

# Building the support models of young prisoners rehabilitation and reintegration

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*This paper aims to present a rehabilitation aspect of work and the need of building the support models for facilitating the labor market integration of prisoners leaving penal institutions. An innovative EU project entitled "PI model of a comprehensive system of cooperation with employers to support the market entry of young prisoners in Lublin province" was presented as an example of such integration approach.*

Keywords – rehabilitation, work, prisoners, model of cooperation, labor market.

## I. Introduction

A person who commits a crime should be punished, which should be proportionate to the offense committed. This thesis is consistent with the ancient principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," which comes to life, gaining new importance in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant [1]. The positivist concept adopts the principle of determinism - the responsibility is seen relatively decomposed into two categories of factors: internal – personal and external – social. This formed rehabilitation model is essentially implemented to the present, having among others, the expression in approach to imprisonment. Currently allows the inmate to use such facilities as general education and vocational training, work, social contact with external environment, therapy [2]. Work is recognized in the modern penitentiary law as one of the most important means of rehabilitation. Its importance in preparing for life in society results, among others the teaching profession and working habit forming [3]. It is important that the possibility to work was given to prisoners already during his imprisonment, and at the time of his leaving for the freedom he received professional support from specialised institution. This paper presents a project which is an innovative attempt to create a model of a comprehensive system of

cooperation between entrepreneurs and other organizations to facilitate labor market entry for young prisoners.

## II. Rehabilitation dimension of work

Rehabilitation can simply be described as the process of restoring person who is breaking the law, to living and proper functioning in the society. We can do this in a variety of ways, including the modification of behavior, development of proper social attitudes, changing of social membership by rejecting stigmatizing subcultures roles, emotional reconstruction with the aim of moving from negative feelings and conditions conducive to breaking of social norms to the states of positive, creative effects of autorehabilitation [4]. The Polish legal system has several means of rehabilitation impact for convicts. These are:

- 1) Work
- 2) Teaching
- 3) Educational and sports activities
- 4) Keeping in touch with family and the outside world
- 5) Awards and disciplinary
- 6) The new measures and methods of influence on the criminal [5].

The work is also an important part of rehabilitation in many European countries such as France, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom as well as in Canada and United States of America [6].

Several arguments emphasizing rehabilitation dimension of work can be cited [7]:

- 1) working prisoners are assessed more positively by society than prisoners who do not work;
- 2) inmates through their work are no longer useless to society - work as a form of general satisfaction for offences;
- 3) inmates learn to appreciate the results of their work - shape feeling of being useful and serviceable, acquire the ability to work in a team;
- 4) work gives the opportunity to raise money in a socially acceptable ways;
- 5) work teaches systematic and fulfill assigned responsibilities - shaping a sense of responsibility for their actions;
- 6) work while imprisonment contributes to the subsequent activation of the criminal career in terms of freedom;
- 7) taking job outside the prison is the training of independent living in the freedom;
- 8) free time management leads to the prevention of the development of common pathologies in the prison environment;
- 9) appearance of the sense of meaning in life, the sense of effort taken, the feeling of being appreciated by others, the development of interests and strengthening of the prisoners self-esteem;

10) work is often associated with the possibility of a different perception of the future, self-esteem, being needed.

The justification for undertaking various initiatives for the employment of prisoners is that there is a high percentage of unemployment in this group. In Polish legislation, the unemployed who did not take job after imprisonment, are defined as persons in particular situation on labour market [8]. Therefore, ex-prisoners need the professional support in this aspect, from various institution, both public and non-governmental. It is important that these organizations undertake common initiatives for the return of former prisoners to the labour market and create the complementary entirety. Extremely important is the participation of employers, without which most of the efforts undertaken in this area is prejudged to failure. In Poland, there is currently no institutionalized system of support for the prisoners - the activities of various institutions are scattered, and the employees of these organizations point out the shortcomings in:

1) communication with other components of prisoners support system, especially with employers,

2) preparation to work with a specific group, such as prisoners are,

3) work-related skills (e.g. coping with stress, job burnout prevention). The lack of tools/methods for the diagnosis of these deficiencies, both at the level of the whole organization and individual employees, is especially noticeable [9].

The next section is a description of a new innovative project that is attempting to create a model of cooperation among the various institutions and employers in order to improve the chances of young prisoners at the Lublin labor market.

### III. An innovative model of support for the prisoners in the labor market

Innovative project "Model of a complex system of cooperation with employers to support the market entry of young prisoners in the province of Lublin" is implemented by the Foundation for the Development of the Catholic University in partnership with the City Employment Office in Lublin, Employers of Lublin Land Association and Natanaelum Association, under the merits patronage of the Chair of Social Psycho-prevention KUL, in cooperation with prisons in Zamosc and Biela Podlaska. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund. The main objective of the project is to increase the effectiveness of cooperation between different components operating in the field of employment and social integration with entrepreneurs to facilitate the social and vocational rehabilitation of young prisoners in the Lublin province. This model will be run using a range of innovative solutions – A-G components developed within the project. A group of people (Users) that make up the model are represented by:

- 1) prison service
- 2) probation service
- 3) employment agencies
- 4) non-governmental organizations
- 5) social assistance services
- 6) employers

The target group are young prisoner under 25 years sentenced to prison in the Lublin province, six months before the end of the imprisonment.

The project consists of two phases - preparatory and implementation phase.

**I. The preparation phase** - it is a process of making a diagnosis and analysis of the problem and to develop a preliminary version of each component A-G. During this phase there were the following activities: meetings with representatives of various organizations, FGI interviews and in-depth individual interviews (IDI). Moreover, a quantitative research among 720 young prisoners from Lublin province and 280 Users was also conducted. A preliminary versions components were specified on the basis of abovementioned activities.

**Component A** – Individual strategy for the preparation for freedom and employability. The strategy sets out the principle of co-operating system for positive social and professional reintegration of young prisoners, compiled on the basis of its characteristics, and psychosocial support system resources (capital of the prison and probation services, social services, job placement, NGOs and employers). The strategy provides the framework for cooperation of the whole system using remaining components (B-G).

**Component B** - Diagnosis of system needs. Three diagnostic methods were developed:

1) Questionnaire of Needs, which is used to measure the job-related individual needs of staff of the support system for prisoners and employers;

2) Inventory of Requirements for Training, measuring training needs of employees in the institutions of the support system;

3) Communication Questionnaire, a tool for communicating mutual expectations between the different institutions that form the system of support for prisoners and employers.

**Component C** - Training relevant to the Users needs. A training program for Users can be prepared on the basis of research carried out using methods proposed within component B. These training aims to increase User's knowledge / skills / competencies, which results in the effectiveness of their cooperation in the social and professional reintegration of prisoners. The following training programs were developed as a result of research carried out under the project:

- 1) skills that are relevant for help and motivation;
- 2) the ability to deal with stress, effective communication and mediation;
- 3) ability of work organization and task management;

- 4) the ability to prevent burnout;
- 5) knowledge of the tasks performed by the various institutions of the system;
- 6) knowledge of building local partnerships and fundraising.

**Component D** – Diagnosis of psycho-social and work potential of prisoner. The Questionnaire of Psychosocial Potential was developed to measure the psychological, social and professional potential of prisoners. This method is based on R. K. Merton's theory of types of deviance accommodation [10]. According to results obtained in the study, we conclude about the potential of a person on the basis of its adaptation in six areas of its life:

- 1) attitude to family life;
- 2) the social roots;
- 3) attitude to the legal standards;
- 4) attitude to work;
- 5) attitude towards others;
- 6) satisfaction with their lives.

Research methods from component D allow Users to create an individual support plan for social and professional rehabilitation of the prisoner.

**Component E** - Interactive platform. The platform is an electronic tool designed to promote cooperation between the Users in the virtual dimension. The platform consists of the following parts:

- 1) Solid content base, where you can place the copyrighted content and articles;
- 2) A forum for Users, where Users can exchange their views;
- 3) Jobs database – a tool for employers, where they can post job opportunities for prisoners. Prisoners, in turn, can post their resume and cover letters in order to obtain employment.

**Component F** - Monitoring of social and working success. The method of monitoring a social and/or professional success of prisoners is a longitudinal study that consists of two parts:

- 1) obtaining information about the variables on such areas as: family life, social relationships, work and sobriety;
- 2) obtaining information about the psychosocial variables that determine a positive re-integration.

**Component G** - Committee for Employment. This committee should work within the prison. In addition to prison staff, the Committee will include representatives of the curators, social welfare, employment, non-governmental organizations and employers. The purpose of the committee is to determine the individual path of social and professional development for a particular prisoner.

**II. Implementation stage** is the period in which selected Users and inmates test solutions that were developed in the early phase of the project. Then the validation is carried out, necessary changes in each component are being made, and the final version of the product is being developed. This version of a model for comprehensive system of co-operation is then deployed to

the country's social policy. Mutual interaction between the components A-G outlined above are illustrated in figure 1.

## Conclusion

This article attempted to present a work (professional activity) as an important element of positive rehabilitation and social and professional reintegration of prisoners. However, many of those persons that leave prison are experiencing a number of problems in recruiting and retaining jobs. Hence, it is crucial to support these people throughout the institutionalized system. This article describes an innovative project which aims to increase the efficiency of co-operation between entities that support employment and social integration with employers to facilitate the social and professional rehabilitation of young prisoners in the Lublin province.

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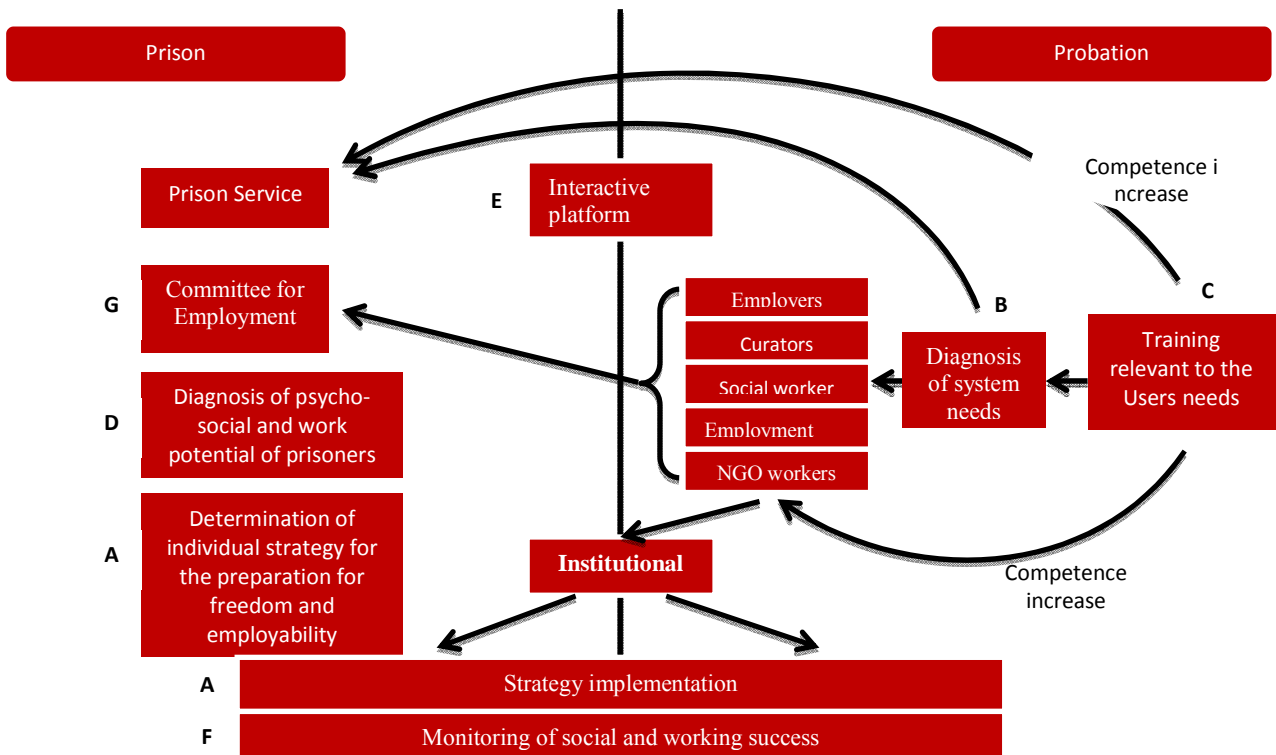


Fig. 1. Model of a comprehensive system of cooperation with employers to support the market entry of young prisoners