
ERASMUS+ PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE: RECOGNISING ERASMUS+ AS A TOOL FOR RESOCIALISATION IN EUROPEAN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

[REF. 2023-3-MK01-KA210-YOU-000171172]

*ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED TO YOUNG OFFENDERS AND
YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS ON THE USE OF ERASMUS+ AND EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY
CORPS PROJECTS IN THE EDUCATION AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS OF YOUNG OFFENDERS IN
NORTH MACEDONIA*

AUTHORS

Vele Georgiev

EUROPEAN CULTURAL EPICENTAR - EKE Bitola

head.eke.macedonia@gmail.com

Ivana Baltovska

EUROPEAN CULTURAL EPICENTAR - EKE Bitola

project.eke.macedonia@gmail.com

Sofija Mickoska

EUROPEAN CULTURAL EPICENTAR - EKE Bitola

sofija.eke.bitola@gmail.com



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INTRODUCTION

As part of an Erasmus+ project entitled “Erasmus+ Pathways for Change: Recognising Erasmus+ as a Tool for Resocialisation in European Correctional Institutions” [Ref. 2023-3-MK01-KA210-YOU-000171172], involving three European institutions – EUROPEAN CULTURAL EPICENTER Bitola (North Macedonia - project coordinator), Institute of Drug Abuse, Toxicology and Pharmaceutical Science, Department of Drug Abuse - Ege University (Turkey) and the Portuguese Prison Education Association (Portugal) – the results of two questionnaires, administered by researchers/members of EKE Bitola were analysed.

The project aims to explore the frequency and importance of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) projects in the educational and reintegration processes of young offenders aged 15 to 21.

The study is divided into 2 parts: Part I examines the first questionnaire administered to young offenders, while Part II focuses on the second questionnaire completed by the staff of the institutions.

PART I

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO YOUNG OFFENDERS

METHODOLOGY

As part of an Erasmus+ project entitled, “Erasmus+ Pathways for Change: Recognising Erasmus+ as a Tool for Resocialisation in European Correctional Institutions“ [Ref. 2023-3-MK01-KA210-YOU-000171172], this questionnaire aimed to find out how often Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects are used in the education and reintegration process of young offenders (15-21 years old), as well as to assess the importance of these projects from the perspective of young offenders.

This questionnaire was filled by 30 young offenders and ex-young offenders, most of them sentenced in Juvenile Prison in Ohrid and in the Correctional Facility in Tetovo-Volkovija. The questionnaire contained 26 main questions (some of them had subquestions), of which there were open, semi-open and closed types of questions. The questions were divided into 6 sections.



The questionnaire was conducted in the Macedonian language, anonymously, during the months of October and November 2024, in the two penitentiary institutions (above mentioned), with the help and support of two people employed in EKE Bitola and the staff that was working with offenders (psychologists).

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The age of the offenders in North Macedonia varied. There were different ages, such as:

- 15 years- 10 %
- 16 years- 16,7 %
- 17 years- 20 %
- 18 years - 13,3 %
- 19 years - 16,7 %
- 20 years - 16,7 %
- 21 years- 6,7%

Notably, **the most common age was 17 (20% of offenders)** and the overwhelming majority **(90%) were male**.

In terms of sentencing, **73.3% of the offenders had sentences longer than two years**.

Regarding their educational background before detention, **a significant 46.7% had incomplete basic education**, only 16.7% had completed basic education, while 16.7% had incomplete secondary education, and 13.3% had completed secondary education.

Analysis: We can conclude that the overwhelming majority of young offenders in North Macedonia are male, with the most common age of 17, 16, 19 and 20, who are sentenced longer than 2 years, indicating that they were involved in serious criminal offenses.

As the data shows, a high percentage of 46, 7 % have incomplete basic education. which shows us the high illiteracy rate in this population in North Macedonia. This lack of education presents a significant challenge for their successful resocialization and there is a serious need for improvement of the process of education of young offenders.

SECTION 2: EDUCATION AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

When asked about the availability of educational programs in the institution, 70% of respondents reported that no educational programs were offered at all. Additionally, 20% said they were offered fewer than 6 hours of educational programs per week, only 3,3 % responded that they were offered 7-13 hours and 6,7 % - over 20 hours. Among those who had access to programs, the answers were the following: formal education 0 %, cognitive-behavioural therapy 16.7%, substance abuse education and treatment 6.7%, while vocational training (70%) and life skills and personal development programs (80%) were the most common offered.



In terms of competency development, respondents felt more positive about multilingual competence (strongly agree) and digital competence (strongly agree). However, their ratings for mathematical competence, science, and technology were overwhelmingly negative (strongly disagree). Many offenders also expressed challenges with educational programs, such as: lack of trust in authority figures (23.3%), inadequate support (20%), limited real-world application (20%), boring or unengaging content (10.%), overcrowded or noisy environment (6,7) %, stigma and peer pressure (13.3%).

Regarding the adequacy of resources and facilities, 30% rated the conditions as "good" or "fair," while 16.7% rated them "poor" or "very poor." Satisfaction with the educational environment was mixed, with 33.3% expressing dissatisfaction, 20% satisfaction, 16,7 % neutral, 20 % responded that they were very satisfied and 10% very unsatisfied. Additionally, many offenders expressed a strong interest and desire for more formal education, language courses (especially in English, but also German and Turkish), practical workshops, including in fields like mechanics, business, and digital skills, crafts and also sport and sport activities.

Analysys: Regarding the educational programs, we must conclude that generally, an overwhelming **70% of respondents reported that no educational programs were offered at all**. Among those who have access to educational programmes, **vocational training (70%) and life skills and personal development programs (80%)** were the most common offered.

However, these programs focus more on vocational education than on regular education that should be compulsory for everyone, especially for offenders under the age of 18.

Regarding the competency development, respondents rated their skills at mathematical competence, science, and technology as negative, showing a significant gap in these areas and an urgent need for implementing these types of programs, in order to avoid the challenges that offenders are dealing with and also to improve their knowledge. The most important is, that after the research, we concluded that offenders have a really strong desire and interest to learn, improve their knowledge and be included in the educational system, as their answers have shown.

SECTION 3: SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The support from families in encouraging participation in educational activities was rated in the following way: 36.7% of offenders reported that their families were extremely and very supportive 36.7%. However, opinions about the institution's support were divided: 26.7% felt it was slightly supportive, 26.7% felt the support was very strong, 23.3% felt the institution extremely supportive.





When asked about the time allocated for educational activities, 36.7% of respondents indicated that the time was insufficient, and 30% answered that it was "very little."

Regarding the constructive feedback on their training performance from the institution, 46.7% of offenders reported receiving constructive feedback often on their academic performance.

Regarding the effectiveness of educational programs, 40% rated them as average (5/10). The offenders expressed low confidence in the teachers' knowledge (36.7% rated it as neutral), and many found the lessons to be either neutral (33.3%) or somewhat disengaging (26.7%).

Analysys: We can conclude that support young offenders are receiving from families is **generally positive**, but there are divided opinions regarding the support of the institution. According to the answers, the time allocated for educational activities was rated as **insufficient**, which indicates an urgent need for more time for educational activities, classes and lessons. The constructive feedback on their training performance from the institution was also rated as good, which means that the institutions are still making some efforts to support the offenders in the learning process, although they are not enough. Among those offenders who have access to **educational programs, 40% rated them as average in terms of effectiveness, which shows that there is a need for improvement**. In general, offenders expressed low confidence in the teachers' knowledge and many found the lessons to be either neutral or somewhat disengaging, indicating a significant issue with engagement in the learning process and education.

SECTION 4: NATURE OF PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

A majority of offenders (86.7%) had never participated in any project with young people from other European countries, and 90% of the offenders have never participated in an educational program abroad! While 46.7% enjoyed vocational training activities the most, many offenders expressed interest in non-formal education (36.7%) but did not have the opportunity to be included in such activities. Additionally, 26,7 % of them expressed interest in formal education, 26.7% for community service and 3.3 % for volunteering.

An overwhelming 90% of offenders were unfamiliar with the Erasmus+ program, and 96.7% had never participated in any related projects. Similarly, 96.7% were unaware of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) program and had no experience with these international programs.

Analysys: Unfortunately, these responses show us the reality in North Macedonia. Young offenders are unaware of the existence of the Erasmus+ and ESC Programmes, and have never participated in any projects of this type, which is showing the gap in the education process and a lot of missed opportunities in their educational process.

SECTION 5: IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF PROJECTS





To question 22: Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your participation in an Erasmus+ or ESC project, there were only 2 answers of 2 respondents which rated their level of satisfaction as neutral and very satisfying and pointed out that this program has a lot of new things to offer and can enrich their knowledge.

To the question 24: Do you know of any success stories from participating in Erasmus+ or ESC projects that you would like to share? If YES, can you briefly describe one of these success stories and explain how it has positively impacted the young offender(s), there were no answers.

SECTION 6: SUGGESTIONS AND FINAL COMMENTS - No answers

KEY FINDINGS AND GENERAL CONCLUSION:

The answers from the questionnaire highlight several key issues regarding the education of young offenders in North Macedonia and present to us the sad reality with prison education in our country.

The majority of offenders are males, the most of them did not have a proper education before being sentenced, which makes it harder their process of resocialization and reintegration. Many offenders reported inadequate educational programs within the institutions, with a focus on vocational training rather than general education. Additionally, the lack of trust in authority and the limited real-world application of the educational programs were identified as major barriers. But, despite this, some offenders expressed interest in more formal education, languages, and practical skills workshops. The support from both families and institutions was varied, with a significant percentage feeling supported from the institution.

Overall, the offenders rated the educational programs as average in terms of effectiveness, with low engagement and limited feedback. The lack of awareness and participation in international programs like Erasmus+ and ESC indicates a missed opportunity for broader educational and reintegration support. There is a clear need for more comprehensive, engaging, and diverse educational opportunities to enhance the resocialization process.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Increase access to formal and non-formal education: Offer more opportunities for completing basic and secondary education, including language courses, especially in English, to improve literacy and communication skills.
- Practical skills training
- Improve teacher training and engagement
- Enhance institutional support
- Promote international educational opportunities: Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) program
- Financial support

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PART II

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS

METHODOLOGY

As part of an Erasmus+ project entitled, “Erasmus+ Pathways for Change: Recognising Erasmus+ as a Tool for Resocialisation in European Correctional Institutions“ [Ref. 2023-3-MK01-KA210-YOU-000171172], this questionnaire aimed to find out how often Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects are used in the education and reintegration process of young offenders (15-21 years old), as well as to assess the importance of these projects from the perspective of young offender institutions.

This questionnaire was filled by 50 respondents - educators, psychologists, lawyers, directors and other staff that work in penitentiary institutions, non-governmental organizations that work in the relevant field, as well as institutions that are closely related to this field.

The questionnaire contained 38 main questions (some of them had subquestions), of which there were open, semi-open and closed types of questions. The questions were divided into 9 sections.

The questionnaire was conducted in the Macedonian language, anonymously, during the months of September, October and November 2024, online, by using Google Forms. 46 of the respondents answered through Google Forms, while 4 people answered using the questionnaire in written form.

SECTION 1: TYPE OF INSTITUTION

According to the answers, most respondents work in prisons (institutions from semi-open type) - 30.4%, followed by non-governmental organizations and probation offices (15.2%). Additionally, 10.9 % work in penitentiary institutions from open type, 8.7 % work in closed penitentiary institutions, 6.5 % work in centres for social work, 6.5 % - correctional institution and 2.2 % juvenile prison.

A large majority, almost all of them - 97.8%, work in male offender institutions. The majority of respondents are psychologists - 34.8%, 17.4% work in the department for treatment, 8.7 % work



as social workers, 6,5% work as instructors, 6,5 are probation officers, and only 4.3% are educators (teachers). An insignificant number of the respondents work as directors, deputy directors, nurses, doctors, lawyers and prison police.

Regarding their experience, 50% of respondents have worked in their current institution for 1-5 years, 21.7% have worked 5-10 years, 19.6% more than 10 years and 8.7% less than one year.

Regarding the number of young offenders, 71.7% of the respondents reported having fewer than 20 young offenders aged 15-21, 23.9% - 20-50 young offenders, 2.2% 50-100 offenders and 2,2% more than 100 offenders. Their detention durations vary, with 43.5% indicating 6-12 months.

Analysys: The questionnaire analysis reveals key information about the institutions and staff working with young offenders. Only 4.3% of the staff that works with offenders are educators (teachers), which indicates a need for more educators in the penitentiary system. Most of the institutions are for male offenders and the average sentence is usually 6-12 months. In terms of young offenders, most respondents reported working with fewer than 20 offenders aged 15-21.

SECTION 2: STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

The analysis of training and professional development within institutions shows that 21.7% of respondents consider their institution moderately supportive of training activities. Most common forms of professional development are workshops and seminars (76.1%), followed by on-the-job training (32.6%), online courses (15.2%), and formal education programs and mentorship programs (10.9%). Training frequency was rated in the following way: 39.1% of the participants have answered that they have participated in training rarely, 30.4 % occasionally, 17.4% answered frequently.

The impact of the training on staff was rated in the following way: 41.3% felt significant positive impact, 21.7% felt extremely positive impact, 26.1% moderate impact and a small percentage felt minimal or no impact at all.

Regarding the training activities and how they have benefited the work of staff in the institution, they were rated in the following way:

- Enhanced Communication Skills - 58.7%
- Improved Counselling Techniques - 71.7%





- Updated Legal Knowledge - 41.3%
- Innovative Rehabilitation Programs - 41.3%
- Cultural Competency - 17.4%.

The specific topics or areas that the institution's staff would like to see covered in future professional development activities, are the following:

- Successful resocialization
- Prevention of Recidivism
- Specialized training for working with different categories of offenders
- Education and teaching techniques with offenders, non-formal education, practical workshops to improve the education level of young offenders
- Successful post-penal assistance
- Establishing cooperation with the business sector for engaging offenders
- Greater involvement of the Center of Social work in the resocialization process of young offenders
- Specific programs for treatment for young offenders under the age of 18
- Use of digital devices for successfully implementing treatment programs
- Mental health and psychological support
- Programs for improving social skills of young offenders

Analysys: The analysis of training and professional development within institutions shows that although there is moderate support for training activities, many staff members participate in workshops and on-the-job training. The overall impact of training is rated as positive, with significant improvements in counseling techniques and communication skills. However, there is an enormous interest for further development in different areas and topics, such as successful resocialization, recidivism prevention, and specialized training for working with different categories of offenders. Staff also expressed a need for more practical workshops, mental health support, and digital tools to improve treatment programs, highlighting areas for growth in professional development.





SECTION 3: PROGRAMS

Regarding the programs that are implemented in the process of resocialization and reintegration, and which of them are used, respondents answered in the following way:

- Formal Education Programs - 10.9%
- Vocational Training Programs 23.9%
- Substance Abuse Education and Treatment Programs 26.1%
- Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy Programs -2.2 %
- Life Skills and Personal Development Programs 17.4%
- Anger-management Programs 10.9%
- Substance - abuse Programs (smoking) 6.5 %
- Alcohol Programs 15.2%
- Change for life Programs - 19.6%
- Individual Programs 34.8%

Regarding the effectiveness of the programs, 39.1% of the respondents answered that they are moderately effective, 28.3% not effective at all, 15.2% responded that they are extremely effective and 10.9% answered that they are slightly effective.

Regarding the measures that are used to evaluate the success of these programs, the most of the respondents answered that there is no appropriate mechanism for tracking success of the programme. Despite of that, some of them mentioned that the following measures (sometimes, ad hoc) are used in the process of evaluation of the programs, such as:

- The rate of recidivism - which can be a long-term measure to track whether convicted persons show a lower likelihood of reoffending after treatment.
- Evaluation tests
- Measures such as cognitive tests to determine whether educational programs helped in the development of intellectual abilities
- Conversations with offenders after their release in order to evaluate their behavior
- Monitoring the psychological effects of achieving short-term and long-term goals set within the training





- Change in attitudes, motivation for learning, and self-confidence of convicted persons before and after the program for treatment
- Reduction in the number of drug and alcohol addicts.

Analysys: Based on the information from the questionnaires regarding the programs that are used, individual programs are most common programs that are used in the process of resocialization, followed by substance abuse education programs and vocational training programs. Regarding the effectiveness of the programs, generally they were rated as **moderately effective**, which highlights the need for improvement and enhancement of these programs. All the measures that are used to evaluate the success of these programs are **ad-hoc measures**, which highlights the necessity of creating an organized system or method of analyzing the success of these programs!

SECTION 4: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS - TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

Regarding the question: how adequate are the technological resources for educational programs, most respondents (32.6%) find technological resources inadequate, 13% rate them as very adequate. 19.6% rate them as adequate, 17.4% rate them very inadequate, 17.4% rate them as neutral. Regarding internet access, 52.2% report that offenders have internet access, but it is not used for learning. Additionally, 30.4% say there is no internet access at all. Macedonian law prohibits the use of digital tools like phones, which limitates the role of technology in education within institutions.

According to the opinion of the respondents, in order to improve the educational programs, the following additional resources are needed:

- Financial resources and support from the Ministry of Education
- Involvement of young offenders in the formal education system
- Greater involvement of the Administration for Execution of Sanctions
- Equipping institutions with modern tools and methods for teaching and digitization, modernization of digital technologies and online learning
- Participation of NGOs and the private sector
- Amendments to by-laws
- Education and career counseling
- Employing of professional staff





Analysis: The analysis shows that technological resources for educational programs in institutions are generally inadequate, with many respondents highlighting limited internet access and restrictions on digital tools. While some believe the resources are adequate, a significant number needs improvement. To enhance educational programs, respondents emphasize the importance of financial support, modernization of teaching tools, greater involvement of various stakeholders, and the inclusion of young offenders in the formal education system. These changes essential to improving the quality and effectiveness of education within institutions.

SECTION 5: COLLABORATION WITH FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS

The analysis of collaboration with foreign organizations shows that 73.9% of institutions do not engage in such partnerships for educational programs. The main reasons include: funding limitations (40%), legal constraints (34.3%), and lack of awareness (34.3%). Other challenges are language barriers (28.6%), logistics (25.7%), and cultural differences (8.6%).

However, many institutions express interest in collaborating, particularly in educational programs (69.4%), rehabilitation (50%), and staff training (47.2%). Additionally, they expressed interest in research and best practices - 38.9 %, technology and innovation - 27.8 % and exchange programs - 25%.

Some of the institutions, which already have some existing collaborations mainly involve NGOs (60%) and higher education institutions (20%), while the other collaboration include: schools and colleges -10 %, vocational training centres -10 %, rehabilitation institutions-10 %, youth development agencies-10 % and private sector companies-10 %. Staff points out the following benefits of the collaboration with foreign organizations, in the following way:

Improved Resocialization Programs 69,2 %

Access to additional funding resources- 53.8 %

Enhanced educational programs -46.2 %

Fostered Technology and Innovation - 30.8%





Improved reintegration outcomes - 38.5%

Enhanced networking opportunities - 38.5%

Improved staff training and professional development 53,8%

Challenges in these collaborations include staff constraints (71.4%), security concerns (28.6%), and high staff turnover (28.6%). Some institutions try to address these issues by recruiting new staff, but most of the respondents answered that there is no strategy at all to address the challenges.

Analysis: In conclusion, while institutions face challenges such as limited resources, legal constraints, and staff shortages, there is a strong interest in improving educational and resocialization programs through collaboration with foreign organizations. Despite current limitations, partnerships with NGOs and higher education institutions have proven beneficial, especially in enhancing rehabilitation and staff training, though more strategic efforts are needed to address existing barriers.

SECTION 6: PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS

The analysis of the responses regarding the Erasmus+ program shows that 67.4% of respondents are not familiar with the program and have not heard about this program. Additionally, 84.8% of the respondents stated that their institution has not participated in an Erasmus+ project in the last four years.

A small group of respondents (only 6), all of whom work within non-governmental organizations and frequently use the Erasmus+ program, provided insights into their participation across various Key Actions (KAs), responding that they have participated in all types of KAs, which is normal and expected, having in mind that non-governmental organizations use these programs and are familiar with them.

The analysis of the responses regarding the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) program shows that 87% of respondents are not familiar with the ESC program. Furthermore, 84.8% of the institutions have not participated in any ESC projects. Among the small group that has participated, the majority have only been involved once or twice, with 6.5% of respondents indicating participation





in one project and another 6.5% in two projects. A very small number, 2.2%, reported having participated in three or more projects. We must note that also in this case, all the respondents are people from non-governmental organizations.

Analysys: The analysis of the responses regarding the Erasmus+ program shows that a large number of respondents are not familiar with the program, which points out the unawareness of people regarding this program. Additionally, 84.8% of the respondents stated that their institution has not participated in an Erasmus+ project, which indicates a lack of engagement with the Erasmus+ program in most of the institutions. As mentioned above, the small number that have participated in these programs are people from non-governmental organizations, which is normal and expected, as they use these programs frequently.

SECTION 7: NATURE OF PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

The analysis of the responses regarding the project activities that young offenders most enjoy participating in shows that vocational training is the most popular activity, with 56.5% of respondents selecting it. Other preferred activities include non-formal education (41.3%) and community service (34.8%). Formal education (classes) and entrepreneurship each received 30.4% of the responses, while community service - 34.8 % and volunteering - 13%.

According to the staff that works with young offenders, young offenders prefer the above mentioned activities because:

- They are interactive, creative, and fun
- They offer more opportunities that can be applied in the real world
- They help them find a job more easily and reintegrate into society
- They can help them to acquire and upgrade their skills
- Personal growth and development and professional development.

Young offenders generally prefer these activities because of their ability to develop new skills, engage, and redirect their energy in a positive way. These activities help in their reintegration, improve self-confidence, and create opportunities for positive social interactions.



The analysis of the responses regarding staff participation in various Erasmus+ program activities reveals limited involvement:

Training Courses: Only 19.6% of respondents indicated that a staff member had participated in an Erasmus+ training course in the last four years. Of those, 6.5% participated once, 4.3% twice, 2.2% four times, and 6.5% more than four times. The majority, 80.4%, reported no participation in training courses.

Study Visits: Similarly, only 23.9% of respondents reported staff participation in an Erasmus+ study visit. Among them, 13% participated once, 4.3% twice, and 6.5% more than four times. The remaining 76.1% had not participated at all.

Job Shadowing: The participation rate in Erasmus+ job shadowing experiences is even lower, with 15.2% of respondents reporting involvement. 10.9% participated once, 2.2% twice, and 2.2% four times. A significant 84.8% of respondents stated that no staff member had participated in a job shadowing experience.

Analysis: This data informs us that while some participation in Erasmus+ activities exists, the level of engagement is extremely low across all types of programs! It highlights the need for increased promotion of these programs, better access, and greater support to ensure that staff can take advantage of these valuable educational opportunities.

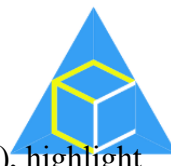
SECTION 8: IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF PROJECTS

This question was answered only by staff that had participated in this program. The responses to the question about the institution's level of satisfaction with its participation in an Erasmus+ or ESC project reveal the following: A significant portion, 46.7%, answered with neutral, 20 % very satisfied and 13.3% satisfied.

The responses regarding what the institution liked most about participating in Erasmus+ or ESC projects highlight the **exchange of knowledge and experience as the primary positive aspect**, mentioned by all respondents.

In general, most of the respondents answered that they have not heard of any success stories from participating in Erasmus+ or ESC projects, but they are willing to learn and to learn new things in





this field. The small percent that have heard some positive experience (only 3 answers), highlight that they have heard just positive experiences through the ESC Programme.

Analysys: The above mentioned information suggests that the staff that have participated in these programs are **generally pleased with their involvement in Erasmus+ or ESC projects and find these programs really useful**, which means that they should be used as an educational opportunity for staff, in order to increase their mobility, their knowledge and expertise and enhance their experiences.

SECTION 9: SUGGESTIONS AND FINAL COMMENTS

Regarding the suggestions that staff have in order to improve the use of Erasmus+ or ESC projects in the context of education and reintegration of young offenders, the suggestions were as follows:

1. Promotion of these programs among the staff and the young offenders as well as improving the awareness of the staff regarding these programs. Raising awareness about the importance and impact of programs for involving the civil sector and providing appropriate training for professionals.
2. Promotion of non-formal education in general
3. Greater interest from the Administration for the Execution of Sanctions.
4. More institutional cooperation between correctional facilities and educational institutions, and improving the accessibility of resources.
5. Greater involvement and exchange of experiences with other countries.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The analysis of the questionnaire on the use of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) projects in the education and reintegration of young offenders highlights several issues. Overall, the use of these programs in the penitentiary system is minimal, with a significant number of





respondents unaware of the Erasmus+ and ESC initiatives. A big percentage of institutions have not participated in these programs, indicating a lack of engagement and awareness.

In terms of staff training and professional development, there is a clear need for more support. While most institutions offer some form of professional development, such as workshops and seminars, the frequency and impact of these training activities are limited. Furthermore, there is a significant gap in staff knowledge regarding the Erasmus+ and ESC programs, and there is a need for more specialized training to enhance the resocialization process.

When examining the programs used in young offenders' resocialization, vocational training and substance abuse treatment are the most commonly implemented, but their effectiveness is often rated as moderate or below. Additionally, a lack of adequate mechanisms for evaluating the success of these programs suggests a need for better tracking and assessment methods. Technological resources and internet access for educational purposes remain a significant challenge, with many institutions lacking the necessary tools for digital learning.

The research also revealed that international collaboration, particularly with foreign organizations, is rare, primarily due to funding, regulatory barriers, and logistical challenges. Despite this, many institutions express a strong interest to collaborate on educational, resocialization, and staff training projects.

Overall, the research suggests that there is significant potential for the Erasmus+ and ESC programs to play an important role in the resocialization and reintegration of young offenders, but greater awareness, training, and institutional support are essential for maximizing their impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increasing awareness of the Erasmus+ and ESC programmes
- Promotion of non-formal education
- More regular and specialised training programmes and courses for the staff working with inmates





- Creating partnerships with foreign organisations and/or institutions
-
- Networking
 - Capacity building
 - Increasing the usage of digital tools and technologies

