put the learner at the centre of the teacher’s efforts, how to deal with an integrated re-entry programme for prisoners and the requirements of innovative learning methods.

The participants were then divided into two groups in order to discuss issues involved in establishing a very good relationship with prison inmates:

- **WORKSHOP A: Where do your inmates come from? – Knowing your ‘students’** (Coordinated by Mr. Anthony Vella – EPEA Malta Branch): The aim of Workshop A was to discuss and debate different aspects of the process leading a teacher / trainer to better know his / her students, as a key aspect in a teaching - learning relationship
- **WORKSHOP B: Communicating with inmates – establishing a positive relationship** (Coordinated by Ms.Sophia Protopapa– KNOWL): The aim of Workshop B was to explore good communication with inmates, to establish an environment of trust in which they are motivated to communicate, as well as create a plan of what they would like to do once they are released.



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At the end of this fruitful session, partners enjoyed a typical dinner at Ta' Kris Maltese Restaurant!

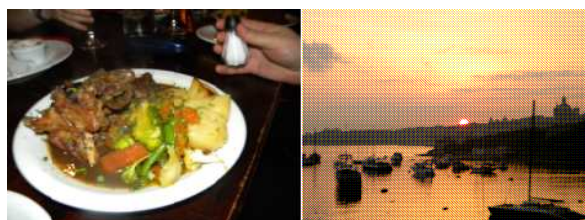
During the second day of the meeting, the morning was dedicated to the reporting on the work and issues addressed during the workshops held on the first day of the meeting.

Gerard Estalella from CIRE presented a project called Reincorpora, that is successfully organized every year in Catalonia. It involves professional training (courses with theory and practice in company) with learning-service in the community. It was presented one cookery course for inmates, where a number of senior citizens were entertained to good food prepared by the inmates".

To conclude the morning session, Laura Franceschi from Consulmarc Sviluppo led a discussion on how the project should proceed and what is to be prepared for the next meeting in Cork, Ireland, at the beginning of April 2014.



In the afternoon, Partners enjoyed a visit of Malta city center, appreciating the taste of its multi-faceted, multicultural background over centuries



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