



Justice Involving Volunteers in Europe (JIVE)

Issue 2 | August 2014

This newsletter provides regular updates about the work of the JIVE project and useful information for third sector organisations, networks and volunteers within Europe working within the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

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Introduction

A lot of progress has been made since the first JIVE newsletter. All partners have been busy laying the foundations of the project and collaborating with various contacts and networks within their respective countries. The project focuses on two areas:

- 1) The role and value of volunteers working with offenders, their families and victims
- 2) Working effectively in partnership with statutory and private organisations

Europe-wide survey on the role and value of volunteers working in the CJS

The JIVE project intends to enrich our knowledge about how and why organisations

use volunteers in their work with ex-offenders, their families and victims of crime. [The BRIK Institute](#) has designed a survey which will capture this evidence and asks how we recruit, train, reward and represent those who undertake civil engagement without pay. It also builds a picture of how integrated volunteers are within organisations, and their wider value in society in supporting social systems and community work. The data will enable the project to evaluate current practice within and between EU member states, so as to share and learn from best practice in volunteer recruitment, training and support. If your organisation recruits, trains and/or manages volunteers, please take 20 minutes to share your experiences. We have set up a survey in the following languages, which you can access by clicking here:

[English](#) [Italian](#) [German](#) [Spanish](#)

Or select a different language via Google Translate by clicking [this link](#). The survey will close after 12th September 2014.

Developing a volunteer profile

JIVE project partner [Aproximar](#) is leading on volunteer recruitment, training and support. This challenging focus requires them to develop a volunteer profile in terms of skills, knowledge and experience, as well as co-ordinating the exchange of current training practices and materials.

Aproximar has developed essential tools (volunteer programme evaluation grid, and a practice exchange framework) to facilitate this process. All partners were asked to identify 10 examples of good practice in their countries and select 3 of the most promising to complete the practice exchange framework tool.





This is a first step in creating a **Prisons' Volunteer Programme** which will be piloted in all 7 partner countries; something never before performed in the EU!

So far, Aproximar has received volunteer programme information from the UK, Netherlands and Portugal, and more are expected as the deadlines draw near. They expect to finalise a practice exchange report in September 2014, which will be analysed and discussed during the October 2014 partner meeting in Lisbon.

Aproximar has identified a number of national partners and is in discussion with the Portuguese Red Cross, which has the responsibility to manage Portuguese Prison Services volunteers. Furthermore Aproximar expects to advertise and promote a national conference, to be held in Portugal during October 2014, which will bring together volunteers working within the Criminal Justice System, as an opportunity to showcase their value and contribution to society.

Netherlands: voluntary support to prisoners

In the Netherlands, a number of organisations are active in supporting offenders in prison. The main organisations are Gevangenzorg Nederland, Exodus, Humanitas and BONJO.

Gevangenzorg Nederland and Exodus are volunteer organisations, both of which are based on the Christian faith. Humanitas is a volunteer organisation based on humanist beliefs, whilst BONJO represents the interest of detainees.

In this newsletter we will introduce [BONJO](#) and briefly detail their work.

Located in Amsterdam, BONJO operates to serve the interests of ex-prisoners and is often contacted by prisoners when they experience problems. BONJO is an association with roughly 80 members and these are volunteer organisations from around the country.

Activities include visiting prisoners and providing one-to-one support or group discussion; providing buddies for prisoners; and advice and guidance on temporary housing, employment and debt.

Additionally, BONJO Central is responsible for publishing their magazine 'The BONJO' and oversees the project 'Huisbewing' where the house of a prisoner is taken care of. The BONJO contact office coordinates the project 'Stragglers' which is organised by the volunteer members.

If you have any questions about BONJO, please contact [Everhardt Lubbers](#). He will submit questions to the organisation and send you an answer.

A short case study from Romania: Mihaela – a volunteer in prison

"I decided to volunteer in prison during the first year of studying for my Master of Probation at the University of Bucharest. I wanted to gain experience of working with inmates, so through the Romanian Association for the Defence of Human Rights ([GRADO](#)) I got to be part of the 'contribution to the implementation of penal legislation in Romania' project.

The project was implemented by GRADO, Romanian Ministry of Justice, National Administration of Penitentiaries, Penal Justice Reform Foundation and Transcena Association. The objective is to support the enforcement of penal legislation in line with European Union



standards. GRADO and Transcena developed programmes for reducing anti-social behaviour and preparing prisoners for reintegration into the community after release from Prison Colibași.

We go to the prison every week to work with the inmates. The team works in the detention area and facilitates group activities which will encourage pro-social behaviour among prisoners. I was trained alongside the NGO and prison staff on how to work with inmates, and I participate in the activities carried out by inmates within both the maximum security regime and the closed regime.

In my opinion, having volunteers to work with prisoners brings benefits to the prison because the system does not have enough resources to hire paid staff. For prisoners it is an enormous advantage as they can attend lessons and learn new things about themselves. It also stops them from being confined to their cells all day.

GRADO considers volunteering important because it increases its capacity, enables students to work with prisoners and helps them gain valuable experience.

For me it is an amazing opportunity to practice what I have studied. I work with a team of professionals, practice the techniques of working with prisoners and I am able to develop both personally and professionally. The most important thing is that I have the chance to work within a field in which I want to make a career."

MIHAELA BRATU, volunteer

Hungary: The (his)story of BAGázs

BAGázs operates in a village that is a segregated Roma settlement. Conditions were poor; there were high levels of unemployment, drug abuse, and generally people that are

disengaged. At that time there was a call from the Central Office of Justice for implementing a peer mentoring programme in the framework of MOMIE, a transnational project financed under the European Community Program for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS (2007-2013), and so former probation officer Eموke Both submitted her application.



About MOMIE

The Models of Mentoring for Inclusion and Employment (MOMIE) project had the following objectives:

- To provide innovative answers to supporting people from disadvantaged groups
- To understand the effects of mentoring in comparison with peer mentoring
- To promote active inclusion of persons excluded from the labour market and contribute to their well-being

MOMIE in Hungary

BAGázs carried out two mentor programmes: one in Bag, and one in Budapest.

They started their mentoring programme in February 2011 in Bag. The aim of the project was to prevent drug use, crime and recidivism, through mentoring. They trained local youth (peer mentors) and college students from Budapest (non-peer mentors) together in a

hostel in the middle of a forest in the mountains.



They used the methods of experimental learning, and role play. The goal of the training was to enable these mentors to support one or two potentially crime involved youths. As a result of their programme, 4 local mentors (peer mentors) and 7 mentors from Budapest (non-peer mentors) worked with 14 young people over a six month period.

You can read the final project report [here](#)

The success of the mentoring programme and its potential convinced them it was worthwhile to continue, but in the framework of the Probation Service there was no opportunity for this. The only chance was to set up an NGO. So the Budapest Metropolitan Court registered their organisation, BAGázs, on 17th January 2011. BAGázs is a mosaic word, from the name of the village and from the word „bagázs”, which is a Hungarian slang word for an informal group, or gang.

The motto is “Legyünk egy BAGázs!”, meaning: “Let’s become one BAGázs (one gang)!”



BAGázs set out to use the methods of non-formal education and volunteering to enable the youth of Bag to work towards their self-defined goals and to enhance their freedom to choose their own path in life, in order to break out from the poverty trap that defines their current lives.

“Volunteering is freely given, but not cost free – it needs and deserves targeted support from all stakeholders.”

For more information about the JIVE project please contact robert.price@clinks.org

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