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CREATE 4 LIFE *focus*

AN ERASMUS+ PROJECT

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL THROUGH CREATIVITY IN THE CONNECTED ECONOMY TO REDUCE REOFFENDING

CREATIVITY, THE CONNECTED ECONOMY AND OFFENDERS

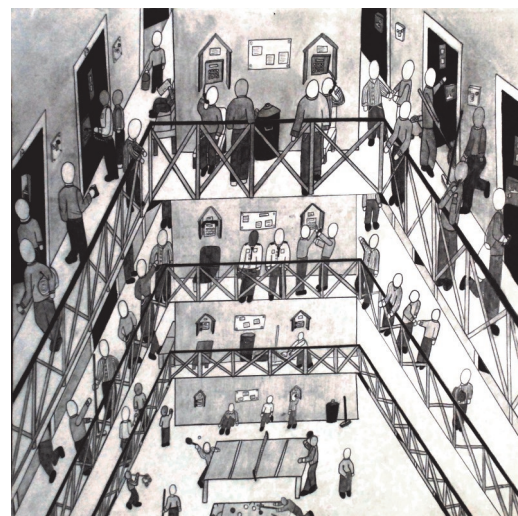
Human creativity is endless, but for offenders the words “No!” and “it will never work” dominate.

Creativity allows an offender to learn about themselves; to develop to their fullest potential and to survive in an ever changing world, with many mutually reinforcing strands supporting resettlement.

Our economy and society is in a period of rapid change a transition from the Industrial Economy to Connected Economy which is about exploration, risk-taking, personal production, networking, making connections, active participation in society and our economy.

At the heart of this new emerging Connected Economy is creativity. But for offenders and ex-offenders to embrace this new economy they need to be able to develop their creative capabilities and understand how to make positive connections to increase their Social Capital.

Financial cuts equate to reduced staff to support offenders in their resettlement, but by understanding the dynamics of the Connected Economy and having the courage to excavate their creativity, a new world of economic and social support opportunities becomes accessible. **Sometimes its a small creative connection that makes a life time of difference.**



*Networking in prison
Image courtesy of www.pictora.org*

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Creativity &



THE CONNECTED ECONOMY

Creativity is central to both an individual's well-being and development as well as being central to our society's future prosperity, but what exactly is creativity and how does it work. We are all creative, but for some it is a valuable skill that has been buried over a lifetime by fear of failure, learned helplessness and peer pressure. Creative individuals are not programmed differently, it is just an issue of behavior and attitude.

Creativity is the way that we explore the world, it's about curiosity, passion and confidence. The act of creating and making for an individual is deeply satisfying, life-affirming and is key to developing a rewarding existence. By being able to explore ideas and situations from differing perspectives, we are better equipped to problem-solve and deal with the challenges that our modern society presents.

In the past, for many, creativity was considered the domain of the captains of industry or the eccentric few, but in our modern connected world it is a valuable tool for all individuals. You do not need permission to create, just the confidence. The Connected Economy is not about how many Facebook friends or Twitter followers one has, but about connection which involves a complex sharing of information, expectation and culture. To successfully achieve in The Connected Economy, individuals need to be able to open up to others, which creates vulnerable moments that can be frightening. Through The Connected Economy we create partnerships and give up complete control of our outcomes.

The Industrial Age of the past was about productivity and chasing scarce items, but the new Connected Economy is about abundance of choice, connection and knowledge. It embraces individuals with the resources to make choices and rewards originality, remarkability and art. Connections build an individual's social capital, that can multiply and increase in value. Networks created by connection become more valuable as they scale, giving the individual greater leverage for their talents and passions.

For offenders in prison and ex-offenders in the community, igniting creativity is a means to empowerment and problem-solving, which are key to successful resettlement and the reduction of re-offending. Linking creativity to the new connected economy allows innovative employability skills and opportunities to be developed, including the awareness of the values of social capital which can create circles of support for resettlement.

By linking internal creativity (one's passions, ideas, positive thoughts) to The Connected Economy, the project creates conduits for the offender/ex-offender/individual at risk of offending to start making connections and developing their Social Capital, thus enhancing their prospects of employment or self-employment.

It's about igniting internal creativity; developing approaches to learn to share, trust, connect; understanding how the connected economy works (tools and rules); developing contacts/social capital; progressing to employability; supporting individuals to become non-offending sustainable EU citizens, resilient in our complex society.





CREATE 4 LIFE - EU PARTNERSHIP

Funded by Erasmus+, the 'Creativity, The Connected Economy and Offenders' project, is a unique EU partnership of organisations working in the criminal justice system. Each partner brings a special skill set to the project and is passionate about developing innovative approaches to support offenders in resettlement and to reduce the likelihood of reducing reoffending.

England



Pictora

Pictora is an innovative 'not for profit' Social Enterprise, bringing the therapeutic value of offender art together with the practical creativity of entrepreneurship and business enterprise skills, in order to support offenders in prison, "Through the Gate", and back into society.

Pictora is reducing reoffending by engagement in arts and entrepreneurship through social enterprise.



"Art is what we do when we are truly alive"

Lithuania



Panevezio Pataisos Namai

The Panevezys Correction House is the only of Lithuania's 11 penal institutions enforcing custodial sentences imposed on female offenders. At present, an average of 300 inmates serve their term here, including women raising their children under the age of three years in the Mothers and babies unit.

Educational opportunities and social rehabilitation programmes are being provided in the institution in order to help inmates to better prepare for life after release.



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Latvia



Resocializācijas un Integrācijas Asociācija

Resocialization and Integration Association (RIA) is a Christian fellowship organisation dealing with ex-offenders through its community centres. RIA is an umbrella organisation for five independent charity organisations which provide support for people in crisis situation, mainly ex-offenders, former inmates, persons suffering from various addictions (alcohol, drugs, gambling), homeless persons and any other kind of marginalized individuals whom cannot adopt into regular social life. RIA through its member organisations provides everyday support to these persons and by various tools, to help them reintegrate back into social life and labour market. Currently altogether the RIA member organisations provide everyday support to approximately 150 – 200 persons per day, giving them overnight accommodation possibilities, food and training opportunities. All these activities are purely financed by donations and individual projects.

Portugal



Associação Humanidades

Associação Humanidades is a private, non for profit organisation aimed at social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, mainly youngsters and children. Develops an integrated approach to social problems based on innovative and flexible methodologies that promote empowerment of agents and learning facilities and resources that support educational and sociocultural activities contributing to the promotion of quality of life, equality of opportunities and equity individuals and territories.

The wall - whispering out loud

Image of the names of young girls and their children supported by Associação Humanidades



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UK TRAINING COURSE

Pictora is the co-ordinating organisation for the Erasmus+ project: Creativity, The Connected Economy and Offenders. Between the 1st - 7th December 2015, Pictora hosted a training programme for partner organisations from across the EU: Panevezio pataisos namai (Lithuania), Associacao Humanidades (Portugal) and Resocializacijas un Integracijas Asociacija (Latvia).



During the weeks training, participants visited two prisons HMP The Mount and HM YOI Aylesbury, meeting and discussing the project concepts with both prison staff and prisoners. Half a day was spent in discussion with a group of 12 adult male prisoners who have inputted into the projects design.



Time was used to develop innovative training ideas and concepts around how to ignite creativity; develop trust and sharing; Social Return on Investment (SROI); link creativity to The Connected Economy, employability and resettlement; develop social capital.

Based on the outcomes of this training programme, project partners will be refining the training tools and testing them with diverse groups across the EU during spring and summer 2016



OUR PARTNERSHIP:
Expertise across the EU



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