

European Educational Support for Prison Officers Interacting in Prisons Learning

Context with Women & Minorities

Mapping, scientific & literature review



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Index

Executive summary	4
PART II - EESPIP Working Methodology	6
How we thought the questionnaires	6
How we collected the data	6
Questionnaires	6
Staff	6
Management	10
Desk research findings in Portugal on Staff and Managers perception of education in prison	14
Prison Staff	14
Management	18
Focus group	21
Minorities in prison	21
Women in prison	23
Poland and France	23
Romania and Spain	24
Desk research findings in Portugal based on previous focus groups	26
Conclusion	28
Bibliography	30

Executive summary

The European Educational Support for Prison Officers Intercating in prisons Learning Context with Women and Minorities project (EESPIP), is co-financed through the Erasmus+ Project and the National Agency FR01, under the coordination of Institut Saumurois de la Communication alongside partners from Romania (CPIP), Spain (DEFOIN), Poland (ARID) and Portugal (Aproximar). Our project aims to open up to staff learning opportunities related to professional development an environment not associated with learning: the prison.

EESPIP plans on delivering content and activities for prison officers to further develop their professional training, related to their professional environment. The thinking behind this project is about the importance of human relationships in shaping a learning career. Our focus is understanding the impact of non-educative prison staff on the learning experiences of the inmates.

For further information about the project and for the full version of the report, please feel free to visit our website www.eespip.eu

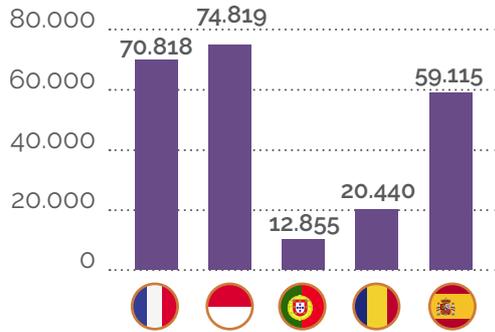
The first part of the project (Intellectual Output 1) was focused on developing the 'image' of the reality we are working with in each of the partner country and at European level.

Statistical number of inmates by country:

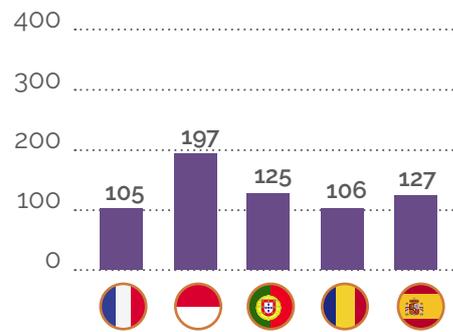
Source: World Prison Brief data 30.11.2019



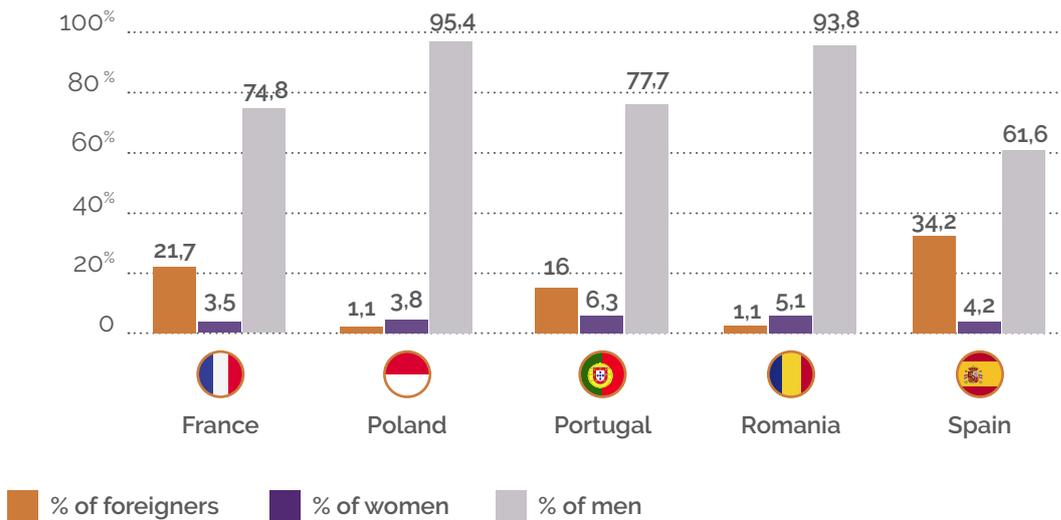
Number of inmates



Number of inmates for 100.000 inhabitants



Statistical repartition between men, women and minorities by country:



Source: Observatoire international des prisons 31.01.2019

This summary contains context and comments of the need analysis research activities: As discussed, women inmates and minorities face a range of barriers to access learning, both institutional as personal. (I.e. associated with their imprisonment and dispositional (i.e. linked to their personal circumstances). Furthermore, given the current context in many countries of Europe a number of factors constrain the extent to which education and training can be offered and the range of provision which can be made available, including: (1) Finite staff & resources; (2) Restrictions imposed by the security requirements of the prison regime; (3) Priorities of policy makers.

PART II - EESPIP

Working Methodology

How we thought the questionnaires

The questionnaires meant for the staff such as staff working in security settings, administrative, logistics, escort and interventions; and management of the prison are made up of 19 questions. They contain several types of questions such as questions with open answer, yes or no questions and scaling questions. The questionnaire for the minority groups has fewer questions, more exactly 6 questions all of which required open answers.

How we collected the data

The partners from France, Romania, Poland and Spain collected the data in person, from several prisons in each of the partner countries. The partner from Portugal has done a desk research about the Staff and Managers perception of education in prison and also about the conditions of women as minority in prison. The results were both quantitative and qualitative.

Questionnaires

Staff

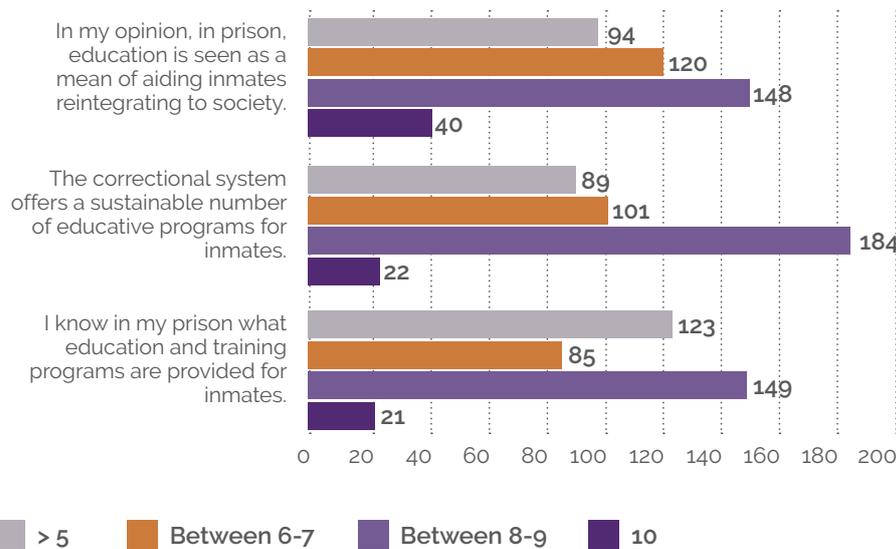
The staff questionnaire was made of 16 questions with topics such as prison education, safety, the level of their involvement in different activities and educational activities, and was successfully applied in penitentiaries across Poland, France, Spain and Romania.

The most important things according to prison staff perception were regarding the communities, to keep them safe; the successful reintegration

of inmates in society, and educating people serving sanctions in prison. Enforcing a sanction and punishing crime was on the bottom list of priorities.

Education is seen as a mean of aiding inmates to reintegrate in society in most of the prisons who took part in the survey and the prison staff seems to be aware of all the programs going on. When asked if they were involved either formally or informally in supporting prison education activities in their prison, 60% answered that they were not involved in any kind of prison education activities and of those who did participate and were involved, only a quarter actually enjoyed that aspect of their work.

According to your perception, how correct are the following sentences, on a scale from 1 to 10?



The staff were mostly involved in supervision of inmates education and sport activities, notification of educators at the requirements of the persons deprived of liberty, moving inmates to and from classes, participation in educative programs, preparing vocational courses, daily interaction with the detainee, running the INSTAD program (quarantine,) support in carrying out activities and sometimes translating for foreigners inmates.

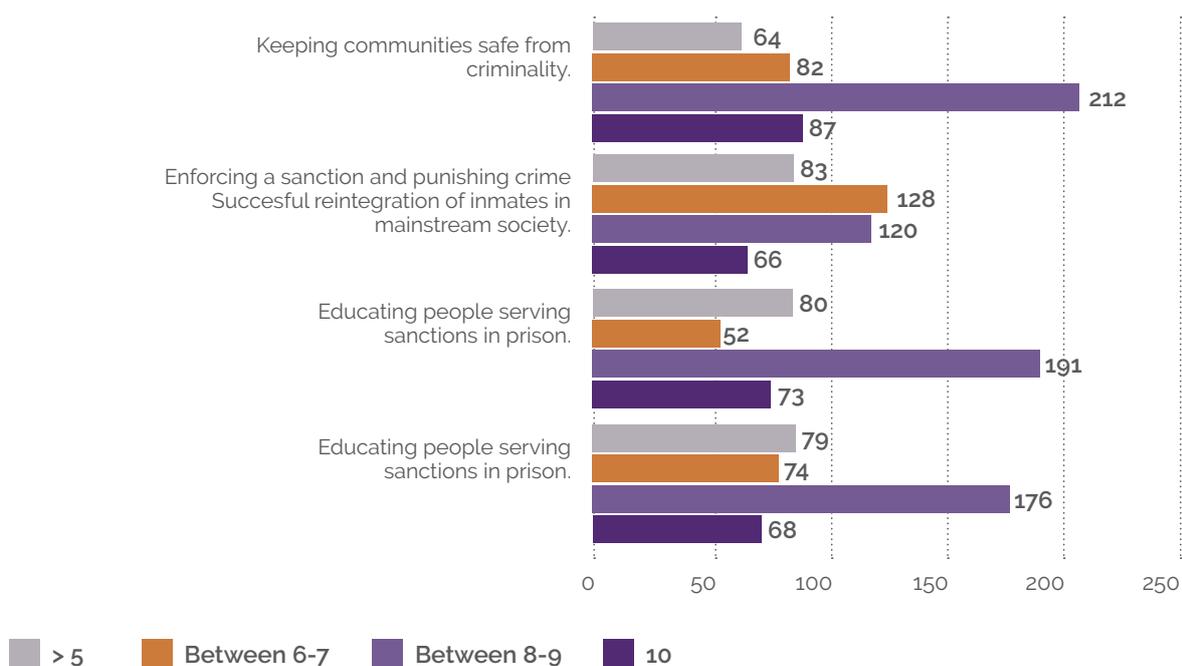


Less than a quarter of the respondents have a previous track record of educative responsibilities and engagement in educational activities.

The respondents perceive their colleagues as actively involved in educative activity, more exactly the involvement in supporting education, outside of the Reintegration or Education Department. However, most of the respondents said that they don't want to be involved in any other ways of supporting prison education.

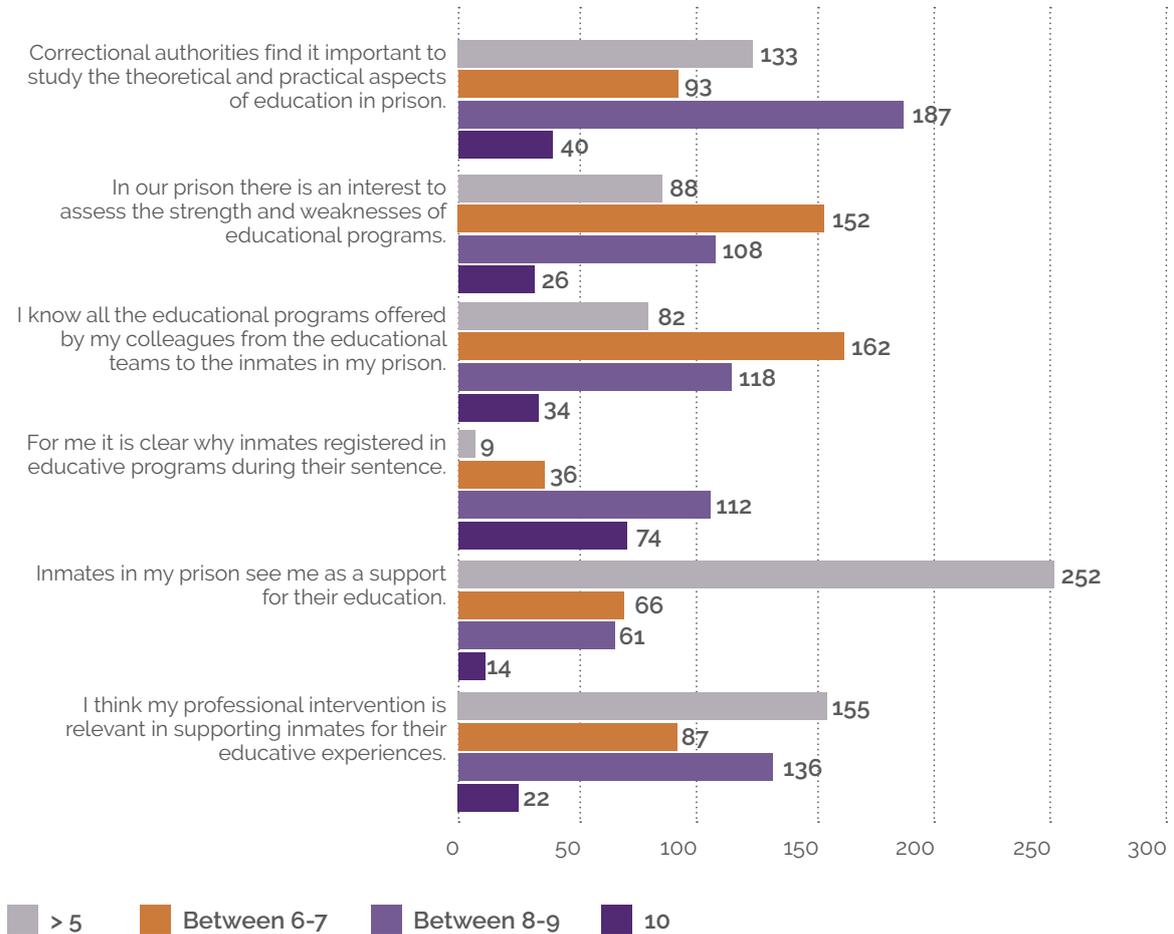
From the staff responses it looks like their perception shows a decreased interest in training on pedagogical aspects and supporting the educative process.

According to your perception, how important are the following topics for your prison, on a scale from 1 to 10?

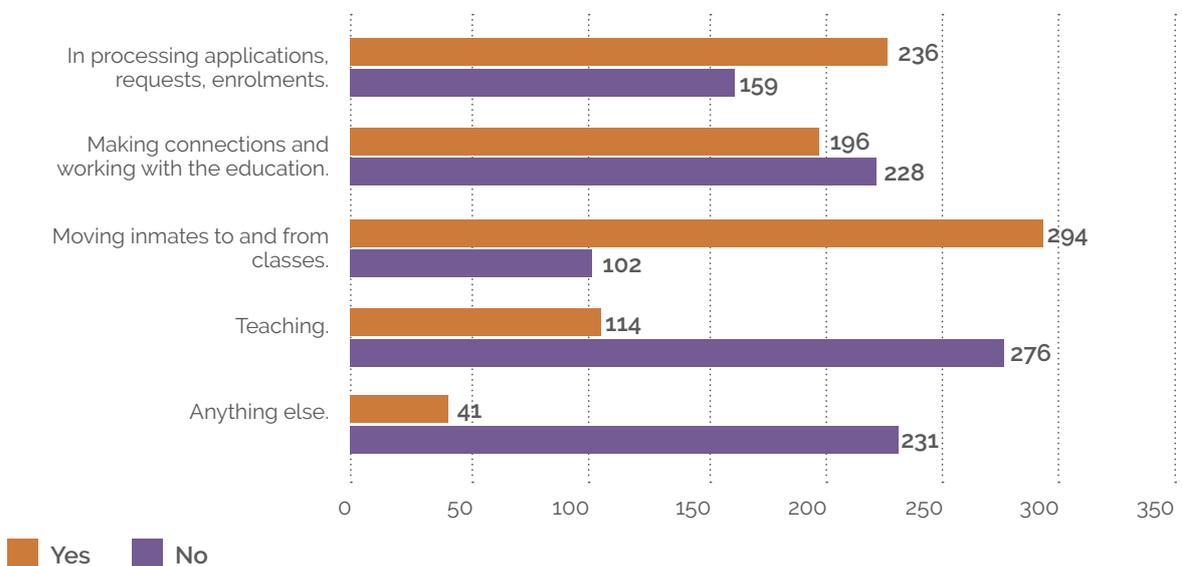


As we can see in the chart below the correctional prison staff is mostly involved in moving inmates to and from classes and in processing applications, requests. Most are not involved in making connections and working with the education department, in teaching or in anything else. When asked if they would like to see any changes regarding the involvement of the correctional prison staff in the organization of formal or informal education of prisoners, the majority believe that there are no changes necessary in relation to each of the above because the current arrangements work well.

On a scale from 1 to 10, please mark following affirmations



Is correctional prison staff (outside of Education or Reintegration Department) involved in the organization of formal or informal education of prisoners:



However, those who answered yes said that they would like to have more educative activities because through education we can train a person capable to socially reintegrate after liberation, not just during imprisonment, they would like to see more involvement from the educational service and of the psychosocial and social assistance service in different programs, more personnel to be employed, concrete reintegration programs – qualification, raising the interests of the beneficiaries in these programs.

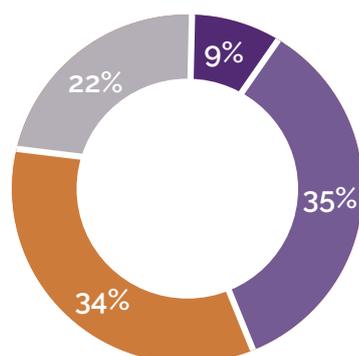
The balance between formal (being classroom activity) and informal learning (non-conventional spaces) seems to be quite even.

Most of the prison staff do not receive training or support in relation to encouraging and supporting prisoner education, however as you can see most of the respondents consider it important to encourage and support prisoner education. Furthermore, most of the staff said that there wasn't anything about prison education and training included in their initial training.

When asked if they would like to see any changes, most of the respondents considered there were no changes needed. On the other hand, those who answered yes said that they would like more trainings, vocational courses, educational activities, hiring more personnel such as psychologists and social workers, and efficiency in each educational department and collaboration between departments

Please rate from a scale from 1 to 10, to what extent do you think prison staff should be involved in encouraging and supporting prisoner education?

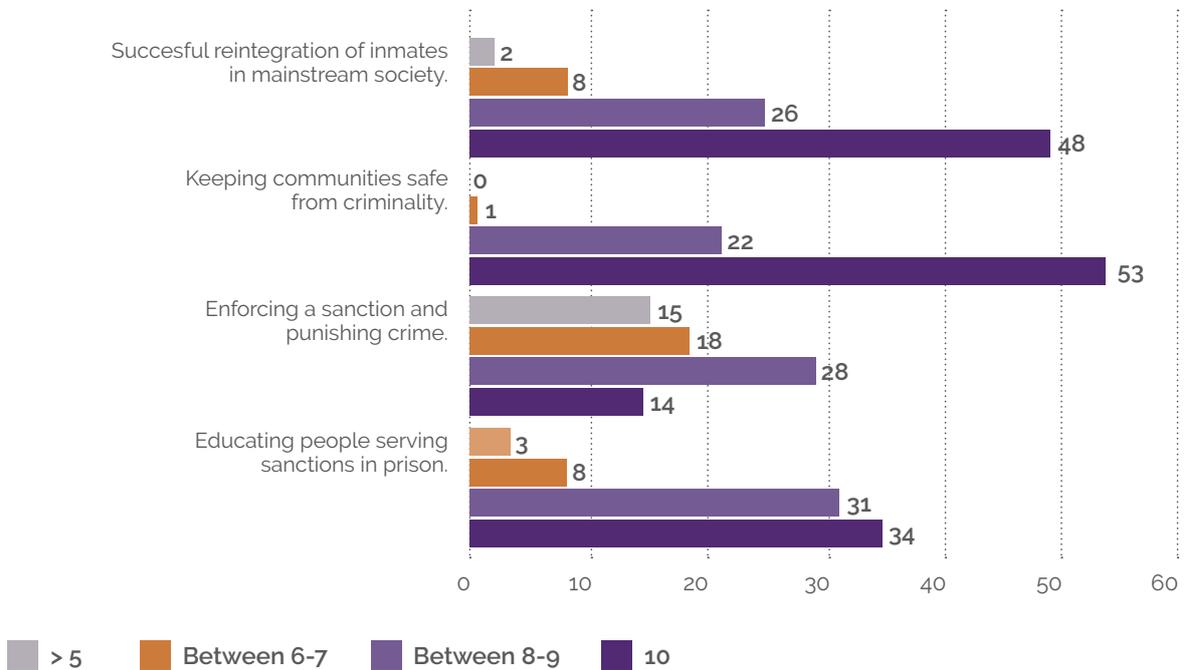
■ > 5 ■ Between 6-7 ■ Between 8-9 ■ 10



Management

80% of the respondents considered that keeping communities safe from criminality and successfully reintegration inmates in mainstream society was very important, followed closely by educating people serving sanctions in prison.

According to your perception, how correct are the following sentences, on a scale from 1 to 10?

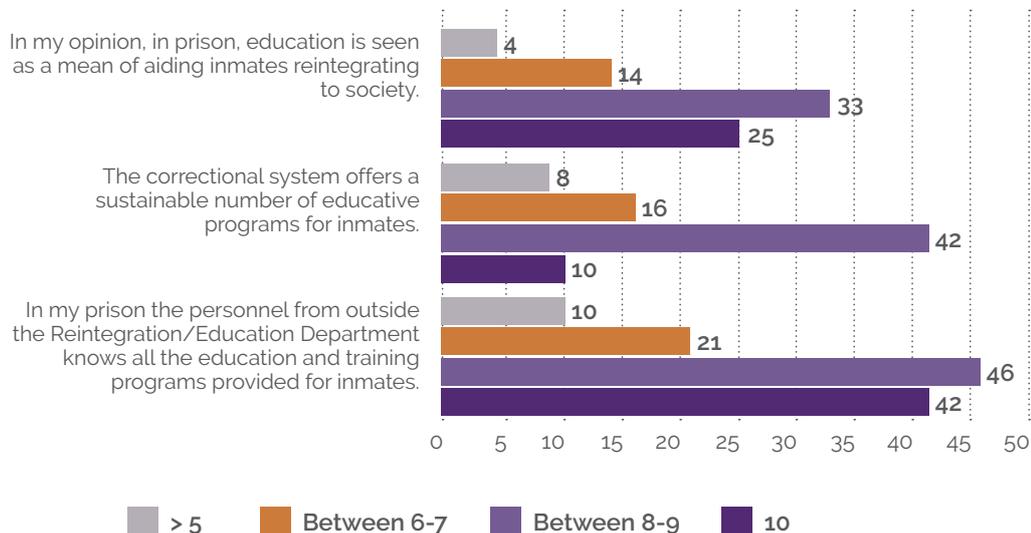


However, they disagreed in relation to enforcing a sanction and punishing crime.

Education is seen as a means of aiding inmates with reintegration in society. A majority agreed that their correctional system offers a sustainable number of programs for inmates. The managers declare that all personnel are aware of the educative and reintegration process. However, during some face to face interviews in the prison in Romania it was obvious that the security personnel were highly unaware of the specialized adult education or literacy programs offered.

When the respondents were asked whether the security or the administrative personnel were formally or informally involved in supporting prison education activities in your prison most of them answered positively with personnel being in charge of guarding, escorting or transport at different activities carried out outside the penitentiary, supervising, supporting the development of educational programs, especially in the awareness of the compulsory nature of the attendance of inmates to these programs and providing support and encouragement to the inmates. Even if they are involved in all of these areas, most of them see it as their duty or obligation and are not doing it necessarily because they enjoy doing it.

According to your perception, how correct are the following sentences, on scale from 1 to 10?



They believe that it is relevant for the prison personnel/staff to be involved in any way they can which supports education in prison for example by having different discussions with the detainees, through different programs and involvement of NGO's, by rewarding inmates who have finished vocational course or evaluated their education Encourage and motivate inmates to attempt courses, specially those who have no degree at all. However, all of this things are hard to do if the prison is overpopulated.

In the chart below we can see that there is an Overall declared support from management staff in promoting education for inmates, in being supportive and training the personnel in this aspect.

The correctional prison staff is mostly involved in making connections and working with the education department, moving inmates to and from classes, in processing applications, request and enrolments, they also have a partial involvement in teaching. But they are also involved in activities outside the penitentiary, helping inmates in recruitment or escorting/ joining them at educative activities.

The majority of the respondents believe that there are no changes necessary in relation to each of the above because the current arrangements are working well, however 22% of them consider that the bureaucracy is excessive and should be eliminated, that there should be more educational programs which help with the development of practical activities and that women and men should have the same rights when it comes to education.

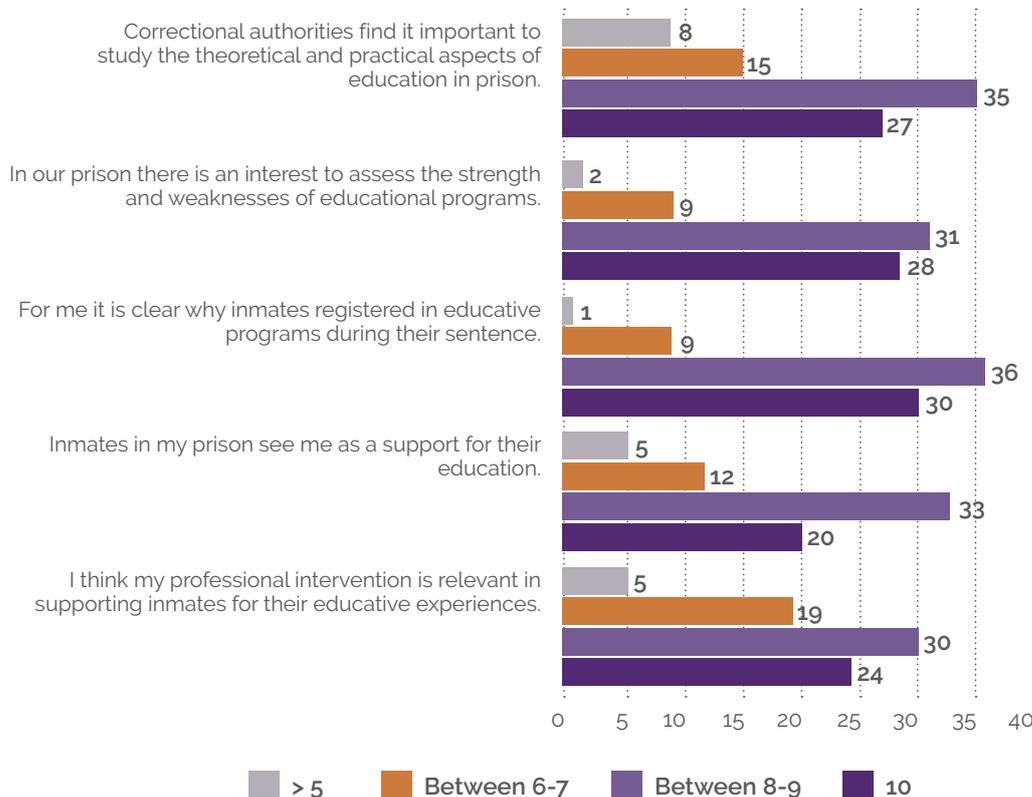
Both formal and informal education (trainings and learning activities) outside of the classroom are very common. When asked about the importance of the involvement of prison staff in the encouragement and support of prison education most of the respondents believe that it was very important that prison staff should be involved in both of these matters.

However, even if most of them receive training or support in relation to this, when asked whether there was anything about prisoner education and training included in their initial training, half of them said that there were no such matters discussed.

When asked if they would like to see any changes, most of the respondents said they would like to see changes such as the active involvement from the side of the personnel and the existence of official programs, more programs for vocational training the alignment of educational programs with the last evolutions of the civil society so that, after release, the detainees should be acquainted with the new evolutions of society and that should ease their new integration in society.

There were a few respondents that said that no changes were needed because what what is available right now is correct and sufficient.

On a scale from 1 to 10, please mark following affirmations



Desk research findings in Portugal on Staff and Managers perception of education in prison

In Portugal the partners were able to provide only research materials from previous interventions regarding education in prison.

Prison Staff

The guard's perception of the importance of prison education is a very positive one, stating that the school influences the behavior of inmates in a positive way; that the teachers give a lot of moral support, and are viewed as counsellors or therapists. Mateus (2015) concluded that in general, everyone agrees that the school is important in the training and occupation of inmates, and the emotional aspect is also not neglected, as some inmates feel more comfortable exposing their problems to teachers.

When it came to the importance of keeping communities safe from criminality according to Marujo (2017), it is necessary to provide these individuals with the necessary skills, so that they can be reintegrated into society, so that they can lead their lives in a socially accepted way and in a responsible way and to keep them away from the life of crime and to avoid criminal recidivism. The training technician refers the importance of the involvement of Portuguese Prison and Probation Services DGRSP itself in the professional reintegration of these individuals into the labor market, giving them tools not only within prisons but also giving the tools necessary to reintegrate into society in a more fully manner. (Marujo, 2017)

The Chaplain of the prison spoke about the punishment and the indifference of society towards the inmates: "The world of Portuguese prison establishments is an immense world, as you know, 1500 men. This is tradition (...) in Monsanto's, as you know, there's 23 hours of seclusion, the prison suit, the food is giving through the sentry box (...). I think as Portuguese citizens (...) we want the prison to be transparent, but we don't want to see. Time passes and consciousness says, "since you're there, you have done something wrong." And the citizenship ends there." (Gonçalves, 2016);

The Perception of the reintegration of inmates into society is seen as difficult by some members of the staff, difficulties of establishments in occupying all inmates, in enabling all of them to acquire skills to work during the execution of the sentence, which means greater difficulties in ensuring that, once the sentence ends, they start working immediately. (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003)

Concerning education for people who are serving sanctions in prison one of the teachers considered the framework of the courses inadequate. She stated that often comes across with people who do not have enough school base to integrate a learning process, which requires for example additional research by the teacher.

School certification of the adult population is an urgency of statistics, which will not translate into a more qualified, better informed and more knowledge in the point of view of this teacher. Another teacher said that in the Complementary Training the content was already adapted to inmates students. The problem is that the applicant's properly adapted curriculum was only for the 2nd cycle, excluding the 3rd cycle. (Gabriel, 2007)

Regarding the number of educative programs for inmates, Occupational Therapist refers to the difficulty in

introducing non-formal activities such as music, plastic expression, dramatic expression, etc. in the school context (Gabriel, 2007). Another problem indicated by the professionals is the outdated and the reduced diversity of workshops. In this sense, a technician states that the workshops are obsolete, and the work ends up being summarized to the tasks of the establishment: kitchen, cleaning, etc. (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

With regards to the perception of the prison staff of the existence of training programs for inmates one of the teachers (1st Cycle) said that the inmates usually dislike classes that take too long and with the same teacher and prefer the extracurricular activities in the prison that school activities that they don't consider important or useful. (Gabriel, 2007) An interview was also conducted with the responsible for Adult Education of the "Direcção Regional de Educação do Norte" about the involvement of prison staff in prison education activities. The focus of the interview with the Occupational Therapist was the difficulty in introducing non-formal activities such as music, plastic expression, dramatic expression, etc. in the school context. This professional referred the difficulties in terms of the lack of motivation of the students: "It is

difficult because it implies spontaneity and movement and school groups in the prison are not motivate".

Regarding good practices inside prison, one of the staff members interviewed highlighted that there are Prisons that are a national model regarding to school, which value school, both in terms of space or in terms of individual evaluation and they channel profits obtained in the production of workshops to reward the students attending school.

Recognizing the difficulties in motivating inmates to school attendance, one worker points out that it is a population for which the school had already failed, had not been able to captivate them and, therefore, it is a population that has fail at school. In his perspective, the similarity of the teaching outside and inside the prison is an obstacle. And so, the school should follow a more vocational route, for example, have training courses that allows degrees of education (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003)

The Importance of studying the theoretical and practical aspects of education in prison was considered by one of the teachers considered the framework of the courses inadequate. She stated that often comes across with people who do not have enough school base to integrate a learning process, which requires for example additional research by the teacher. (Gabriel, 2007).

When asked about the reasons of registration in educative programs the ex-inmates interviewed pointed out several reasons to have attended the professional training, all mentioning that they attended them by their own choice. Some of the reason mentioned by inmates was to earn some money, to keep themselves busy, curiosity, stay away of trouble in prison, to gain knowledge and learn things that never learn before, to help forget the bad environment lived in prison, to have the equivalence to the 12th grade (Marujo, 2017).

In the inmates perception, they feel supported by the staff of the prison: "prisons are provided with a set of resources, school courses, vocational training and other kind of varied programs and, in addition support by the various technicians, each resource has a technician" (Ermida, 2018). Another inmate stated: It didn't even have to have guards there; we knew the way and went alone and waited for the teachers to arrive."; "I think it was good because the teachers encouraged the students, offered gifts and they came happy..." (Homem, 2011)

When it came to the importance of management intervention in supporting inmates another professional highlighted the reduced number of re-education technician and the lack of follow-up that is given to inmates attending school. Each technician has more than one hundred inmates, so the professional suggests decreasing that number of inmates per technician (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

One of the guards talked about the difficulties linked to the prison staff involvement in the organization of education of inmates: "The guard is here for everything. There's been several roles taken, such as Dad, Mom, religious supporter, friend, and other situations that the guard must adapt to". Another guard also talked about the several roles of the profession. He stated that the time spend with the inmates allow them to help and support the inmates solve their problems, go with them to the clinical services, and that they are involved in solving problems related to the education service (Mateus, 2015).

Regarding alternative places in the prison outside of the classroom of education or training some of the professionals also talked about the need to improve the buildings where the inmates have the training and

minimize the security problems.

One professional talked about a case where containers were put in the courtyard so the inmates could have the training, with immense security problems. Therefore, the first step would be to organize the service, to know exactly what the training needs of the inmates are. Then there must be a minimum set of conditions for this training to be done. Besides the lack of facilities, another problem indicated by the professionals is the outdated and the reduced diversity of workshops. (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

The guards referred that they had a training course before being recruited for the job, and that the course had some contents as Penitentiary Theory and behavioral aspects. One of the guards also said that there have been some training opportunities, but that the guards don't always have access to them, due to the very limited openings for each establishment. Another stated that he attended a course for four months, which included psychological training and contents such as rights, duties, laws, weapons handling, handcuffing. This guard also had an opportunity to attend two months of internship (Mateus, 2015)

criminal system in which has no life imprisonment and therefore sooner or later has to reintegrate that person into the society." (Gonçalves 2016)

The responsible for Adult Education of the "Direcção Regional de Educação do Norte" stated that Adult Education is generally designed for adults in their diversity of audiences. But minorities have smaller offers. In terms of specific offers, she mentioned the effort to try to find special offers for differentiated audiences: for Prisons, for the Romani population, foreigners, immigrants. They are trying to use the mechanisms available to tailor the offers in terms of formative offers for an open and flexible curriculum adjusted to the audiences: "I think they are very flexible certification models, which allow for a set of games that the adult can do." (Gabriel, 2007).

The Ombudsman Perception of involvement of the administrative staff in prison education activities was stated as: in addition to school matters, topics such as health, hygiene, drug addiction, citizenship, etc. should be included in this program". In order to pursue these tasks, he mention the need of having an incentive for the participation of an external, public or private entities, in particular of local health, education, culture and police authorities, among others, in the

education of inmates, by carrying out courses, conferences and debates, both within the establishment and abroad. (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

The District Attorney General of Lisbon talked about some good and bad practices within the Portuguese prisons: "There are some establishments that I know about (...) there are very good ones, and there are very bad ones. I can give some examples, that of the Azores, a very good one that the Ministry of Justice granted and has no more than 100 prisoners and it could In the context of social skills, we have the sport which is essential (...) within the prison system.

For those who can, for those who are able, the use of sport as a form of internalization of rules of coexistence, escape, of contained aggressiveness, etc. For example, the notion of fair play is very important and can be a very positive instrument, moreover, there is a reasonable program that applies to the system, but which is far from what I would like it to be."(Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

In the opinion of the Ombudsman, education should not be limited to teaching and "a complete programme of studies should be developed in each establishment with the aim of offering inmates the possibility of

cultivating some of their of interest.". Thus, in addition to school matters, topics such as health, hygiene, drug addiction, citizenship, etc. should be included in this program. (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003).

The professionals consider in general the evaluation of the area of education as positive, since they consider "that there has been a very reasonable response, well structured, with a good articulation with the Ministry of Education in which 36% of the prison population attending school (...)" (Almeida, Duarte, Fernando & Abreu, 2003) Regarding the Perception of the existing educational programs in the prison the responsible stated that Adult Education is generally designed for adults in their diversity of audiences. But minorities have smaller offers. In terms of specific offers, she mentioned the effort to try to find special offers for differentiated audiences: for Prisons, for the Romani population, foreigners, immigrants. They are trying to use the mechanisms available to tailor the offers in terms of formative offers for an open and flexible curriculum adjusted to the audiences: "I think they are very flexible certification models, which allow for a set of games that the adult can do." (Gabriel, 2007).

About the perception of management support in prison education one of the inmates, regarding to the motivational aspects and the perception of the school stated: "I know that the Principal would like very much for me to go to school, but you know, I need to make money. (Gabriel, 2007). The perception of the existence of training for prison staff and of opportunities for training or education as a manager in relation to encouraging and supporting prisoner education, is that teachers should have a specific training, especially from a psychological point of view, because dealing with the emotional situation of the inmates is difficult and it's very different of teaching a group of socially framed and integrated adults. The reflection upon this interview by the investigator mentioned that the method of the recruitment of the teachers is no different from the recruitment of the teachers in another context and that there's no specific courses to prepare those professionals for working with inmates. (Gabriel, 2007)

Focus group

Minorities in prison

The study was carried out in France and Poland with approximately 80 representatives of ethnic minority present in the prisons that the project partners have applied the questionnaires. The questionnaire was made up of 6 questions all of which were open-answers questions.

The first question was regarding education, more exactly what education meant to them. A large number said that education for them is knowledge, learning and development on all kinds of levels by broadening their horizons. Some also said that it was a way to find a job, a profession, that it was something good and useful which helps them acquire the necessary skills needed in society. Only one person refused to give an answer.

The second question was related to the educational offer available in their prison, and they were asked to make a list of activities that were not already named by the participants. The majority of them answered with different courses such as language courses or drawing, but there was also a part of them who did not know any or who did not care about what the possibilities where.

The third question asked the participants the educational direction (mainstream education, VET and adult education) were they pursuing. Most of them said they were following a vocational education, general education, Cooking classes, language courses, carpeting courses. However, there were also a few respondents that said they were not interested in any of those because they are getting close to the end of their imprisonment or because they were too old for any of those.

When asked whether they were getting enough support from the prison officers to enrol and participate in the educational activities the majority of them said that the support is sufficient and there is no need for change; some of them also consider that education should be made compulsory for those who cannot write or read. There were also respondents who said that they don't feel like the prison officers are supportive enough, and that they should listen to them more, they could help by telling them what courses they can follow, or maybe improve their access to books and school.

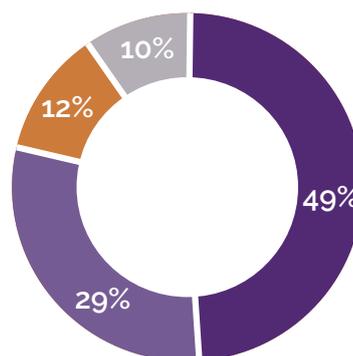
The fifth question was “ How do you think your prison officer can help you in your training course?” most of them said they would like the prison officer to recommend them a course or to a school, to have an open attitude and to be willing to listen to them, to try and motivate them to participate in classes, provide literacy. A few of them said they do not know any means of being helped.

The sixth question referred to the specific needs or conditions of minorities in terms of education. Many of them answered that they don't have any, however there were people who wished to learn the language of the country they were imprisoned in or that they would like to learn how read and write or even follow some courses such as cooking, hairdressing or building things.

The last question of the survey regarded the importance of education in the daily routine of the prisoners. As you can see in the chart on the right, most of them consider education very important. Some of them even had some additional comments by stating that education was very important for them and that they consider that by getting an education they will be able to lead a good life. At the other end of the rope however, there were 2 respondents who said that they would rather play football than study, or that they didn't want to attend in any activities, and even though the prison staff offered to help them read and write, it only annoyed them so they reused (to be noted that this respondent filled in the survey with the help of a tutor)

On a scale of 1 to 10 being the highest, in your opinion, how important is to have education in your daily routine?

■ > 5 ■ Between 6-7 ■ Between 8-9 ■ 10



Women in prison

Poland and France

In France women are in extreme minority in detention. They represent only 3.6% of the In France women are in extreme minority in detention. They represent only 3.6% of the prison population as of January 1, 2019 (2,534 people); a stable proportion. It has never exceeded 4.5% since the 1980s. Only two prisons are specifically reserved for them: the Rennes Prison Center and the Versailles Prison House.

The first question of our questionnaire was regarding education and what it meant to them. Many said that for them education was a way to find a job, acquire certain knowledge and skills or qualifications, that it was a way for them to develop themselves, that it provided the means of staying in contact with their families and that it was their fundamental right.

When asked if they knew of the educational offer in their prison the majority said they knew of different courses such as cooking or language courses, only a few said they did not know. Most of the respondents would like to follow a vocational training, general education, different courses such as cooking, hairdressing or language and teaching courses, however there was one person who said she wasn't interested in any of them due to the short term of imprisonment.

The third question was regarding the support that the women inmates receive from the prison officers in order to enroll and participate in educational activities and if they would like to change anything. Most of the answers were positive, they agreed that the support was sufficient but that they would like to see more courses for women, more opportunities for role with disabilities. Those who



disagreed considered that the courses available for women were very limited and the most common offer was cooking classes. There were also a few who said they did not need any kind of support.

Question number 4 "How do you think your prison officer can help you in your training course?" was answered with: more presentation of the available forms of education by the officers, providing help in choosing the courses, taking in consideration their needs and help them follow through and being able to help with the courses when the teacher is not available.

There would be some specific conditions/needs that the respondents mentioned such as more courses for women, self-defense courses, language courses, however many respondents considered they did not have the need for specific conditions.

All female respondents consider that it is very important to have education in their daily routine. Some additional comments being "education is important in the life of everyone who wants to achieve a goal in life, such as a well paid job" or "Education is also just being in prison, because it taught me humbleness, self-respect above all. It also taught me faith in my abilities and after leaving prison would like to continue my studies - go to university".

Romania and Spain

In Romania and Spain there was only one focus group involving both minorities and women, with 52 participants; compared to Poland and France, because women here are a part of the minority in prisons.

The first question they were asked was regarding education and what it meant to them. Many said that for them education was a way to find a job, acquire certain knowledge, improve the knowledge they already had and some even said that they consider it a fundamental right. Some of them said that it helped them be a better person, and a very small number did not want or did not know to answer.

When asked if they knew of the educational offer in their prison the majority said that they were aware of the courses available because of the social workers. The courses available are for example second chance education, literacy, numeracy, or vocational such as carpentry, agriculture, etc. In Spain more than half of the

respondents answered either that they were not interested in studying, that they didn't know the training offer, or they simply did not want to give an answer.

All participants in Romania stated that they were interested in pursuing a vocational education and they consider that they get enough support from the prison officers to enrol and take part in different courses or trainings, only one respondent said that he does not need such kind of support. In Spain something curious is that the most trained are the ones who demand the most training. Some foreigners' inmates have good training from their countries, most of them want to learn a trade, to read and to write and artistic workshops. More than half of them said that they have the support of prison officers to enroll and participate in the educational activities.

When asked 'How do you think your prison officer can help you in your training course?' the responses varied from having support in further reading, and continuous support even after finishing taking part in a training or course to having the officer help them in choosing the right course/ training, and encouraging them to participate.

The specific needs stated by the women inmates were regarding parental education and other family related courses. In Spain respondents considered that the training activities are sexist: sewing, clothing, makeup, hairdressing, presenting great differences with those offered to men, and that the training activities are more limited for women than for men. All of the respondents considered that having education in their daily routine was very important because they consider it important for integrating in society, for maintaining contact with their families, for giving them a meaning, for reducing anxiety and depression.



Desk research findings in Portugal based on previous focus groups

In Portugal the partners were able to provide only research materials from previous interventions regarding education in prison

Education of the inmates in prison was perceived as very important for their reintegration and rehabilitation. Inmates perceive trainings as positive, but sometimes difficult to get in. Most of them enjoy taking part in trainings and activities and intend to continue studying when they return to society. On the other hand, there are inmates that say they don't have time to attend school because they prefer working. These inmates, even if they do not take part in classes, acknowledge the fact that the classes are very well organized, and that because of the respect that exists between inmates and teachers the whole environment is so peaceful that there is no need for prison guards.

The inmates tend to perceive school in prison as very important because many of them reveal serious reading and writing problems. It tends to be perceived as a mean of gaining more knowledge, having access to the driving license, as well as a mean of obtaining more qualification and opportunities for job improvement and professional reintegration (Homem, 2011). There are some of them that do

not know how to read or write, therefore this provided them an opportunity to learn to do so. The fact that they receive benefits after successfully completing the courses/trainings serves as great motivation for them.

Regarding the existing educational offers in prison, they are seen in a very positive light. Inmates named courses such as photography and IT, civil construction and painting, carpentry, electricity, gardening or even bakery and baking. The majority of them were aware of the courses they had access to.

In terms of education, inmates are interested in following courses of vocational training, sometimes multiple courses at the same time, but also mainstream education. They feel supported by the prison staff in following courses and taking part in trainings, the perception of the staff involvement is seen as positive. The inmates stated that all the teachers were very supportive, get along very well with the inmates, provided them with help and counseling and that they made the inmates feel better. (Homem, 2011).

Regarding the motivation for attending school, most of the female inmates (79.5%) responded that they attend school for personal fulfillment, 38.6% of the female inmates attend school motivated to find a better job, 27.4% for reasons linked to some sentence benefits and 27.2% as a hobby or to occupy free time (Gabriel, 2007); 41.2% of inmates say they have no profession before the imprisonment. Similarly, 45.5% of respondents only attended regular education (in school age), however, school is a new experience for 34.1% of students of this prison.

It should be noted that EFA training courses are pointed out by a grate number of respondents who said they have already experienced this model of adult education. This is explained by the investigators by the existence of the Social Security programs associated with the granting of the monthly social allowance, which lead the beneficiaries of those services to the Adult Training Courses (Gabriel, 2007).

For most of the inmates, education is seen as very important, maybe even the most important activity within prison. Education helps the become more open minded, more prepared for life after imprisonment or just as a means to keep oneself busy and at the same time improve his or her skills. For others it was a factor for professional improvement, helping them get the job they wished for but maybe were not skilled enough, but it also helped them fight stigmatization and social integration.

Conclusion

"Education should be at the heart of the prison system" with this phrase, we believe that every prisoner has the possibility to improve and evolve through education. Here we are not talking only about bettering basic skills such as literacy, numeracy etc. but also interpersonal skills and even one's self-confidence. All of these things can be achieved with the help of a good educator and the willingness to try.

Our research and EESPIP project is closely tied with promoting and supporting correctional facilities into offering proper education to the most disadvantaged in society, to give them a possibility in life. Once prisoners have served their time, it is fair to them and in the interests of their communities that they have the same decent chance. The opportunity to re-enter society successfully, to find work, to live fulfilling lives. If education is the engine of social mobility, it is also the engine of prisoner rehabilitation.

International conventions to which the EU countries are part of, assure the rights to education for every group in society. Today, every prison has a remarkably varied population, which has to be taken into consideration when educational activities are being organized. It is rather concerning that so many female and minority prisoners have a need for compulsory and upper secondary level education. The prison and probation services and the educational authorities must make regular surveys of prison populations, identify needs, and see to it that the educational activities offered are kept in line with these needs.

Resulted from our questionnaires and focus group, we can see that there are a few common priorities/concerns from both the management side and the staff, regarding the safety of communities, the successful reintegration of inmates into society, with both parties disagreeing that sanctions and punishments are practices that should be applied within prisons. A contrasting issue came up in relation with the staff's training or support in order to encourage and support prisoner education, more exactly the management said that prison staff do receive training, while the staff consider that they do not receive any training related to the above.

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