

# PROJECT INFO

The project “*Law through Experience: Interactive and Participatory Socio-Legal Training for Prison Educators*” began in October 2004 as a European Commission-supported Grundtvig 1 project within the Socrates scheme (116881-CP-1-2004-1-SK-GRUNDTVIG-G11). The common aim of the institutions participating in the project (ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth, Koebenhavns Kvindedagshoejskole, Občan a demokracia and Polskie Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Prawnej) was to contribute to combating the social exclusion of prison inmates and clients of other penitentiary institutions by developing a socio-legal training course for their educators with corresponding training materials (resource texts, lesson plans and general methodological materials). The course is supposed to be delivered to prisoners themselves through their trained educators with the intention of helping the prisoners to better understand their rights, duties and responsibilities, to strengthen their civic competencies, and thus to re-socialise themselves .

The training course and its materials focus on the following eight topics related to law and human rights:

1. Law – Rights, Duties and Responsibilities,
2. EU Law,
3. Discrimination,
4. Gender Issues,
5. Domestic Violence,
6. Right to Privacy,
7. Freedom of Expression,
8. Right to Information.

The course and its materials – resource texts and lesson plans covering each of the topics – involve not only international and European perspectives but also national specifics of the participating project partners. The course, resource texts and lesson plans have been produced on the European level and the national levels of the participating project partners .

The project and its products place emphasis on acquiring both legal and social knowledge and skills. This is why the project partners have applied a multidisciplinary approach when dealing with the course content and while employing a variety of methods of interactive and participatory teaching when dealing with the process of presenting the lessons. Moreover, the training materials are supplemented by practical methodological guides that help trainers to use interactive and participatory methodology, divide trainees into groups, implement supporting training activities and evaluate the learning process.

All of the project products – the training course as well as its materials – were thoroughly tested throughout the project. The main methods of testing were

immediate and distant expert peer reviews, as well as testing carried out directly with the project addressees on the national and international levels. An important milestone in terms of the project testing was an international training program for prison educators that took place in Warsaw, Poland, in March 2006. In Slovakia, testing has been carried out in cooperation with the Corps of Prisons of the Slovak Republic and with the Law Clinic for Selected Communities/Street Law in Košice. The whole project was accompanied by internal and external monitoring and evaluation. The external monitoring and evaluation were carried out by Antares 2000.

The project came to a conclusion in September 2006. However, the training course developed within it will be further offered as a Grundtvig 3, within the Socrates scheme. Its products will be an invaluable source of knowledge, experience and inspiration on the national levels of the institutions participating in the project regarding further work in the field of human rights and civic education and in combating the social exclusion of disadvantaged groups.

Our website offers all the resource texts that have been developed regarding the above mentioned topics in Slovak and English. The texts are also suitable for working with other target groups than clients of correctional facilities.