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POS DRU 2007-2013



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ADMINISTRAȚIA NAȚIONALĂ A
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Investește în oameni!

„Revenirea foștilor deținuți pe piața muncii și integrarea lor în societate”

Proiect co-finanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Sectorial pentru Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007 – 2013

Axa prioritară 6 “Promovarea incluziunii sociale”

Domeniul major de intervenție 6.2 “Îmbunătățirea accesului și a participării grupurilor vulnerabile pe piața muncii”

Proiect POSDRU/70/6.2/S/33488

➤ Introduction

Within the framework of the project „*The return of ex-convicts to the labour market and their integration in society*”, the UNDP team of experts on social inclusion performed a comparative analysis of the measures taken in 8 EU countries to combat social exclusion of ex-convicts. The purpose of the study was to analyse the national and European context for the reintegration of (ex-)convicts, with the perspective to develop an integrated national mechanism for advancing the social inclusion of this vulnerable group.

In order to validate the results of the study within an extensive consultative framework, a working group consisting representatives of public authorities that are active in the area of social inclusion of convicts and ex-convicts and partner organisations in the project has been established.



UNDP organised two rounds of consultations with the representatives of the working group to discuss the results of the comparative analysis. During the first consultative meeting, on 27 October 2011, the consultants presented to the working group the proposed methodology of the analysis, the inputs from the representatives of the working group being included in an updated version of the report. During the second session of consultations, held on 11 November 2011, UNDP consultants presented the findings of the comparative analysis of 8 models of social inclusion of ex-convicts used at the EU level: Austria, Denmark, England & Wales, Estonia, France, Germany, Scotland and Sweden. Following the consultations, Denmark and England & Wales were identified and selected as the two countries using the most successful practices in the field of social inclusion of ex-convicts.

Following the working group’s agreement on the selection of the two models of best practices, UNDP organised two study-visits in the selected countries, in which approximately 20 persons (representing National Administration of Penitentiaries Romania (ANP), United Nations Development Programme Romania (UNDP), University of West Timisoara, National School of Political Studies, Public Administration (SNSPA),





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Regional Center for Adults' Professional Training Calarasi, Ministry of Justice, Probation Department etc.) were involved.

All participants considered the study visits as very useful and a starting point for an in-depth analysis of best practices of social integration throughout the European Union, to be further developed and applied in the Romanian penitentiary system.

➤ *Purpose and objectives of the field visits*

The field visits were undertaken with the goal to experience and observe the mechanism and functioning of good practice models identified in the comparative analysis, and offered the opportunity to enhance the knowledge and experience in the area of social inclusion of former prisoners. The specific objectives of the study-visits were as follows:

- Observe and determine which models of reintegration used in other countries can practically be applied in Romania;
- Identify measures to prevent social exclusion used in the selected countries and analyse the prospect of adoption into the Romanian system;
- Identify social policies and practices for a comprehensive tool that assesses the prisoners' reintegration problem;
- Achieve a comparison of different systems: observe both the similarities and the differences between the countries to arrive at outcomes, lessons learnt and suggestions for the next steps in the framework of the project.

➤ *Program of the field visits*

➤ Study visit in Denmark, Copenhagen: 27 November – 1 December, 2011

On Monday, 28 November, the Romanian delegation visited the Probation Centre Vestegnen. The meeting was organised by Mr. Freddy Asmussen, probation officer, and Ms. Vibeke Blinn, social worker. The representatives of the centre presented for the Romanian delegates the action plan used for the rehabilitation of the offenders and also the goals and vision of the probation centre. Later on, the working group visited Hostel Brøndbyhus, a halfway probation house that facilitates the integration of former or current prisoners into society and on the labour market. After the discussion with Ms. Connie Saudbae, director of the hostel, and Mr. Jens Mogens, social worker, the study group performed a tour of the house to observe the conditions and programs offered to the residents.



Next, the delegates paid a visit to State Prison Jyderup. Here, they met Ms. Charlotte Braum, legal adviser of the open prison, for discussion and questions on behalf of the working group, followed by a tour of the prison.

Tuesday, 29 November – The working group attended a meeting at the Headquarter of the Department of Prison and Probation Services of Denmark. The presentation was held by Mr. Morton Bruun Peterssen, Chief Advisor of the





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Danish Prison and Probation Service, and Mr. Jan Forde and Ms. Janne Jensen, representatives of the department.

Afterwards, the delegation met Mr. Ole Hessel, director executive of the non-governmental institution High:Five, organisation that facilitates the reintegration of former offenders in the labour market.

Wednesday 30 November was dedicated to an internal meeting of the working group for discussions and conclusion of the field visit in Denmark.

➤ Study visit in the United Kingdom: 5-9 December, 2011

Tuesday, 6 December commenced with the visit of the Romanian delegates at The National Offender Management Service (NOMS), in Daresbury, North West England. The introductions were held by Mr. Tony Challinor, Head of the Commissioning and Commercial Group, and Ms. Francesca Emmet, International Relations Manager. Mr. Mark Nickson, head of Co-financing and Mr. Bill Spiby, NOMS CFO Lead Manager, presented the responsibilities and activities of NOMS CFO, presentation followed by a discussion and working meeting on the proposed Romanian/NOMS co-operation agreement.

The delegation divided into two groups and departed for journey to visit Achieve North West ESF funded reintegration projects. A group of eight people visited the establishment for offenders "Recycling Lives", whilst another group of seven delegates visited the "Elixir" centre, two establishments which support the reinsertion of former convicts into the labour market.

On *Wednesday 7 December*, the first group of the delegates arrived at HMP (Her Majesty's

Prison) Risley. The visit started with an welcoming tour of the prison, followed by a meeting for discussions with the project's managers, facilitators, case managers and also offenders held at HMP Risley.



The second group travelled to HMP Styal, a female prison in north-west of England. The representatives Yvone Smith, Andrew Johnson and Tracey Hill presented for the delegates an example of a case management process for each prisoner and the training experience and motivational programmes offered for these. During the visit, the delegates had the opportunity to meet with various partner agencies working in the prison on resettlement activities, and also to make a tour of the prison to observe areas like first night centre, resettlement sites, farm and gardens where prisoners work and secure units like mother and baby and community house.

The study-visit on in the UK ended on Thursday, 8 December with a meeting of the working group for discussions and conclusion of the field visit.





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➤ Conclusions

Overall, the information and experience gathered during the two study visits confirmed the results of the preliminary comparative analysis coordinated by the UNDP experts, while the working group were able to further advance the work on the principles that will be taken into consideration in the design of a good practice model to be implemented in the Romanian penitentiary system. Consequently, the following *solutions for a national model have been proposed*:

- Creating a network of collaboration and coordination between the penitentiary and probation systems, along with other actors that may be involved, such as social workers, NGOs etc., which will have clearly delimited responsibilities with regard to (ex)prisoners' guidance.
- Informing companies and public employers about this issue, and motivate the representatives to support this vulnerable group through Corporate Social Responsibility activities and employment offers.
- A case manager (mentor, social worker or prison officer) should ensure that convicts are monitored and informed about rights and ways of reintegration into society and the labour market, while they are in prison and after the release. The person in charge should intermediate the connection between the offenders and employers, by reducing stigma and prejudice on the disadvantages of the criminal record.
- The introduction of a system of evaluation of offenders based on their economic,

personal and social background, to assess their needs of financial support after they are released, and the implementation of a legal procedure concerning this issue.

- The restructuring of the criminal record on categories, which may be of great use for the potential employers when dealing with job applications from former criminal convicts.
- Implementing a plan of concrete measures for social inclusion centres and programs designed specially for the offenders that are released.
- Changing the prevailing attitude towards criminal records and the mentality and attitude of the society towards ex-convicts through the agency of a public awareness media campaign.

Following the study visits, it has been agreed that it is possible, and therefore encouraging, to adapt good practices and solutions, taking examples also from countries like France, Germany and Canada. The UNDP experts emphasised that along with the implementation of the good practice models, it is essential that the principles behind the solutions be adapted to the Romanian cultural, social and legal context.

Following two consultative workshops with the participation of relevant national stakeholders, within which the results will be scrutinised, a study containing recommendations on establishing a network of social inclusion centres for ex-detainees will be published, while concrete proposals for immediate action will be presented to the Government of Romania, including the amendment of the legal framework concerning the reintegration of former convicts.

