



## Report

### On the 12<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EPTA CONFERENCE

18-19 June 2019

### National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna, ROMANIA

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual EPTA Conference was organized by the National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna, Romania, during 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2019. Its main theme, “Staff motivation and retention”, proved to be a very interesting topic and gave the participants the opportunity to share and exchange ideas, experience and best practice models.

The two days of the Conference were full of content and all the formal and intercultural activities it comprised allowed the participants to strengthen previous connections, make new ones and extend their informational horizons.

The first day was opened by Mrs. Manuela FRANGU, 2019 EPTA General Secretary, who welcomed the guests and introduced the participant countries, as well as the observers and who emphasized the importance of the event within the EPTA network.

The 2019 EPTA President, Mr. Vasile SCUTARU, the Director of the National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna underlined, during his welcome speech, that the existence of such a network, which becomes larger and larger each year, with everything that it involves, including the annual Conference, has a great positive impact on all participating countries. As an example, he spoke of some of the ideas that the representatives of the Romanian Training School got in different editions of the EPTA annual conference and which have been already implemented in the activities of the school.

Another aspect that was underlined was the importance of drawing a document which should regulate the organization and functioning of the EPTA network. He mentioned the fact that the school, as a partner in the project “Tackling gaps in cross-border cooperation between European Penitentiary training Academies”, funded by the European Commission Justice Program, agreed to draft such a document. Therefore, once the document was finished it was sent to the Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries for approval and, later on, to all EPTA members in order to be given a final form according to the members' comments and suggestions. Mr. Scutaru kindly asked all present EPTA members to go through the document and send a feedback as soon as possible, as the network lacks a formal, coherent document, which will be of great help not only to the current EPTA members but to the future ones, as well.



The representative of the country that held the EPTA Presidency in 2018, Mr. Christophe MILLESCAMPS, director of ENAP, was given the opportunity to address the audience and, in this context, he underlined the importance of this annual event as it allows the participants to tackle different issues that are of great interest for the penitentiary systems within Europe. His speech focused also on the importance of the penitentiary system in the society as well as on the constant improvement of the training of the penitentiary staff.

Mrs. Ioana Mihaela MORAR, the Deputy General Director of the Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries, gave a warm welcome to the participants to the Conference and emphasized the fact that the event was organized at the National Correctional Officers Training School - Târgu Ocna as it is the only penitentiary training school in Romania. She also stressed the fact that the Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries is very much concerned with the initial and continuous training of the staff and that being an EPTA member allows the Romanian penitentiary system to get aligned with the most modern standards of the European penitentiary system through the EPTA principles and purposes.

In order to have all the participants informed about EUROPRIS and its role in EPTA, the 2019 EPTA General Secretary invited the Executive Director of EUROPRIS, Mrs. Kirsten HAWLITSCHK for a speech. Mrs. HAWLITSCHK spoke about the connection between EUROPRIS and EPTA and the role EUROPRIS has undertaken along with the involvement in the "Tackling gaps in cross-border cooperation between European Penitentiary training Academies" project. Thus, the organization committed to take care of the new EPTA house style, new EPTA website as well as to hold the EPTA secretariat during the project (including members administration, archiving process, establishing links with other European initiatives, etc.).

Mrs. HAWLITSCHK included a very important piece of information in her speech which will be of great help for the penitentiary training academies: the Council of Europe issued the Guideline called "Recruitment, selection, education, training and professional development of prison and probation staff", a very useful document for all the institutions that provide training to the penitentiary and probation staff.

To anticipate the activities that would take place the second day of the Conference, Mr. Dan HALCHIN, Director of ARAD Penitentiary, gave some food thought to the participants to the Conference raising three questions on the topic of the event: "What is motivation?", "What is the source of motivation?" and "How can we stimulate motivation?".

After the guest messages, Mrs. Manuela FRANGU offered the audience a presentation of the National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna, of the Romanian penitentiary staff categories, of the selection process and of the initial training of the correctional officers. She then gave an overview of the topic of the event, drafting some guidelines on the approach and on the content of the activities that would take place the second day.

The agenda included also a presentation of the project "Tackling gaps in cross-border cooperation between European Penitentiary training Academies". Mr. Pepijn GERRITS, the Director of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee, the coordinator of the project, who offered some general pieces of information about the activity of the

organization and specific information about the duration, objectives, partners, activities and deliverables of the project. He underlined the fact that the project represents a great support for the entire EPTA network as the three handbooks on "Leadership", "Dynamic security and professional positioning/relational mediation" and "Managing difficult inmates", resulting from the work of three expert groups, will constitute an inspirational and informational help for all the penitentiary staff training academies. Another major aspect that was also stressed was the financial help offered by the project for the organization of the EPTA annual conferences for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The second part of the day involved the presence of a motivational speaker, Mr. Cristian VLĂDOIU, who made a psychological approach to the motivational process. He drew four types of personalities with their main traits and the way each of them can be motivated.

The day ended with a formal dinner, occasion for all participants to know each other better, exchange ideas and establish connections between their institutions with the purpose of future collaborations, resulting in a stronger EPTA network.

The activities of the second day took place at the headquarters of the National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna. The day started with the school visit and continued with the workshops that the participants had previously registered for.

**Workshop no.1 "Motivation management"** was moderated by Mr. Dan Halchin, Director of ARAD Penitentiary and PhD in *Military Science and Information*, included debates on how to increase motivation in the penitentiary system.

The scientific content of the workshop was provided as follows:

- **Management of Prison Staff Motivation in Turkey(Turkey)** – topic presented by Mr. Barış ÖNER- Head of Department of Personnel Training – Judge and Güven URGAN - Department of Personnel Training - Branch Manager;

- **FIRACTIVA'T. Activities that make justice (Catalonia - Centre for legal studies:)** - topic presented by Mrs. SÍLVIA MARTÍNEZ- Head of Initial Training in Criminal Justice and Mr. NATX JAMBRINA - Head of Continuous Training in Criminal Justice;

- **The meaning of mentoring for starting prison officers (Austria - Austrian Prison Service Academy)** - topic presented by Mr. Erich Hubmann - Manager of the department of basic training and Mr. Martin Hoffmann – Manager of the department of basic training;

- **Motivational factors of the Czech prison staff (Czech Republic - Prison Service Academy)** - topic presented by Mr. Ladislav Jareš - Lawyer and personnel officer (interpreted by Mrs. Zuzana Rosendorfová);

- **Motivation management and training (Switzerland – SKJV)** topic presented by Mrs. Nadja Künzle - Head of leadership training.

The main ideas focused on staff training in communication and psychology with the purpose of learning how to deal with stress and trauma, as well as to develop teamwork.

Financial motivation is another important aspect, that is why the representatives of some countries spoke of the some financial/retirement programs/procedures that were drawn in order to make this job more attractive.

The main best practices on motivation which were agreed by the participants were:

- Using social media in order to offer an adequate perspective upon different situations that occurred and upon the activities of the penitentiary system;
- Organizing fairs to make the public aware of the work which is carried out in the correctional system;
- Using the mentoring program to guide and motivate senior officers;

**Workshop no. 2 "Career challenges"** was moderated by Mrs. Manuela FRÂNGU, Deputy Director of the National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna.

The scientific content of the workshop was provided as follows:

- **Recruitment and attractiveness (FRANCE – ENAP)** - topic presented by Mr. Christophe MILLESCAMPS - Director of the ENAP and Mr. Cédric LE BOSSÉ - Head of the International Relations Department ;

- **Professional career in the prison service (POLAND - Prison Service)** – topic presented by: Lt. col. Grzegorz Bajda - Director of Personnel office and training of the Central Management of Prison Service;

- **Where should we go? (Spain)** – topic presented by José Ceferino Delgado Ruiz – Head of the Human Resources Area at the Penitentiary Work and Employment Training Entity (TPFE), Mrs. Maria De Los Desamparados Alvarez Gomez Head of the Spanish Training Centre. General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions, Mrs. Francesca Melis Pont Head of Service of the Spanish Training Centre, General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions;

- **Formation of the penitentiary staff in Ukraine: challenges and ways forward (Ukraine Bila Tserkva Penitentiary Staff Training Centre)** - topic presented by Mr. Oleg Duka – director of the training centre and Mr. Mykhailo Iskra – ICRC representative.

The debate started from the idea of career in prison system. Thus, the participants agreed that career depends on the person and his/her desire to grow, on his/her limits, expectations, on the opportunities that the system offers, on regulations and legal provisions.

The main challenge of the career is, however, a subjective one, depending on the individual: he/she, besides taking into account the financial aspect, must believe in what he/she is doing and must feel that he/she belongs to that particular system.

Thus, all persons in the workshop agreed that a career guide would be useful for everyone. This guide should be supported by training (initial, refreshing and specialized training) and should include all the pieces of information needed for those who want to develop a career in the field, as well as well-defined competencies for different and diverse categories of positions within the system.

The most important aspects that have to be taken into account when speaking about career challenges are:

- the idea of values and deontology shared in the right way;
- the personnel should find a meaning in their jobs;
- common values of the staff;
- professional equality.



**Workshop no. 3 "Enhancement of positivism towards excellence"** was moderated by Mrs. Monica GrațIELA MÂNDRU, chief of Professional Training Department in Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries.

The scientific content of the workshop was provided as follows:

- **Supporting Your Psychological Wellbeing (IRELAND - Irish Prison Service College)** presented by Miss Julie McCafferty - Organisational Psychologist;

- **Promoting desistance and life without crime in the Finnish correctional establishments (FINLAND - Criminal Sanctions Agency)** topic presented by Mr. Henrik Linderborg - Senior Research Officer;

- **Stress management / resilience: A training of 3 days (Belgium)** topic presented by Mrs. Schmidts Beatrijs - Head of the Training Centre

Training programs regarding positivism might include:

- Wellbeing and wealthy living;
- Psychological and trauma resilience;
- Mind-set and appropriate approach to prisoners;
- Understanding and awareness of mental health and personality disorders of inmates;

- Understanding mechanisms to change behaviour.

The main best practices, which were discussed by the participants, were:

- Training on the management of a challenging environment or trauma;
- Training on coping mechanisms;
- Three days wellbeing and resilience training;
- Two hours workshop on Psychology, Wellbeing and Healthy Living.

**"Moral case deliberation" course** was attended by a group of participants in a suited number for an efficient approach of the method.

**Mr. Thijs BIEMANS**, trained MCD facilitator, with expertise on motivational guidance, team-development, individual coaching and Psychiatry and addiction was the one who guided the participants into exploring this topic.

The objectives of the course were to develop moral competency, to learn to deal with the case at hand, to improve team cooperation and decision-making processes and to adjust, develop or implement policy and guidelines.

Thus, the participants were presented a case and asked to choose the right action to be performed according to their subjective perspective on that particular case.

Using the dilemma method, the facilitator asked the participants to get involved into a debate, which, subsequently, brought to the surface the right moral thing to be done.

In the second part of the day the participants were offered the opportunity to display some of the most important and interesting events/activities of their institutions in a market place. Austria, Switzerland, Turkey, The Netherlands, Czech Republic are some of the countries which took advantage of this and presented some pieces of information about the institutions they represent and some of its activities.

After the market place, Mr. Vasile SCUTARU, the 2019 EPTA President, handed over the EPTA members' certificates to the representatives of the EPTA member

countries, together with the attendance certificates for all participants, who also received the group photo that was taken on the first day of the conference.

The informal dinner in the evening was, again, a proof of the Romanian hospitality and, moreover, another occasion for the all the participants to meet once again, before the next day departure, to know each other better and to discuss upon the content of the conference as a whole, as well as upon each of the activities that the conference comprised.

**Note that in addition and as support of this report, video footage of the conference, photos as well as presentations will be posted on the EPTA website.**