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Greek Re-entry: Myth or reality
An evaluation of the Greek rehabilitation and re-entry system: The
Case of EPANODOS

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted per the requirements of a thesis in the masters program of Comparative Social Policy and Welfare of the department of Social Sciences of the University of Tampere, Finland. The paper deals with the evaluation of rehabilitation and re-entry programs as perceived by the professionals of social sciences in the only official organization on rehabilitation and re-entry in Greece, EPANODOS. Specifically, it analyses the penal system of Greece and the legislative framework which governs it. The study also examines Greece's penal institutions and the detention conditions inside them. Other topics examined are the communication possibilities of the prisoner with their family and social environment, the opportunities for employment and work inside and outside the institution, along with the educational and vocational programs provided by social services. Most studies investigating imprisonment and re-entry in Greece are focused on imprisoned people and any examination of re-entry is based on prisoners' and former prisoners' perspective, rather than that of the professionals who are offering those programs. That is why I decided to conduct a qualitative research and interview five professionals (n=5) from EPANODOS. My data were categorized and analyzed using thematic analysis. The evaluation of the re-entry programs from the experiences and the critical point of view of those professionals answered my research question, which is: How feasible is rehabilitation and re-entry in Greece? From their answers I investigated how this newly formed organization functions, what it offers and how many people work there, what are the difficulties it faces in providing the services to former prisoners, if they are getting any help from the state and what kind of help and if any results from previous studies were taken into consideration; also the state of rehabilitation, if there have been any significant changes and how the existing rehabilitation programs are evaluated. Finally, I examined whether any good practices are being planned, or already in place. My findings showed that, even though re-entry has not been among the state's priorities, it is still feasible in Greece, but needs time to develop. It has been noted that things take time to mature in Greece, mostly due to the changes in the country's sociopolitical system, leaving sometimes Greece behind in comparison to other European countries regarding not only re-entry and rehabilitation policies, but social solidarity and social aid policies in general; problems that are becoming even more prominent in an era of financial crisis. However, given the relevant changes in policy and service implementation, it is expected that positive results will appear in due time.

Keywords: re-entry, rehabilitation, penal institutions, former prisoners

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern developed societies have achieved throughout the years a considerable progress, at least in terms of legislation, in combating all forms of discrimination. Despite these efforts, the issue of social exclusion has yet to be fully tackled. Various Greek and international studies (Thanopoulou et al., 1997; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008; Zaitzow, 2011; Konttila & Kaivo-oja, 2011) argue that serving a sentence in a penal institution as a punishment affects the social and professional life of the offender in many levels: before they are imprisoned, during their time spend inside the institution and after their release. Incarceration for either short or long time periods creates a gap in their private and social life and makes their return to the labor market even more difficult (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 13). It is a “common belief” that assistance provided to incarcerated people in Greece is much less from what someone would expect from a modern, European country. Until recently the only assistance this group of people (offenders, ex-offenders) received came from the Unemployment Office, NGOs and private or church-based organizations. However, prisoners and former prisoners were not the exclusive target group of those organizations, save for two faith-based ones. It was apparent that the needs of those people were certainly not being met. It took nine years for the state to design and form an organization focusing entirely in the rehabilitation and re-entry of former prisoners (Courakis, 2008: 6¹).

This is the reason I decided to conduct this study as per the requirements for my thesis for the masters program of Comparative Social Policy and Welfare of the department of Social Sciences of the University of Tampere, Finland. The purpose of this study is to describe and evaluate the approach to rehabilitation and re-entry policies and programs in Greece through the context of the professionals working in that first state organization focusing on former prisoners, EPANODOS.

EPANODOS was formed in 2007. Its core objectives are designing the re-entry process and providing re-entry programs. The organization’s overall objective has been the resettlement of former prisoners back into society by enhancing and promoting their working skills and abilities in order to provide them with an easier access to the labor market. It also offers counseling and psychological support, which creates the necessary infrastructure for former prisoners to acquire a safe vocational and educational integration. There have been very few studies investigating the penal institutions and the impact imprisonment has to offenders and to their integration back into

¹ See: <http://www.epanodos.org.gr/papers.html> (in Greek language).

society, as studies tend to focus on the offenders' perspective (Thanopoulou et al., 1997; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008).

The data for my theoretical part are based in international and Greek literature, newspaper and scientific articles along with supplementary information from online sources. Additional information is taken from the documentary, *“To Kill or to Cure”* by Freed and Kalina (2003), from three shows of the Greek information show *“Protagonistes”* by the journalist Stavros Theodorakis² aired in 2008 and 2011 respectively and from my personal experience as an intern social worker for 6 months during my bachelor studies in the judicial penal institution of Korydallos in 2005 and as an intern student in the organization CRIS-Tampere³ (*Criminals Returning Into Society*) for 3 months during my master studies in 2010 and from a former prisoner whom I met in 2011. Another source of data has been my participation in a conference about re-entry which took place in Tampere in 2010⁴ and a course I attended from the School of Management and Political Science in the University of Tampere in 2011 by professor Ekunwe, called: Politics Penology and Correction⁵. The documentary *“To Kill or to Cure”* describes different penal institutions systems, with an emphasis on the Chinese, Japanese, Finnish, US and Canadian ones. Ekunwe (2007: 46) described it as “a compelling and controversial look at a problem that goes back to Cain’s murder of Abel, and to this present day on how we should deal with crime”. The show *“Protagonistes”* airs on the Greek TV channel ‘Mega Channel’. The show covers daily life topics and presents various minority groups. In the shows I used as data material, Theodorakis visited the agricultural penal institution of Agya in Crete in 2008, the juvenile penal institution of Avlona and the female penal institution of Eleona in Thiva in 2011⁶. By interviewing prisoners and professionals, the journalist described the daily life of the prisoners. The contexts of both shows are described thoroughly in Appendix II-IV.

The institution of Korydallos is located in a south-western suburb of Attica and is the largest institution in terms of population, regardless of the fact that it was originally designed to receive remand and short term detainees. It has 6 wings divided according to offence. Due to overpopulation, this division no longer applies. During my practice placement I was posted in A wing which is designed to hold financial criminals. The former prisoner, who agreed to share his experiences with me, has served time in the judicial penal institution of Korydallos for men in C

² See: <http://www.megatv.com/article.asp?catid=14693&subid=2&pubid=972251> (in Greek language).

³ See: <http://www.kris.fi/?id=163>.

⁴ See: http://www.tampereconventionbureau.fi/congress_calendar/2010/?x3173=69875.

⁵ See: <http://www10.uta.fi/opas/opetusohjelma/marjapuuro.htm?id=10792>.

⁶ See: <http://www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.prwtagnistes&id=665> (in Greek language).

wing. The person agreed to describe and illustrate the conditions of the penal system and the penal institution. For the protection of his personal data, he is referred as Prisoner. CRIS-Tampere described by Ekunwe (2011: 414) “is a community-based organization whose principal mission is to reduce society’s reliance on incarceration”. It was formed in Sweden by former prisoners and among the organizations’ employees are former prisoners. In Finland, CRIS has been cooperating successfully with the government and the society by providing services for those in need. The international conference “Global perspectives on re-entry” that I attended took place in Tampere from the 9th until the 12th of June 2010. Professionals from various specialties explored the issue of re-entry in both a macro and a micro level, from the parolee to the program provider (Jones & Ekunwe, 2011: 10). During the conference I attended a workshop where I was introduced to a new school, the school of Convict Criminology⁷. It has been formed in USA by ex-convicts academics and aims in educating the public, the scientific circles and policy makers about the realities of confinement and the impediments to community re-entry (Richards et al., 2011: 200-201). It also came to my attention that many of the European and international participants were not familiar with the concept of rehabilitation and re-entry in Greece and its penal system in general. I am hoping my study will be a step in filling that gap.

Examining the literature, two studies influenced my work in particular. The first one was published in 1997 and was focused in the long process of professional integration or re-integration of female offenders after their release. The second was published in 2008 by the institute of Social Policy of the National Centre of Social Researches in Greece, as part of the “Network for the prevention of social exclusion of women” project under the EQUAL initiative. The study focused on the issue of professional reintegration of female prisoners as it occurs within their family and social re-integration. Even though the studies referred to women specifically, it demonstrated that most programs in and out of prisons, which are overall the same for men as well, did not evolve throughout the years. The number of prisoners has increased dramatically but the programs – content-, capacity- and capability-wise- remained the same. Moreover, the two studies were conducted prior to the creation of EPANODOS and stated the importance of better planning, after care and the need for further support programs. Naturally, I wanted to study whether these needs were finally starting being met (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 26; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 11).

⁷ See: <http://www.convictcriminology.org/>.

The theoretical part consists of four chapters with some additional sub chapters. In the first chapter theories on re-entry and rehabilitation are presented and the meaning of social integration is clarified. The second chapter describes the Greek penal justice system (brief history, legislation and penalties in use, overall aims). The third chapter is more specific and describes the penal institutions. It has three sub chapters where I describe the conditions of the penal institutions, the population inside of them and the behavioral profile of that population. The reason for this distinction is, for the first sub chapter the fact that the Greek penal institutions have been negatively characterized as exceeding capacity and being overcrowded and substandard. The sub chapter on population is to show the number of prisoners inside the institutions and the categories they come from. The third sub chapter is to show the behavioral adaptations of the prisoners and the reasons behind them. The third and final chapter of the theoretical part describes the prisoners' social rehabilitation and re-entry and is also divided in three parts. The first describes the programs and services that are implemented for the prisoner concern: the social relations, educational programs, employment training, sensitivity programs for drug abusers and leisure activities programs. The second part describes the programs and services provided for the former prisoners along with some of the organizations that provide them.

In the empirical part I describe my research question, method of analysis, tool, dissemination, and research ethics and ultimately, the data. My research question is: How feasible rehabilitation and re-entry is in Greece? I have done a qualitative research with thematic analysis. My questions, which are presented in Appendix I, fell into four thematic categories: a) rehabilitation and re-entry system in Greece, concepts and programs, which describe the current system, b) EPANODOS, where the organization is described and analyzed, c) re-offenders which as the name indicates focuses on this particular group and d) initiatives on rehabilitation, which describes the new practices. From the four categories, four main themes emerged which affected and affect rehabilitation and re-entry as a process; thus, they were the dimensions for my analysis. The themes are a) Management: where the managing system of re-entry in Greece is evaluated, bureaucracy and other factors did not allow it to develop as it should have, b) Funding: where the importance of funding is described and analyzed; every program needs funds in order to form c) Immigrants: because the immigration wave has been big in Greece and immigrants consist half of the imprisoned population and d) Stigma: for a successful re-entry procedure the stigma must be alleviated. Through those key themes, my research question was answered and my objective was accomplished. My objective is to prove that regardless of its delay and regardless of the many problems, re-entry does take place. The judiciary system of Greece, even though it is still punitive, slowly turns its focus on re-entry.

The interview guide consisted of introductory, key and closing questions. The timeframe lasted approximately 20-25 minutes. The interviews were individual. The issues that I wanted to cover from these categories were the existing rehabilitation projects inside the penal institutions and the existing conditions of them along with the re-entry procedures and the obstacles the former prisoners have to face while they return to the society. In addition other covered issues included the employment, financial contribution of the state or lack of thereof under the current financial situation of the country and finally issues concerning immigrants in conjunction with the cases of re-offenders. The issues were covered intertwined with each other and all of them were examined throughout the experiences of the professionals under the service provision of EPANODOS. For this reason, quotations from the conducted interviews can be found within the entire theoretical part, illuminating and supporting various arguments. The professionals diligently answered the questions in good faith and provided with heap of data. Five interviews were conducted which included the Manager of the organization, the Psychologist, the Employment Counselor, the Legal Counselor, and the Researcher, who is also a lawyer but is focusing on the research part.

The paper concludes with the main findings, good practices and suggestions for the future, along with an introduction to CRIS-Finland and the school of Convict Criminology. I believe that the contribution of this paper to the scientific community will be valuable. It shows the effort that is done by the professionals in the field of re-entry and it will prove that even though things in Greece do not develop as fast as in other countries, attempts are being made to improve the situation, and the importance of that, as well as the unique point of view of the 'first-line' professionals who are working on the field of re-entry, cannot be denied.

II. THEORETICAL APPROACH

1. Overview of Rehabilitation and Re-entry theories

Ever since modern times, communities have been concerned that those who break their norms should be controlled and identified. Both the breaking of such norms and the ensuing punishment are to be found in all societies (Sargent, 2004: 1485). Gottfried Leibnitz (1646), one of the first great thinkers to analyze the purpose of punishment, acknowledged that it may be inflicted out of retribution, as a form of revenge with the intension of satisfying the injured party, or it may be imposed as a means to protect society. The latter, involves ways of treating for those who break the law, but it states, that it would be wrong to be imposed on those who do not (Boonin, 2008:1; Gottfried Leibnitz, 1646 in Ekunwe, 2007:44). According to Jones et al. (2009: 151-152) throughout history, those designated as deviant have been under the various strategies of social control of society, which included banishment, slavery, deportation, corporal punishment, imprisonment⁸, imposition of monetary funds, bodily suffering and in extreme cases death. These were caustically clarified in the starting pages of Foucault's (1977 in Gubrium & Holstein, 2001: 6) book "Discipline and Punish". The book refers to "the individuation of society and the birth of the penal institutions". In their majority the purpose of those punishments was the separation, most of the time in a harsh way, of convicted offenders from the rest of society⁹ (Jones et al., 2009:151-152). In the same work, Foucault (in Gubrium & Holstein. 2001: 7) underscores the historical origins of the modern criminal justice system. His query was the reasons behind the appalling somatic agony subjected to offenders. His answer was "that the spectacle of torture was an event whose political culture was informed by a sense of seamless relations among the body of the king (the crown), social control, and subjectivity". Later, he specifically argued that the modern methods of treating offenders are no more humane than the barbaric torturous practices of the past; they are rather, simply put, more effective means of social control.

Foucault (in Gubrium & Holstein, 2001: 7) supported this position through the observation that, modern criminal justice produces subjects who willingly keep *themselves* under surveillance (i.e., citizens who police themselves). While the criminal justice authorities no longer use cruel forms of punishment (e.g. flogging or public hangings), their power of control has not diminished. Quite

⁸ The term imprisonment is "A penalty imposed by a court under which the individual is confined to an institution" see: <http://www.lectlaw.com/def/i016.htm>.

⁹ In ancient Greece for example, the birthplace of democracy, the typical punishments were exile and death. Imprisonment was used to hold people awaiting trial or execution (Jahnige, 2005; Myris, 2005).

simply, rehabilitation is replacing retribution. Thus, later on, many academics and policy advocates paid a lot of attention to prisoners' re-entry (Irwin, 1970; Travis, 2005: in Zaitzow, 2011: 230).

Re-entry in my thesis is an umbrella issue that includes several terms related to its concept. Among them are 'prisoner aftercare', 'through care', 'reintegration', 'integration', 'parole' and 'resettlement'. 'Resettlement' is identified as the aggregate of statutory institutions and nongovernmental organizations whose aim is to assist people that pertain to the dangerous groups to reintegrate and have their essential needs covered; these include nourishment, shelter and finance (Kontilla & Kaivo-oja, 2011:102). Morgan and Owers (2001, in Maruna et al, 2004: 5) defined resettlement as "a systematic and evidence-based process by which actions are taken to work with the offender in custody and on release, therefore, communities are better protected from harm and re-offending is significantly reduced. It encompasses the totality of work with offenders detained in penal institutions, their families and significant others in partnership with statutory and voluntary organizations".

"Rehabilitation and re-entry are the sum of institutions and NGOs whose aim is to try and assist people belonging to the so-called 'dangerous groups' to reintegrate and cover their essential needs" (Psychologist)

Re-entry is an experience limited to people who have served time in penal institutions and it occurs when incarceration in those institutions ends. During that reintegration process, a former prisoner¹⁰ returns to the community as a free citizen.

"The designation of rehabilitation and re-entry is the smooth restoration by the provision of skills, of the person who has been cut off for a certain amount of time from society in order to be accepted into it" (Legal Counselor)

Primary among the aspects which are present during the process are justice and security (Ekunwe, 2011: 414, 420; Kontilla & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 98). Every person experiences re-entry differently, in their own unique way.

"When referring to rehabilitation and re-entry we should know that every person has different needs and requests; an individual intervention should occur" (Manager)

¹⁰ I use the term "prisoner" to identify the person who is confined inside a penal institution. However, the term is broadly used in literature and also means a person who lives confined in a specific place for a certain period or a person being held by the police (Ganiaris, 2008).

Once out of the penal institutions the person experiences something displeasing and difficult in multiple levels. The process of imprisonment creates a gap with multiple consequences between the person and their background. Prominent among those consequences are the inability to obtain and ensure employment or the loss of their existing or former employment position and financial difficulties, which they accumulate and result in a feeling of panic (Farkas & Miller, 2011: 345).

“Former prisoners have a financial request. However, if we put this request in a long term basis and look past of their ‘unsaid needs’ we will observe that this is actually the explicit request. But their needs are deeper and require deeper intervention” (Manager)

Generally, the prerequisites for re-entry are formed before re-entry takes place. The moment the individual is taken into custody the process itself should begin. That is, everything that is done to a person convicted should happen in order to serve the cause of having the individual prepared for successful integration after release.

“How it should be according to my opinion? Re-entry should start from inside the prison” (Employment Counselor)

This suggestion has been current among many British resettlement workers (Maruna et al, 2004: 5). Considering this, a carefully planned pre-release focused on re-entry makes the possibility of the prisoner re-offending less likely. This way, the term ‘recidivism’¹¹ is intertwined with the re-entry procedure.

“The main focus is the reduction of recidivism” (Researcher)

The avoidance of re-offending is the ultimate goal of a successful re-entry system. High percentages of re-offending are occurring due to lack of education and employment (Ekunwe, 2011: 423).

“The avoidance of re-offending is the main goal of a successful rehabilitation system” (Manager)

“Most of the people who have been to prison face numerous problems and cannot find a job, already know the easy ways to get money” (Psychologist)

¹¹ Recidivism is concerned with the reconviction rates of offenders released from custody. Recidivist rates are generally used to test whether a term of imprisonment can reduce future re-offending; whether different programs undertaken within the penal institution contribute towards re-offending; or whether other forms of community based punishments are more effective at reducing further re-offending (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2001: 236; Jewkes, 2007: 728).

According to Theodorakis (2008), ¾ offenders, among them many juveniles, will return to the penal institution unless something changes. Greece specifically, had the biggest amount of juvenile offenders in Europe for 2008, 8/10 will re-offend few years after their release; McEvoy (2008: 4) mentions that “3/5 will be reconvicted within the first two years”.

“I will make a personal evaluation, it is not statistic; 2/3 of the former prisoners will re-offend (Employment Counselor)

“According to statistics, up to 80% will re-offend” (Manager)

Konttila and Kaivo-oja (2011: 101-102) stressed that “re-offending usually occurs shortly after release; nearly half of those former prisoners will re-offend within the first 3-6 months”. They continued by referring to Scandinavian studies which have indicated that those who had been incarcerated multiple times in the past have much higher recidivism rate than those who had been inside a penal institution only once. A great number of factual guides show that rehabilitative mediations have a positive impact on reducing recidivism rates when treatment befittingly meets the offender’s criminogenic needs (McGuire, 1995 in Kontilla & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 103). Vennard and Hedderman (1998) suggested that, programs which can be formed by the principles of effective intervention, are successful and thus “can work” to reduce recidivism are those which:

- a) Attempt risk classification and target more intensive programs at high risk offenders
- b) Target criminogenic needs – the factors which contribute directly to criminal behavior, for example anti-social attitudes, drug dependency, low level of education and skills poor cognitive and interpersonal skills
- c) Have high program integrity
- d) Match teaching methods to prisoner’s learning skills
- e) Use a skills-based intervention and social interaction, but which also address and challenge the attitudes, values and beliefs which support offending behavior
- f) Are community based (Vennard & Hedderman, 1998 in Muncie, 2004: 10; Cullen & Gendreau 2000: 109).

The corresponding obligation of convicts is to actively participate in those rehabilitation programs. In this view, rehabilitation can be perceived more as a punishment alternative rather than as something to be achieved via the means of punishment. As Carlen (1994 in Banks, 2004: 11) mentioned, “an approach in sentences which is purely punitive does little to decrease crime and serves only to increase the population inside penal institutions”. Recidivism increases the penal institution population and the amount of criminality in that the more offenders are inside the penal institutions the more challenging re-entry becomes (Keinanen & Saarimaa, 2005 in Kontilla & Kaivo-Oja, 2011: 99).

For the reintegration process to be adequate the concept of the offenders' request should be taken into consideration. A thorough examination of this request shows that it is twofold. First is the prisoner's need to be released and then are the former prisoner's needs after release. The former describes the need to leave the penal institution as long as the terms of release are satisfied and the latter describes the actual and meaningful integration into society. These requests are based on the so-called *Needs Model* which focuses on the prisoner's deficiencies and is the antithesis of the *Strengths Approaches* which is not concerned about the person's deficit but rather on the positive assistance the prisoner can provide to society. There are benefits to both of those philosophical approaches (Kontilla & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 103).

In accordance with the definitions of resettlement, a component of the re-entry procedure consists of rehabilitation or rehabilitative work. Rehabilitation is identified as a treatment-based process, intervention or program that enables individuals to overcome previous difficulties linked to their offending (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2001: 236; Jewkes, 2007: 728-729).

The origins of rehabilitation can be traced back to Great Britain in the late 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century. Many theories were formed, in order to explain the connection with punishment and its effectiveness. Von Hirsh (1976 in Muncie, 2004: 9) believed that rehabilitation encouraged excessive intervention and denied prisoners their due rights. Those theories regard crime¹² as the symptom of a social disease and aim to cure it through the use of a treatment. Additionally, they have the tendency of seeing crime as predetermined by social circumstances rather than as a matter of choice by the offender (Hudson, 1996 in Banks, 2004:116). Matthews (1989) and Carlen (1994) suggested that the offender's choices are often limited due to several circumstances and social conditions such as poverty and inequality, which many times drive people into participating in criminal activities. Therefore, as Hudson (1996 in Banks, 2004: 116-117) claimed, it is a responsibility of the state to recognize its part in causing crime and its role toward crime prevention by providing rehabilitation to assist the prisoner not to re-offend. Rehabilitation as

¹² Crime is not a self-evident and unitary concept. Its constitution is diverse, historically relative and continually contested. As a result an answer to the question "what is crime?" depends upon which of its multiple constitutive elements is emphasized. This in turn depends upon the theoretical position taken by those who define it (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2001: 59).

According to the contemporary definition in Greece, it is "*an unjust act attributable to the doer and punishable by law*" (Greek Penal Code, art 14 & Katsantonis 1969 in Anagnostakis, 1975: 3-4).

a notion is more complicated in comparison to retribution¹³ and deterrence¹⁴. The latter, involve a process of thinking that proceeds from crime to punishment, whereas rehabilitation involves the inquiry of the offence along with the offender's social background (Hudson, 1996 in Muncie, 2004: 9, 25).

The essence of the rehabilitative philosophy is the denial of the connection concerning punishment and guilt (Bean, 1981 in Banks, 2004: 116). In reality they can be entwined. Hudson (1996) stated that rehabilitation involves punishment. The fact that, punishment involves in some measure, treatment even of negative value for the recipient has been accepted by every philosopher who wrote on the subject, starting from historical times with Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Kant and Hegel to more recent times with Flew, Benn, Hart, McCloskey, Honderich and Primoratz (Adler, 1991 in Boonin, 2008: 6). Prior to Hudson's statement, Martinson (1974) after analyzing 231 studies of certain treatment programs in the United States, argued that, "with few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism". Martinson's study produced a prevailing orthodoxy, the quote "*Nothing Works*", meaning that no treatment program can successfully work in preventing re-offending, and that no program works better than any other. Later he attempted to rectify this pessimistic view of rehabilitation treatment by acknowledging that several program work in some cases, for several types of offenders (Hudson, 1996 in Muncie, 2004: 9, 25; Martinson, 1974 in Banks, 2004: 116-117; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 16; Taxman et al., 2004: 233, 237). The response to the acceptance of this citation varied. Practitioners and policy makers attempted to keep the modified rehabilitative ideal alive. In 1982, Cullen and Gilbert argued that, community based programs should be expanded, not because they are just as effective as institutional ones, but simply because they are also less costly and more humane; an argument that was also shared by McMahan (1992). They contended that at the very least, rehabilitation forces the state to recognize that it has an obligation to care for the prisoner's welfare and needs (McMahan, 1992; Cullen & Gilbert, 1982 in Muncie, 2004:10).

Other defendants of the rehabilitation policies argued that the major focus should be aimed at certain imprisoned offenders, such as juvenile offenders and sex offenders. Indeed, a majority of

¹³ McLaughlin & Muncie (2001: 249), identify retribution as a punishment inflicted upon offenders in consequence of their wrong-doing.

¹⁴ Deterrence is a philosophy of punishment that aims to prevent criminal activity through the development and application of effective and efficient sanctions. It involves the demonstration of both the citizenry and the reasoning of the detained offender that the pains and losses associated with apprehension and punishment will overshadow the possibility of criminal gain or profit (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2001: 88; Jewkes, 2007: 721-722).

programs are focused on “*what works*” from Martinson’s (1974) classic article and on “offender accountability”. In several cases, rehabilitation policies were blamed by liberals for allowing the state to act coercively against prisoners and on the other hand were blamed by conservatives for allowing the state to act leniently towards them (Cullen & Gendrau, 2000: 109; Martinson, 1974 in Nikolopoulos, 2005: 102). It is however, common knowledge that, incarcerated people regardless of the rehabilitative programs are being cut from both society and employment and are subjected to legal and societal prejudice, exclusion and marginalization (Anagnostakis, 1975: 3; Jones et al., 2009: 151-152; Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 47). It is important to clarify the fact of penal harm. We have noticed that in the classic theory, the penal institution was, and still is depicted, as an act of deliberate evil by the state against a citizen. It is considered evil due to the intention of causing pain and suffering. Within the EU, the only punishment is supposed to be deprivation of liberty. Penal institutions can be seen as a lesser of evils, or a necessary evil, but penal incarceration must never be conceived as a social good any more than “the state waging a war against other states” (Hilborn, 2011: 26). Therefore, it is almost a certainty that, even though, rehabilitation is not a utopic concept, it is still distant from reality. Someone can say that it is more like the line on the horizon where we should all head (Lazerges, 2000 in Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 18).

2. Greek Justice System

Greece along with the rest of the Mediterranean countries stands in comparison with other European societies in its broad use of imprisonment. In the recent years criminal behavior in Greece as experienced by people has had an increase and it is expected to become more ominous within the days of financial crisis¹⁵. Even though, the Greek Penal Code is considered as one of the best in Europe, ever since 2005 when a scandal was brought up about corrupted judges, the system became even stricter. Sentences are being delivered relatively easy. Within a decade Greece doubled the population inside the penal institutions from 5.500 prisoners in 1997 to 12.500 prisoners in the beginning 2007 (Theodorakis, 2008). It has been argued by Hilborn (2011: 38) that “the present system creates the conditions for a stable population inside the penal institutions via chronic incarceration, an addiction relationship to the penal institution. This can be seen as an addiction that is similar to other impulse control disorders such as pathological gambling”. Already at the end of 2007 there were nearly 11.343 prisoners for penal institutions made only for approximately 9.000. Most of them are poor and represent different minority groups (Theodorakis, 2008).

¹⁵ Cantor and Land (1985 in Dritsakis & Gkanas, 2005: 6) indicate that potential earnings from illegitimate activities becomes lower and discourages a person from committing a crime since during times of economic depression, a rise in employment rates lowers the consumption expenditures, mostly in households.

Until the 80s there was a minor criminality rate in Greece. As a matter of fact in 1983 Greece belonged to the five European countries with the lowest prisoner rates. The criminal justice system was accustomed to a rather homogeneous society back then, however, the urbanization along with the industrialization plus the modernization process that occurred after fifteen years followed by the arrival of foreigners¹⁶, many of them illegal, brought many modifications. The system could not and did not adapt promptly to these modifications (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 3). The penal system and the population inside the penal institutions advanced swiftly. Thus in the sixth World Prison Population list, Greece was elevated from a low category placement to that of a moderate user of imprisonment (Walmsley, 2005 in King, 2007: 98, 113; Becket & Sasson 2003: 13).

The Greek justice system is founded on the Continental tradition and derives from the constitution, which, since democracy was restored in June 1974 displacing the military junta, was amended twice in March 1986 and April 2001, the Penal Code¹⁷ (hereinafter PC) and the Penal Procedure Code (hereinafter PPC). The PC, which is published in the Greek language and has been translated in French, German and English language, contains 14 chapters and 88 articles. It has had several amendments over the years but without being extensively reformed. All the amendments were piece-meal and involved minor issues. In the last amendment an attempt was made in order to mix the “jurisdiction model” with the “reformatory model” (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 21). Following, the PPC was enacted at the same time with the PC and has also been amended and reformed several times. The division of the judiciary is into civil, criminal and administrative courts. Five special courts compose the country’s highest judicial authorities. These are the Supreme Judicial Court along with the Special Supreme Tribunal plus three administrative, financial and criminal issues courts. Judges are assigned for life by the President of the Democracy after consulting a judicial council (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 9-10, 18, 30; Lampropoulou, 2005: 213; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 20). It is clear from the vast number of prisoners that the judiciary has been and still is frequently punitive¹⁸ (Cheliotis, 2009: 1). The attempt to converge the two aforementioned models of the PC was not fully successful (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 22). The aim of the Greek penal system, is influenced by the deterrent philosophy which Bean

¹⁶ According to Spinellis and Spinellis (1999: 8) the majority of non-Greek immigrants at that time were Albanians, Egyptians, Russians (many of them originating from Greece), Polish, Ukrainians, Palestinian, Philippine, Nigerian and more. During the last decade the scenery has been modified with people from Middle East being the majority.

¹⁷ In later studies the term Penal Code has been changed to Correctional Code, in order to stress its correctional nature (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 20). However, in my paper I will use the original description which has been used both by Spinellis and Spinellis (1999) and Lampropoulou (2005).

¹⁸ According to Price (1997) justice equals punishment in Greece.

(1981 in Banks, 2004: 107) simplified as “to prevent criminals from committing new crimes and keep others from doing likewise”. As Muncie (2004: 4) noted “the common sense for those not willing to abide by the laws was castigation and punishment”.

These punishments administered by the PC are aligned into penalties and security measures. Penalties are further categorized in main penalties and supplementary penalties. Additionally, the custodial, the pecuniary and the community penalties are involved in the former (main penalties) which furthermore, contain the following, imprisonment¹⁹, deprivation of liberty, probation²⁰, pecuniary penalties, compensation orders²¹ and, recently, community services (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 35-37).

Deprivation of liberty, according to the Greenwich Council²², does not have a simple definition. Ultimately it is a legal question which is determined by the courts. In Article 5 of the European Convention of Human Rights it is referred as the unlawful “detention of persons of unsound mind”. The purpose of it is the prisoner’s social rehabilitation. It is the responsibility of the state to provide the means, both during imprisonment and after, for a successful integration within the society, family and working life. The process even though sounds easy, it is very complex (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 48).

Community services (PC, art. 59-64) are alternative ways of serving the sentence which, were not widely applied in the past but lately have been applied under the supervision of the Social Assistance Curators²³. In these alternative ways prisoners are working in the community with day release. This partial way of serving time and do community work applies to those whose sentence has changed to monetary payment (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 29). Prisoners got the permission to work outside the penal institution’s perimeters in the community without surveillance, in both private and public sector. These people serve their sentence, and at the end of their work, have to return to specially modified institutions or in special modified wings of their penal institutions. The

¹⁹ The sentence varies between 10 days minimum to 5 years maximum (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 36)

²⁰ Probation is identified as “The release into the community of a defendant who has been found guilty of a crime, typically under certain conditions, such as paying a fine, doing community service or attending a drug treatment program. Violation of the conditions can result in incarceration” see: <http://www.lectlaw.com/def2/p091.htm>.

²¹ According to Spinellis and Spinellis (1999: 36) “they are not provided in the Greek penal sanction system”.

²² See: <http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/2763E986-75BB-45B5-927F-F11A4D994C2F/0/FinalDraftCareHomesDOLSGuidanceJan2009.pdf>.

²³ See: <http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΟbrΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ/Πρόληψηκαικαταστολήτηςεγκληματικότητας.aspx> (in Greek language).

result of this way of sentencing is for prisoners not to lose their job during their imprisonment and to help them integrate smoothly and gradually into society (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 30). Additionally, various academic works have demonstrated that recidivism rates were lessened to offenders who were sentenced to community service rather than to prison²⁴ (Clausen, 2007 in Konttila & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 102). This way of serving according to the PC can occur in penal institutions during work days. For imprisoned students and student prisoners and for those already employed, it can happen at the end of the week or in official holidays (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 30). Pecuniary penalties include two types, the proper and the fines. They are not broadly used but they are enforced directly to the offender. Among the penalties the one which is most commonly used is the conversion of a custodial sentence into a pecuniary sentence. According to art 82 of the PC if a custodial penalty does not exceed a year it should be modified into a pecuniary penalty (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 37). Capital punishment²⁵, solitary confinement and sensory deprivation are no longer administered (Spierenburg, 1991: 281). Concerning the category of supplementary penalties, these include the offender's deprivation of civil rights, the restriction in exercising a profession needing a license and the declaration of the sentencing decision (Spinellis & Spinellis: 1999: 37-38).

Although, it has a punitive judiciary, the Greek penal system generally follows the European criminal policy which emphasizes in the significance of rehabilitation as a means of carrying out sentences. Prisoners are rehabilitated through education, vocational training, and productive labor²⁶. Not to forget that the first and most important principle of a restorative perspective and the Greek restorative perspective²⁷ in particular, has that, justice requires the work to heal victims, offenders and communities that have been injured by crime or other harmful behavior (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004: 31; Konttila & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 105; Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 49). As Foucault (1977, in Hudson, 1996: 7 in Banks, 2004: 122) highlighted, the role of the system is to create the "right thinking citizen", which results to a competent and disciplined individual. Foucault (1991, in

²⁴ I use the term prison to identify institutions with long-term populations where violent incidents are more likely to take place, are usually known for their anarchic surroundings, for the availability of narcotics and for the fact that they are further away from the perpetrator's residence. See:

<http://www.therapeuticjustice.com/programPDFs/JAILS%20are%20not%20prisons.pdf>.

²⁵ According to McLaughlin & Muncie (2001: 24) capital punishment is "The punishment of which death is inflicted".

²⁶ In Plato's work, the "Republic" (Πολιτεία in Greek language), "Protagoras" and "Laws" (854d), the penal system functioned in a similar way. The purpose of both criminal laws and penalties was that punishment should mete out redeeming pain, not debilitating harm. He made clear that a just punishment must always hold out to the offender the prospect of moral education and, hence personal reform. The person subjected to punishment should emerge "*a better man or failing that, less of a wretch*" (Tetlow, 2005: 153; Kyriakopoulou, 2008; Johnson, 1988: 12).

²⁷ The belief has suggestions consistently of returning elements to the state "*as they were*". It is a broad concept which largely stands for the reformation of impairments and of fissures to social bonds emerging from crime; its focal point is the correlation between crime and victims, prisoners and the community (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2001: 247).

Jewkes, 2007: 30) has also mentioned the fundamental principles which are “seven universal maxims that for the last 150 years have constituted the good penal condition”. These principles are: the essential function of the penal detention, which must be none other than the alteration of the individual’s attitude; the segregation or/and assessment of the prisoners according to their age, mental attitude, employed approach of correction and stages of conversion; the individuality of the prisoners along with the achieved conclusions and the improvements or setbacks that must be taken into consideration as possibilities when adjusting prisoner’s penalties.

One of the fundamental components in the prisoner’s transformation must be their progressive socialization. An indispensable precaution in the interests of society and an obligation to prisoners is for the authorities the education of them. Supervision of the penal institution regime must, at least partially, be administered by specialized staff possessing both the moral qualities and technical abilities required for educators. Finally, measures of supervision and assistance must follow the process of imprisonment until the rehabilitation of prisoners is complete (Foucault, 1991 in Jewkes, 2007: 30).

It is the “duty of the penal institution service to assist the prisoner in the future to be a responsible member of society”. As such, in order to have a positive sense of security the behavior of all the responsible authorities, staff and specialized personnel of the social services (social worker, psychologist, sociologist, and criminologist) providing the programs and services towards criminals shall be, such as to create an environment which can assist them to respond and contribute to society as positively as possible while preserving and promoting the prisoner’s self respect. Also, minimize to the degree of security necessary in each particular case, the harmful effects of the prisoner’s removal from normal life while preparing them for, and assisting them on discharge (Scott, 2007: 53-54, 59).

“Prisoners should learn how to solve their problems and/or achieve their goals without resulting to violent or less convenient ways” (Employment Counselor)

Particular emphasis should be placed on the rehabilitation of imprisoned juvenile offenders. As it has been supported, the first signs of delinquent behavior and the victimization begin early in life during childhood and early adolescence (Georgoulas & Tsalkanis 2006: 89). The reformatory measures, imposed on them should be educational in nature, aiming primarily to reform them rather than punish. The young offender tries with makeshift means to achieve what other young people

achieve with legal ways. They seek a route out of the social exclusion; they attempt to acquire a social role, a status even within a marginalized group (Kagelari, 2007). Due to the fact that, amidst the major difficulties to a fruitful bridge of the chasm amid a disturbed adolescence and the access to a more balanced coming of age is insufficient, occupational opportunities, specialized training should be administered by faculties and institutions for an academic and vocational education (Hagan, 1997 in Farral, 2004: 60).

In practice however, a contrasting situation is visible. The role of the correctional system has been doubtful. Travers (1997 in Ezzy, 2002: 41) described it as “unjust”, Reiman (1994 in Richards & Ross, 2001: 178) said that the system’s purpose is “to maintain and encourage the existence of a stable and visible ‘class’ of criminals”. Finally as Scott (2007: 49, 53-54) cited, the purpose of the detention of convicted offenders shall be to be kept in custody. The overarching aim of the penal institution is to fulfill a punishing role, which can be no other than to deliberately inflict suffering and hardships upon those who are detained within the institutions walls. The institution itself is nothing more than a tool utilized for the castigation of those who refuse to conform to the laws and the rules of the state and a way of armoring the public as long as the perpetrators are incarcerated (Ekunwe, 2011: 421). Several defenders of the penal institution have argued, in a varied plausible level, that there can be a justification in this thought and that imprisonment’s apparent ability for an actual adjustment can actually reform and rehabilitate those contained inside; through the arrangement of means of social defense and public protection for future crimes by its deterrent or incapacitative²⁸ effect; and/or through the fact that a sentence in penal institutions is justly deserved²⁹ and is a proportionate response to each person’s wrongdoing (Scott, 2007: 49).

3. Greek Penal Institutions

The organization of Greece’s penal institution system is based on the constitution, international conventions, the Correctional Code (hereinafter CC, amended in 1967, 1989 and 1999, and which is also known as Prison Law), the PC and the PPC, along with numerous ministerial and presidential

²⁸ According to McLaughlin and Muncie (2001: 146) “incapacitation is a justification for punishment which maintains that the prisoner’s ability to commit further crimes should be removed, either physically or geographically. The death penalty is the starkest form of incapacitation”.

²⁹ “Just deserts” or “proportionality” is a retributive rationale of punishment, the basis which is that punishment is justified as a morally appropriate response to crime and that the amount of punishment should be in proportion to the degree of wrongdoing (Mc Laughlin & Muncie, 2001: 158; Jewkes, 2007: 273).

decrees (Lampropoulou, 2005: 213-214). Penal institutions³⁰ are under the governance of the Ministry of Justice Transparency and Human Rights and theoretically they are categorized to general institutions of detention and special institutions. The former are further classified by type A which accommodates pre-trial detainees, along with offenders convicted for debts and short-term convicted offenders, and type B which consists the remaining categories of offenders. Unlike other countries like Finland (Freed & Kalina, 2003³¹), women are kept in separate facilities than men. The special institutions include the institutions for juvenile offenders and the semi-open penal institutions. Practically, they are distinguished in five different categories, these according to Spinellis and Spinellis³² (1999: 42, 44) are:

- a) Four open³³ agricultural penal institutions
- b) Three correctional institutions for minors
- c) Seven closed penal institutions, one of them for women
- d) Three therapeutic institutions
- e) Thirteen judicial³⁴ (temporary) penal institutions

It is crucial to mention that no division exists between low security institutions and high security institutions as in other countries³⁵. A relative security exists in all closed institutions. Nonetheless, over the years a gradual classification between the institutions was noticeable. In this manner various sentences were executed in certain penal institutions (e.g. drug addicts are sent to Patras institution etc).

³⁰ A penal institution is the special regional department of the Ministry of Justice under the General Prison Policy which functions on a management level (Ministry of Justice: Internal Rule of function of General penal institutions A & B/ Εσωτερικός Κανονισμός Λειτουργίας Γενικών Καταστημάτων Κράτησης Τύπου Α & Β, Φ.Ε.Κ Β' 463/17-4-2003 in Greek language).

³¹ From their documentary: "To Kill or to Cure". The two have travelled the globe looking at different penal institution's systems. It is a compelling and controversial look at a problem that goes back to Cain's murder of Abel, and to this present day on how should we deal with crime (Ekunwe, 2007: 46) See: http://www.telefilm.gc.ca/data/production/prod_2626.asp?lang=en&cat=tv&g=doc&y=2003.

³² They have identified 27 institutions in 1999 but over the years several more were constructed.

³³ "Open penal institutions, are institutions which allow prisoners to interact more with the community in which they are situated" (Jewkes, 2007: 727). The agricultural penal institutions are the only institutions belonging to this category. Prisoners leave the premises every morning to work in the farms or take care of animal herds (sheep and other) in free pasturing grounds (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 48).

³⁴ In principle judicial penal institutions are for offenders awaiting trial. *They are either on remand or they are to be tried on appeal or they are convicted for one offence and they are on remand for a second* (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 45).

³⁵ See: <http://www.sockshare.com/file/D86657AE9A3C3A23> and <http://www.vidxden.com/1btao79vfnc>.

In the table below all the institutions are presented as shown in the official web page of the Greek Ministry of Justice Transparency and Human Rights³⁶:

Greek Penal Institutions

Agricultural Penal Institutions

Rural Penal Institution of Agya (Crete)

Rural Penal Institution of Kassandra

Rural Penal Institution of Tyrintha

Central Penal Institution Supply Storage Centre (KAYF in Greek)

Correctional Institutions for Minors

Special Juveniles Detention Establishment of Avlona (EKKN)

Rural Penitentiary Establishment of Minors in Kassavetia (ASKA)

Special Juveniles Detention Establishment of Volos (EKKN)

Closed Penal Institutions

Closed Penal Institution of Alikarnassos

Closed Penal Institution of Corfu

Closed Penal Institution of Patras

Closed Penal Institution of Trikala

Closed Penal Institution of Chalkida

Central Closed Penal Institution of Korydallos for Females

Detention Establishment of Malandrinos

Therapeutic Institutions

Hospital for offenders of Korydalos

Psychiatric Establishment for offender of Korydalos

Drug Rehabilitation Centre for Drug-addict prisoners of Eleona of Thiva

Judicial Penal Institutions

Judicial Penal Institution of Thessaloniki

Judicial Penal Institution of Ioannina

³⁶ See:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/APXIKH/Επικοινωνία/ΤΗΛΕΦΩΝΙΚΟΣΚΑΤΑΛΟΓΟΣΚΑΤΑΣΤΗΜΑΤΩΝΚΡΑΤΗΣΗΣ.aspx> (in Greek language).

Judicial Penal Institution of Komotini
Judicial Penal Institution of Korydalos for Men
Judicial Penal Institution of Kos
Judicial Penal Institution of Larissa
Judicial Penal Institution of Nafplio
Judicial Penal Institution of Neapolis
Judicial Penal Institution of Tripolis
Judicial Penal Institution of Chania
Judicial Penal Institution of Chios
Judicial Penal Institution of Korinthos
Preventorium for Offenders of Amfissa

Four more institutions must be included in this table³⁷. Two have already been constructed and include Greece's largest Penal Institution for women, in Eleona Thiva and the Penal Institution of Central Macedonia III in Nigrita, Serres (northern Greece) with a capacity for 600 prisoners; however, at the moment, due to lack of specialized personnel only 120 prisoners are being held. The other two are under construction and will be ready in the beginning of 2012, these are, an institution in Agya in Chania Crete also for 600 prisoners and an institution in Nikiforos in Drama (northern Greece) (FREE SUNDAY, 27 November 2011).

According to Law 2298/95 and Law 3860/2010 male juvenile³⁸ offenders who are sentenced to reformatory measures in a penal establishment (PC, art. 122), or their placement has been imposed as a limiting condition (PC, art. 282) or live in unsuitable social environment with professional criminals are to be sent to the special juvenile detention establishments. The aim of those institutions is their educational and vocational rehabilitation along with their social support. Juveniles attend school inside or outside of the institution and participate in cultural or sport activities. They can also use the benefit of furloughs either for educational or family or health

³⁷ These two institutions are not mentioned in the former webpage which includes the addresses and the telephones of the institutions. They are mentioned on the general webpage, without being distinguished as judicial or closed. For this reason they are not mentioned in the table. They are mentioned in the following link:
<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΟΒΡΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ/Πρόληψηκαιαποστολήτηςεγκληματικότητας.a spx> (in Greek language).

³⁸ According to Lampropoulou (2005: 223) "the age of full adult criminal responsibility is 17 years (PC, arts. 121,126).

reasons³⁹. As reported by Spinellis and Spinellis (1999: 46). The distinction among men and women which is present in the other institutions is unlikely for juvenile prisoners. Since 1998 there has been no separate institution for female juvenile offenders. For very young prisoners an exception is made and they are transferred to welfare institutions.

In the field of Special Therapeutic Institutions⁴⁰, there are two independent rehabilitation centers for prisoners who are drug addicts. The centers were established with law 2721/99 and they are located in Eleona and in the municipality of Kassandra in Chalkidiki. The Drug Rehabilitation Center for Drug-addicted Prisoners in Eleona in the city of Thiva is a therapeutic institution which aims in the physical and mental rehabilitation of its inmates. It has the capacity to hold 250 prisoners. The second is being constructed in the agricultural penal institution of Kassandra and will have the capacity to hold 360 addicted prisoners. The Ministry of Justice has employed all the necessary professional personnel in order to ensure its proper and successful function.

The personnel is the same in every institution and consists of the Director, the social service (social scientists), health service (medical personnel), a secretariat, correctional officers (warden), technicians and other professionals. Several members of the personnel comprises the Prison Board which is responsible for the institution's correctional policy, the improvement of the institution's conditions and the necessary measures taken and the protection of the prisoner's rights (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 43). Every penal institution is subjected to certain general rules. These rules form the basic principles of the institution and are written in the Internal Rule of Function of General Penal Institution type A & B by ministerial degree, Law 2776/1999 (PC, art. 8). Generally penal institutions function on a 24hour basis, however only health coverage and guard duty are provided 24/7. Social services, managerial services and financial services are available only during working hours. Every prisoner and visitor entering or leaving the institution is subjected to electronic and bodily search. Prisoners are not allowed to walk outside the gate without specific permission or without an escort. The escort is usually a guard. Furthermore, visitors are not allowed to enter or stay inside the institution without a specific permit or without an escort. Concluding, prisoners are not allowed to hold any keys of the institution. The warden and the person responsible for the workshops arrange the delivery of the keys to prisoners who work inside the institution.

³⁹ See:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΟbrΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ/Πρόληψηκαικαταστολήτηςεγκληματικότητας.a spx> (in Greek language).

⁴⁰

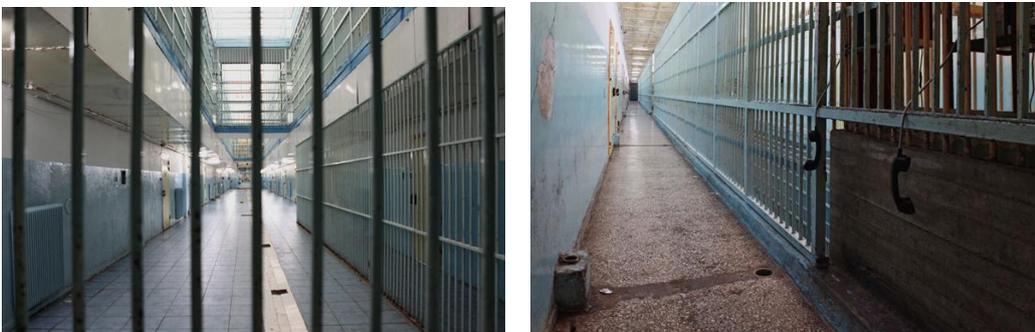
See:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΟbrΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ/Πρόληψηκαικαταστολήτηςεγκληματικότητας.a spx> (in Greek language).

3.1 Penal Institution's Conditions

The condition of a country's penal institutions provides a measure of the society's magnanimity or meanness, its self-assurance or anxiety- its "*mood and temper*" as was put by Winston Churchill who came at a different time with this separate conclusion with a previous diverse commentator Fyodor Dostoyevsky (Sparks, 2007: 75).

The condition of the Greek penal institutions with a majority of them being antiquated (Cheliotis, 2009: 1), has been described as "inhumane" and "degrading".



Hallways from the juvenile penal institution of Avlona; see: <http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΑνήλικοιΦυλακισμένοι.aspx>.

In 2010 the secretary of the former Minister of Justice Mr. Katsifaras⁴¹ acknowledged these conditions and commented that, "the conditions and the picture of the penal institutions today are unacceptable and reaches if not exceeds the limits of rights and values of human life". It is true, that several of the institutions are devoid of adequate infrastructure and are not following the standards of a "healthy prison"⁴².

⁴¹ See: <http://www.newstime.gr/?i=nt.el.article&id=20987> (in Greek language).

⁴² The purpose of a "healthy prison" according to the UN is to support prisoners and pre-trial detainees to reduce re-offending or achieve other agreed outcomes via an effective staff work (HMCIP, 2004 in Bennett, 2007: 530).



Cell windows from the juvenile penal institution of Avlona; see: <http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΑνήλικοιΦυλακισμένοι.aspx>.

These standards which are mentioned by Owers (2005: 6) are essential for a penal institution and include standards of decency, safety and respect. The distance from theory to reality concerning the institutions' standards is illustrated by one of the interviewees from EPANODOS, the Employment Counselor, who, on March 2011, said:

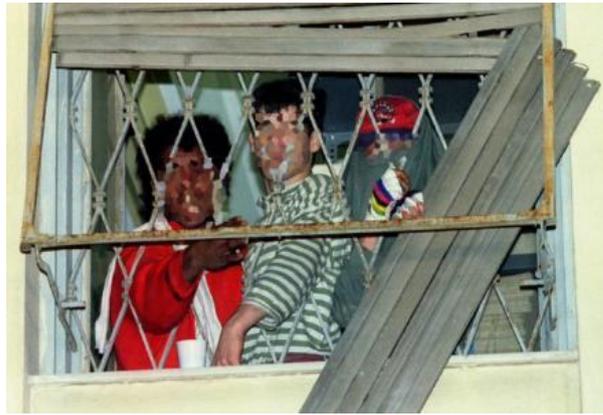
“I have been to the institutions of Korydallos, Thiva and Avlona. The institution of Thiva is brand new; therefore, the establishment is decent. The condition of the other two is horrible, tragic. People packed inside the cells without being able to handle their issues. There are not enough personnel... overpopulation” (Employment Counselor).

A country that does not follow those standards violates Articles 2-3 of the European Convention of Human Rights⁴³ (prohibition of inhuman treatment and preservation of life) and faces primarily the danger of being criticized by EU and secondly the grave danger of being fined by the European Court of Human Rights. Since the Greek institutions do not follow those standards, the country has been criticized several times. The first two have been within a 5 months period in 2009 and they concerned the long stay of pre-trial detainees in the penal institution cells⁴⁴. The latest two happened also within 2009⁴⁵ and concerned the same institution, the judicial penal institution of Ioannina and were reported in Greek newspapers (Ethnos, 5 November 2011; FREE SUNDAY, 27 November 2011). It was found that the particular institution had its prisoners, “packed” inside the cells and the hallways without ventilation, health coverage and medical coverage.

⁴³ For additional info, see: <http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/grc/2011-10-inf-eng.pdf>.

⁴⁴ See: <http://www.in.gr/NEWS/article.asp?lngEntityID=1074150&lngDtrID=244> (in Greek language).

⁴⁵ Taggatidis v. Greece – resort No 2889/09 (FREE SUNDAY, 27 November 2011).



Prisoners from the penal institution of Ioannina; see: <http://www.thebest.gr/news/index/viewStory/97273>.

Dr. Fytrakis, a professor of law who has visited the institution noted, “This second criticism of the European Court of Human Rights shows the general condition within the penal institutions. I fear that the situation may get worse due to the financial crisis”. On the other hand Dr Tsitselikis of the University of Macedonia was more optimistic and noted that, “this decision may help improve the terrible conditions that exist inside the Greek penal institutions”.



The juvenile penal institution of Avlona; see: <http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΑνήλικοιΦυλακισμένοι.aspx>.

The main links for these existing conditions is the fact that the Greek penal system in terms of law application is very chaotic and that the penal institutions are overpopulated⁴⁶. In legal terms, there are numerous laws and modifications, which in their majority were never fully applied⁴⁷. Due to either lack of specialized personnel, technical infrastructure, or financial resources. It is no strange that many laws in Greece, not only Penal laws, but laws in general, were passed without considering the social policy process mentioned by Guba (1984) and Rist (1994 in Ezzy 2002: 37),

⁴⁶ One of the reasons of overpopulation has been the police’s erratic choices under their discretionary power for a long period of time (McConville et al., 1991 in Ezzy, 2002: 41).

⁴⁷ An example is the body of the social assistance curators which according to Courakis (2006: 4) has not been functioning as it was supposed to.

which is described as a three staged cycle, consisting of: policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation. These are the requirements for an efficient and proper function of the laws. A majority of the Greek laws passed because they had to (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 48). Courakis (2006: 9) mentioned with reference to Roscoe Pounds' (1910) study, "*law in books and law in action*", the severe gap existing between statutory laws and that which is applied in practice (if it is applied).

"I think if you read any written theory, any laws concerning rehabilitation, if you read their chapter, you will think that all is very nice. In reality though, it is very different" (Prisoner, 2011).

"Everything the law state is OK, in practice only few are happening" (Employment Counselor).

"There are laws, scientific conferences, published articles, pointing what should be done but in practice we only have EPANODOS and some charity organizations along with several NGOs" (Legal Counselor).

This results for Greece to be viewed internationally in these related terms, as progressive and sensitive but only... *in paper* since in most of the cases the mere adoption of the law, be it malicious or well intended, is considered by the state as a *panacea* solution in addressing all the relevant issues (Courakis, 2006: 9).

Overcrowding penal institutions, combined with the aforementioned resource constraints and managerial inefficiencies, has dominated the field of what is possible in penal policy for many years now, and the rate of increase⁴⁸ in the penal institution population has indeed been extreme. Even though a non-cost means, that of conditional release⁴⁹, was deployed in order to curb the phenomenon, it has not managed to bring it down, the numbers of offenders being processed via the penal justice machinery and being sent to penal institutions has risen dramatically (Jones et al., 2009: 164). For this reason the Ministry of Justice decided to solve the issue with the construction of new penal institutions, regardless of the fact that international studies have proved that building new institutions does not actually, solve the problems of neither the overpopulation nor the *bad* conditions inside. On the contrary, the problems are transferred for a later time and thus, magnified. Eventually, if the state follows this mentality the new institutions will be full; therefore, newer ones will have to be constructed. It will result in an endless circle (Chalkia, 2007). A result of

⁴⁸ Garland (2001 in Chalkia, 2007) described the phenomenon of continuous increase of population in the penal institutions as 'massive incarceration'. Massive incarceration is a social institution structuring the experiences of specific diverse social groups.

⁴⁹ Cheliotis (2009: 1) reported that "the same holds true in relation to similar schemes such as temporary release".

overcrowding, is for convicted prisoners of various crimes to live together without distinction and moreover, to share the same facilities with pre-trial detainees and hence, turning this problem to a chronic one. According to a prisoner in Korydallos, prisoner classification is done ‘with the paper they come with’.

“The classification of prisoners in Greece is done with the paper they come with. A person, who may be wrongfully accused for a drug-related offence, will be placed in C wing⁵⁰. There he will have his first contact with drugs. The Greek state introduces him to drugs” (Prisoner, 2011).

In another penal institution, the juvenile institution of Avlona for example the wings and cells are divided according to nationality and not according to offence. The connecting link is not the offence but the nationality and religion, sometimes even the social status. Thus, Greek nationals are kept separately from the rest, even from the Greek Roma (Theodorakis, 2011⁵¹).



“Lunch time inside the cell” from the juvenile penal institution of Avlona; see:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/AvhlikoiFylakismevoi.aspx>.

Overcrowding is a problem that exists outside the control of the penal institutions’ specialists, and which requires both political and judicial leadership, therefore, the custodial sentences are handed down appropriately to those prisoners who cannot be effectively dealt with through other disposals (Medliscott, 2007: 262; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 38). The chief inspector in England and Wales made a statement, which, even though refers to UK, it is, however, mirrored crystal clear to Greece, “our prisons are still 24per sent overcrowded and operating perilously close to full capacity” (Owers, 2005: 1). Overcrowding leads to lack of safety for those who live in penal institutions. There are also other complaints which as Cohen (1985 in Cheliotis, 2009: 1) mentioned “were caused by penalty itself and operate subtly to legitimate the ongoing and continuing neglect of decarcerative alternatives”. This inconsistency is present in the Modern Greek state (Cheliotis,

⁵⁰ C wing is where the drug dependents are held in the institution of Korydallos.

⁵¹ See: <http://www.megatv.com/article.asp?catid=14693&subid=2&pubid=972251> (in Greek language).

2009: 1). Various issues, such as, bullying, suicide, self-harm and health problems are regular among prisoners (Jewkes, 2007: xxiii-xxiv).

“Fights are taking place. Not every day though. Sometimes it is because of the long queue to use the phone. Then, groups are gathered and they charge with any weapon they can find.” (Prisoner in Avlona in Theodorakis, 2011)

Moreover, along with the lack of specialized personnel, it results in fewer opportunities and participation in the education, training and rehabilitative programs (Noonan, 2003 in McEvoy, 2008: 10). Among the interviewed professionals of EPANODOS the psychologist presented a very clear comment on that.

“The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. What do I mean is that, I see the attempts of the organization of rehabilitation and re-entry in a scientific and managerial level but they lack in infrastructure and manpower” (Psychologist).

At present, little social rehabilitation projects are taking place for prisoners inside the penal institutions. Furthermore, as the researcher and the manager of EPANODOS commented the existing rehabilitation projects do not happen in every penal institution.

“There are intervention programs but they occur individually in certain institutions in collaboration with the institutions and the nearby organizations, for example an intervention in Thivas’ institutions does not necessarily occur in other institutions around the country” (Researcher).

“In some of the penal institutions there is preparation, not in all of them and that is because most of them are understaffed, they don’t have the opportunity to make this passage as we would have wanted it to be and as it should have been” (Manager).

In addition, the support prisoners are getting when they re-enter society has been considered inadequate. A majority of them, especially the ones lacking family ties, start their life as free citizens with hardly enough money to cope for the first days (Richards & Jones, 2004: 205; Petersilia, 2000 in Ekunwe, 2011: 421). According to Courakis (2008: 1) when offenders are about to be released the only support they get is a minor amount of money from the unemployment office and sometimes an additional help from any Companies of Released Prisoners (if they function), from the institution’s charitable funds or from the Social Welfare Funds. Moreover, as Courakis (2008: 1-2) continues no serious attempts are taking place considering the prisoner’s employment seeking. Already there are several professions in private and public sector (especially in public) for which a license may be denied if the applicant has served time in a penal institution. This phenomenon is visible also in USA (Richards & Jones, 2004: 206; Wheelock et al. 2011: 283).

Therefore, the problems the former prisoners have to face when they try to start a new life in society are insurmountable. As such an attempt is being made to solve these problems by several statutory and charity organizations, along with the assistance of several NGOs; by stepping in, they fill the lack of personnel and provide the essential needs (housing, food, money) and the means (education, employment seeking, etc.) for a successful integration. Primary among these organizations has been the Diacony for the Release of Poor Prisoners and Defendants - Saint Xenii.

Saint Xenii⁵² is an Orthodox Missionary Sisterhood founded in 1978 in Thessaloniki. By being affiliated with the church it believes that crime is not an act of choice by the offender but the result of social circumstances. The offender is a “lost sheep” who, with the proper guidance, can return to their “flock” (Banks, 2004: 116). It was the first organization to be active in the rehabilitation of former prisoners. Up till now it has assisted in the release of 12,360 prisoners at a total cost of 3,250,000 Euros. Collaborating with the penal institution's social services, Saint Xenii provides the amount of 300 Euros for prisoners, who by paying, can convert their sentences into fines⁵³. Saint Xenii does not set criteria in providing this financial assistance. Every prisoner who lacks money is entitled to receive it. Because of its missionary character, it is active not only in Greek penal institutions but also in foreign countries. Moreover, it provides support, counseling and distributes the religious magazine “Christian Pulse”, which is also the organization's information instrument.

3.2 Penal Institution's Population

Different ways exist to define the concept of penal institutions' population. I will use the definition made by Konttila and Kaivo-oja (2011: 107) which is based on the definition used by Eurostat: “penal population is the total number of adult and juvenile prisoners (including pre-trial detainees) on 1 September, including offenders held in Penal Administration facilities, other facilities, juvenile offenders institutions, drug addicts' institutions and psychiatric or other hospitals”. Cheliotis (2009: 4) is using the term ‘caseload’ which is “the total number of cases of offenders (whether convicts or pre-trial detainees) held in custody during a given year”. With the penal institutions' population increasing worldwide and the demand for more and longer penal sentences; emphasizing the vindictive role of the penal policy, it could be said that this phenomenon is universal, highly diverse and causes a damaging pressure in the penal institutions (Konttila & Kaivo-oja, 2011: 106; Ekunwe, 2007: 40). The phenomenon was described as ‘massive incarceration’ by Garland (2001 in Chalkia, 2007). Concerning the Greek penal institutions it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, that

⁵² See: www.diakonia-filakon.gr/frontend/index.php?chlang=EN.

⁵³ See penalties in chapter 2.

in their majority they are unable to cope with the demands of the increasing number of prisoners in resources, infrastructure, inadequate facilities, regimes and procedures in establishments and poor communication between staff or negative attitude among staff groups. They have been characterized by various human rights organizations as exceeding capacity, and being overcrowded, and substandard⁵⁴ (Liebling, 1999; OICS 2004 in Liebling, 2007: 432; Smith, 1982: 45).

Despite the measures taken to reduce the use of imprisonment and to expand the use of non-custodial sanctions by substituting imprisonment by financial penalties and conditional release (Cheliotis, 2009: 1), the penal institutions' population is still increasing (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 53, 55). In 1979⁵⁵, the total number of prisoners was only 2.815. As was mentioned in the beginning of chapter 2, in 1983 Greece was still one of the countries with low criminal rates. Mitrosyli and Fronimou (2008: 37) in their study, in 1994, have mentioned that a number of 1001, of both sexes were imprisoned with a 2 year sentence. The overall number was 6.500 and the penal institution capacity was only 3.900. At the end of the same decade (1999), 7.538 offenders (adults and minors) were imprisoned, whereas there were only 4.543 available places (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 45-46). The number continued to rise, therefore, in 2000, it was 7.625 for 4.700. In 2001, it was 8.295 for 4.825, in 2002, the overall number was lowered to 8.507 but still it was too much since the available places were 5.284. During 2003, the number was raised again to 8.418 prisoners (with the same capacity in the institutions), a rate of 83 per 100.000 of the national population (Ilia & Spyrea, 2009; Roth, 2000: 119). One year later, from January to April 2004, there were 8.726 prisoners; 8.798 later in the same year. This was a significant rise if we take into consideration the fact that, the nominal penal institution capacity of that year was still 5.284 (Lampropoulou, 2005: 224). Continuing, in 2005, the population was already 9.870 which represented 91 per 100.000 of the national population⁵⁶. Additionally, in the first semester of 2006, the total number had reached 10.627 and at the end of the same year it was 13.170 (Cheliotis, 2009: 5). Statistics from Mr. Katsifaras⁵⁷ (2010) concerning the year 2009, showed the population having reached 11.343 with the capacity only for 9.103. The latest statistics presented on the newspaper FREE SUNDAY (27 November 2011) shows the number having reached 12.500 with an official capacity of 9.100.

⁵⁴ See: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country_IRBC_GRC_45f1473a2f_0.html.

⁵⁵ See: www.epda.gr (In Greek language).

⁵⁶ See: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>.

⁵⁷ See: <http://www.in.gr/NEWS/article.asp?lngEntityID=1074150&lngDtrID=244> (in Greek language).

The table below shows the penal population, along with foreigners, pre-trial and drug abusers⁵⁸, from the 1st of January⁵⁹ of each year between 2003-2010, as it is presented in the web page of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights⁶⁰.

Table 1: Statistics on prisoners in Greece, from 2003 to 2010

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of Prisoners	8.418	8.726	8.722	9.964	10.370	11.645	11.736	11.364
Number of Pre-trials	2084	2570	2481	3104	3065	3045	3218	3541
Number of Foreigners	3858	3708	3704	4281	4695	5622	6078	6307
Number of drug abusers	3386	3562	3465	4346	4640	4912	4937	4345

According to Cheliotis (2005: 202) the judicial penal institution of Korydallos, which, as mentioned in the introductory part, is located in a south-western suburb of Attica, and has been originally designed to receive only remand and short term detainees, had 2.103 prisoners in 2000, 2.185 in 2001 and 2.131 during the first six months of 2002. The situation did not change in the years to come. Therefore, in 2005, according to the senior social worker Mrs. Bellia⁶¹ (2005) Korydallos had more than 2.000 prisoners for 350 available places. Another judicial penal institution, that of Ioannina, which was mentioned for its inhumane conditions in the previous chapter, even though it has been designed for 80 prisoners, during the time of the report it held 220 (Ethnos 5 November 2011; FREE SUNDAY 27 November 2011). These numbers have positioned the Greek penal institutions among the most crowded in Europe. Concluding, it is noteworthy that Greece does not, in fact, follow the European Union's requirement of seven square meters of space for each prisoner. Drosou⁶² (2008), a spokeswoman for the Initiative for Prisoners' Rights, pointed that 13.000 offenders were crammed into institutions designed for 7.500 with a further 5.000 in police detention

⁵⁸ Those three consist the main reasons for overpopulation (FREE SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2011).

⁵⁹ The numbers of course change during the course of the year.

⁶⁰ See:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΟbrΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ/Στατιστικάστοιχείακρατούμενων/ΓΕΝΙΚΟΣΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣΠΙΝΑΚΑΣΚΡΑΤΟΥΜΕΝΩΝΠΟΙΝΩΝ.aspx>.

⁶¹ Mrs. Calliope Bellia was the senior social worker and my supervisor while I was doing my internship in the institution; the citation is from my internship portfolio.

⁶² See: <http://www.mediaisland.org/en/inmates-greek-prisons-refusing-meals-protest-overcrowding>.

cells. In the institution of Ioannina they were packed one on top of the other since they did not even have one available square meter each to “sit down” (Ethnos, 5 November 2011; FREE SUNDAY 27 November 2011).

The high numbers include both local and alien convicted offenders, pre-trial detainees and drug abuse offenders (as seen in the table above). Among the EU countries, Greece is hosting the majority of “lifers” sentenced for drug abuse. According to the Ministry of Justice Transparency and Human Rights approximately 4.400 prisoners serve a sentence for drug abuse (FREE SUNDAY 27 November 2011). Furthermore, pre-trial detainees comprise one-third to one-quarter of the penal population. Pre-trial detainees as I have already mentioned are kept in the same facilities with convicted offenders (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 53). The pre-trial detention’s average length in the Greek penal institutions is 365 days and exceeds by far the minimum custodial sentence and it is EU’s highest (Commission of the European Communities, 29/8 2006 in Cheliotis, 2009: 4; 2005: 202). That is one of the reasons according to Lampropoulou (2005: 224) why the penal population is that high. Two cases based on the prisoner’s experience describe the negative effects on pre-trial detainees.

“Everything takes time. The Court takes time; the Court of Appeal takes time. There was a prisoner who has served his sentence as pre-trial and then was called to attend the court for his case” (Prisoner in Avlona in Theodorakis, 2011).

“Before you talk about rehabilitation you should start with the number of years and months for pre-trials. 24 months staying in your pre-trial? That is hell, and most of the people who go through that pre-trial after they are being released and they are proved innocent, do they get compensation? No.” (Prisoner, 2011)

Concerning convicts of alien origin, their annual caseload rose by 14, 5%, from 2.253 to 5.420 within a 10 year gap between 1996-2006 (Cheliotis, 2009: 6). Greece due to its geographical position accepts 90% of illegal immigrants arriving in EU (FREE SUNDAY, 27 November 2011). Correspondingly, the proportion of foreigner prisoners amongst the total caseload of prisoners was increased from 25, 3% to 41, 1%. It is clear also from the table that nearly one in two prisoners is a foreigner. “This amount” mentioned Cheliotis (2006: 166) “is four times higher than the estimated proportion of non-Greeks in the general population of the country, but the level and nature of their criminal involvement fails to justify the discrepancy”. This increase, falls within the line of thought was pursued by Wacquant (1999 in Cheliotis, 2006: 166) and was maintained inside the European context that Western European countries, and with the passing of years also Eastern European

countries, experience an equivalent situation with the US, where “foreigners and quasi-foreigners would consist the ‘blacks’ of Europe”. Both categories are perceived by the authorities and the public as a needless division of usual suspects, the first to be held responsible for a crime and are declared “*personae non grata*”⁶³ (Cheliotis, 2006: 167). In other cases foreigners are being detained because they cannot be deported (Baldwin-Edwards, 2001: 5). For those people, serving a sentence under these circumstances represents something of a ‘disaster’, a ‘catastrophe’ and, in consequence, they are often in a psychological state of ‘trauma’ (Crawley, 2007: 228).

3.3 Behavioral Profile of Prisoners

Owers, (2005: 7) has mentioned that “the way prisoners are treated and housed is fundamental to respect”. The conservation of life and mental stability is clearly among the fundamentals of safety. The United nations have derived four fundamental criteria about prisoners’ treatment and housing concerning: (a) safety- even the most vulnerable prisoners must be held safely, (b) respect- prisoners must be treated with respect for their human dignity, (c) purposeful activity- prisoners are able and expected to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them and (d) resettlement- prisoners are prepared prior their release into the community, and are helped in order to reduce the likelihood of re-offending (HMCIP 2004a in Bennett, 2007: 530).

Owers (2005: 4), Zaitzow (2011: 228) and Ekunwe (2007: 109, 127) discuss the mental, physical and emotional havoc inflicted on prisoners by having their self esteem stripped away along with the deprivation of their liberty due to the incarceration experience. That, combined with the astounding and dehumanized conditions within the penal institutions, may lead to immature and usually calamitous but natural behavioral adaptations (Richard & Ross, 2001: 178; Zaitzow, 2006:8-9 & 2011: 228 Aloskofis in Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 38). Goffman noted 5 different ways for prison adaptation. These are: (a) situational withdrawal, (b) intransigent line, (c) colonization, (d) conversion and (e) playing it cool. Initially the prisoner decides not to interplay with other prisoners. Following, the prisoners start showing aggression towards the institution and the prison stuff, by refusing to assist. The third one is the institutionalization of the prisoner. After spending a long time behind bars, the prisoner start preferring the life inside from the life outside. Conversion is the prisoner’s settlement to the expectation of the prison guards. In conclusion, the last way is to stay away from trouble, therefore, when they are released, they will be physically and mentally unharmed (Haralambos & Holborn, 1995 in Ekunwe, 2007: 128).

⁶³ The term is defined as “fully unacceptable or unwelcome, especially to a foreign government” see: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/persona+non+grata>.

“I recall examples of prisoners from my first month in the institution of Korydallos who were aggressive, either towards me or towards the institution and the society, prisoners who were passive and withdrawn to themselves, thinking all the time how their lives came to this situation and others who tried to manipulate me (either by lying or by emotional outbursts,) in order to assist them. As I discovered later they were either forced on this behavior or had chosen it willingly.” (Personal observation, 2005)

One of their biggest issues is the “prison thoughts”. These result from the ennui that follows the lack of constructive time and they are the same thoughts circling in their mind (Ekunwe, 2007: 81; Theodorakis, 2008). These traumas are experienced intensely by senior prisoners who find themselves inside the penal institution for the first time (Jewkes, 2007: 198). These people have never served time before, and upon entering an environment as alien to them as the penal institution, are likely to suffer severe ‘relocation stress’⁶⁴. Familiarization with the cultures and routines of the institution is more difficult for elderly than it is for younger ones (Crawley, 2007: 228). Ekunwe (2007: 102) describes the strategic surviving pattern of prisoners with four distinct phrases: “Don’t show weakness”, “Show loyalty to convicts, not staff”, “Don’t lose control”, “Mind your own business”.

These behavioral adaptations and strategies vary between the institutions. They appear usually in the most crowded ones and they are the cause of numerous problems including strikes, suicides and sometimes deaths⁶⁵. An incident of those occurred in 2008⁶⁶ and caused unrest in all the country’s institutions.



Unrest in the penal institution of Ioannina; see: <http://www.citypress.gr/freesunday/index.html?action=article&article=2345>.

⁶⁴ The term ‘relocation stress’ has been used by Sieber et al., (1993 in Crawley, 2007: 240) “to describe the feelings that elderly people experience when they have to move out of their familial home and into institutional care”.

⁶⁵ According to Themeli (2002 in Lampropoulou, 2005: 232), “the deaths and suicides seem to be related with overcrowding”.

⁶⁶ See: http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_politics_0_31/10/2008_101738; Cheliotis (2009: 11)

Six thousand prisoners, approximately half of the institutions' population at that time, went on a hunger strike in 21 of the country's penitentiaries (Chalkia & Pappa, 2008). During that time, two prisoners deaths were reported, one suicide attempt, whilst the largest amount of prisoners sewed their lips together. Some 4.800 convicted prisoners at the top security judicial penal institution of Korydallos in Athens and the closed penal institution of Alikarnassos in Crete had started the strike in November 2008, as a desperate means of protest, demanding better conditions in the institutions and restrictions on the amount of time the pre-trial detainees must spend behind bars. A minority of the Greek public was in sympathy with the protesters and showed their support with marches and motorbike rallies through several of Greece's city centers, demonstrations outside of the penal institutions, open-air concerts and finally internet blogging. They called not only the necessity reforms but also for the eventual abolition of penal institutions. The opposition had shaken the penal system to its roots due to the fact that it was extended even outside the country's borders. The Minister of Finance at that time, visiting the London School of Economics, was subjected to an egg-pelting attack from Greek anti-prison agitators (Cheliotis, 2009: 11). Eventually the prisoners were justified. The Minister of Justice had promised that till the beginning of 2009, 3.720 people will be released. This was approximately 1/3 of the prisoners and until April of the same year they will be 5.500 (Theodorakis, 2008). Moreover, due to the second criticism from EU, the new Minister of Justice Mr Papaioanou promoted an amendment in the Greek parliament concerning the conditional release of all prisoners with a sentence up to 5 years (FREE SUNDAY, 27 November 2011).

4. Prisoners' Social Rehabilitation-Re-entry

It has become clear from the literature and my research that, in Greece, there is not a set rehabilitation and re-entry model in place throughout the system. The processes vary but in essence every successful intervention should be multileveled, taking into consideration the different needs the person has before entering the penal institution, while being inside the penal institution and finally when is outside of the penal institution. Thanopoulou et al., (1997: 47-48, 60-61) mention that the model used for social and vocational rehabilitation, along with a successful reintegration, during both the stage of imprisonment and the after release stage, is multileveled. Each model consists of three levels. The levels during imprisonment are: (a) legislation, (b) existing penal institution's conditions, and (c) programs provided by several organizations. The levels after release are: (a) legislation, (b) issues the offenders may face and (c) the action of various different organizations along with the programs they have. It is clear that an examination of the two

procedures shows that, except for the second level, the rest are common in both cases. On the other hand, Ekunwe (2011: 425) in his research about re-entry noted a six stage model that can be efficient when planning a successful reintegration. The stages include:

- a) Pre-trial release
- b) Plea bargaining and sentence negotiations
- c) Sentencing
- d) Self-development and preparation for re-entry while in prison
- e) Release after serving sentence
- f) Parole revocation

The manager of EPANODOS mentioned that the model they are using in their organization is a three staged one⁶⁷.

“The model used in EPANODOS has three stages; one that is an immediate intervention which covers the essential needs. This starts from the welcoming phase, where the clarification of the individual needs happens in conjunction with what the person wants. Then there is that of the intermediate intervention, which includes consulting in order to identify the actual needs of the former prisoner and finally the long term intervention where the networking with other organizations occurs” (Manager).

I have mentioned in the beginning of the paper that there is a common knowledge of the lack of social rehabilitation for prisoners while inside the penal institutions and the inadequacy of the provided support when they leave the institution (Courakis, 2008: 1; Petersilia 2000 in Ekunwe, 2011: 421). Actually, according to the interviewed professionals of EPANODOS, the process starts after release and not prior⁶⁸.

“It should start from inside the penal institution. There is no preparation for the outside world, none. A person sent to prison has more chances of re-offending” (Employment Counselor).

“A preparation must start from inside the penal institutions; we should not wait for the person to be released, as it happens now” (Researcher).

“Some of the penal institutions prepare their inmates, not all of them though” (Manager).

“We should not wait to begin after release” (Legal Counselor)

“I will give a reply based on my experience. There is no preparation” (Psychologist).

⁶⁷ The model of EPANODOS is the one which I will analyze.

⁶⁸ As Ekunwe (2011: 420) mentioned “for re-entry to be successful its planning should begin when the person enters prison”.

Prisoners are over represented as a lower socio-economic group, with high levels of alcohol and drug abuse along with/or even higher levels of illiteracy, a major lack in basic skills -especially in the group of illegal immigrants- and a high proportion of post penal unemployment. Likewise they have high rates of school dropouts compared to the general population (McEvoy, 2008: 26). Moreover, prisoners are unlikely to receive any actual training in marketable skills while they serve their sentence (Richards & Jones, 2004: 206; Uggen et al., 2004: 271). The employment counsellor from EPANODOS commented on that by saying:

“Some of the existing workshops do not follow the needs of the market, like the jewellery workshop” (Employment counsellor)

This comment follows the general idea that penal institutions’ work is nothing more than a way to keep prisoners busy, not a means of imparting skills and knowledge that can be used by the prisoner upon his release (McEvoy, 2008: 9). Because of this limitation, prisoners can obtain limited jobs upon leaving. Furthermore, employers are reluctant in hiring them; thus, they have an even greater difficulty in filling out employment applications that inquire about arrest and conviction records (Richards & Jones, 2004: 206; Uggen et al., 2004: 271). These barriers were summarized by McEvoy (2008: 26) in three broad headings: (a) Criminal Records and Social Exclusion, (b) Criminal Records and Employers’ Attitudes and (c) Criminal Records and Lack of Legislative Protection from Discrimination.

A small study (44 employers) conducted in 1991 by the South Glamorgan Probation Service, found the unwillingness of employers in hiring people who have served time because they were found stealing from their previous employers or were found guilty for violent or crimes of sexual nature (McEvoy, 2008: 29). Another study, conducted the same year by researchers at Bristol Polytechnic in co-operation with Somerset Probation Service (Donland & Winters, 1991 in McEvoy, 2008: 30) showed that both offenders and ex-offenders were most likely to be employed in the future by larger companies. Civil, traffic and alcohol related offences were most favorable by employers, whereas sex offenders were a least liked consideration for employment.

However, former prisoners’ chances of obtaining employment would be improved by the large majority of organizations if they were willing to explain the circumstances of their offence during the interview process. Moreover, the safety of the organizations’ interests, along with the reliability of the former prisoners as employees was another of the main concerns of the employers. The vast

majority of employers also said, the chances of employment are lessened if the prisoners' experiences and competences are found inadequate (McEvoy, 2008: 30). In 1998, Fletcher et al (in McEvoy, 2008: 27) after analyzing five examples of interventions in the criminal justice system in the US, concluded that among the main barriers to employment for ex-offenders, were, the attitudes many employers have towards them, the concerns from the offenders about their criminal records and further about their disclosure or not in their application. Also, the absence of confidence and motivation, along with low self-esteem, the lack of qualifications, including poor basic skills with poor health conditions and the lack of recent and general work experience along with the lack of contacts for jobs. Finally, debts resulting from poverty, in conjunction with insecure sheltering, which is one of the main requirements in order to have a solid base and secure employment (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 62-63).

It has been demonstrated that the criminal record is the biggest obstacle the former prisoners have to face when attempting to find and secure employment. As Foucault (1999 in Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 73) said, the criminal record actually deprecates the ex-offenders to unemployment and to professions with the biggest exploitation. It does not bring liberation but suspension. With this phrase Foucault actually condemns the penal institution as a place for rehabilitation. Several years later, Pager (2003 in Ross et al., 2010: 3) in his documentation, developed several findings concerning the same matter, the difficulties faced from average prisoners, after their release from the penal institutions and their efforts in finding a job, due to the stigmatization and the criminal record. These were, "Criminal records close doors in employment situations and, ex-offenders are but one-half to one-third as likely as non-offenders to be considered [for hire] by employers suggests that a criminal record indeed presents a major barrier to employment". Of course Pagers' findings are referred to the prisoners on the US, but with a closer look they also mirror the Greek reality. It is a requirement in the Greek legislation that a person, who wants to get a working license in several professions and especially be employed in the public sector, must have a clear criminal record. Some exceptions were introduced with the law 2207/94 (art. 4 par. 6.) and concerned the ability for employees with criminal record to be able to work in several public services as helping personnel or unskilled personnel. It is noteworthy that even though the law exists it is not always applied due to the bias of many employers (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 63). Pager (2003 in Ross et al., 2010: 3) also had a third finding, concerning the fact that "incarceration in black people was easier than for whites and that, they were more strongly affected by the impact of a criminal record". A similar situation is in Greece as well but not just with blacks, it is with all foreigners. As was mentioned by Baldwin Edwards (2001: 5), "they are automatically imprisoned before trial, by

virtue of not being Greek, many are imprisoned for breaking the Aliens Law, i.e. simply through being in Greece and others are being detained-unlawfully, as HRW claims-because they cannot be deported”. It is needless to explain that concerning immigrants, especially illegal ones which are the majority, finding employment is impossible since they do not have a legal status and no official organization is going to provide them with a job in the black market⁶⁹. As such, with the existing poor conditions inside the penal institutions, and the experience of social stigmatization, a feeling of frustration and lack of confidence is generated to recently released prisoner, even prior their release (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 63). As Fletcher (2001 in Ross et al., 2010: 1) noted, the employment issues are the most important issues former prisoners have to face.

4.1 Before Release

Concerning the rehabilitation programs provided prior release; the Greek penal institutions’ administration is that of voluntary tasks. That is because the Greek Constitution prohibits forced labour (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 47). The programs, whose goal is the reduction of recidivism, include education and training, recreational activities, employment focused activities and sensitization groups for drug dependents. These are what Solomon (2004 in McEvoy, 2008: 9) has named “purposeful activities”.

4.1.1 Social Relations

In the field of social relations between the prisoners and their families or social environment, the Greek PC does not set any restraints. This is because keeping in touch with their families is imperative for the prisoners’ normal living inside the institution as well as for smooth re-integration back to the society. The forms of social relations which fall under the term *communication* include visiting hours within the penal institutions, mailing, telephone calls, furloughs and day release⁷⁰ (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 23).

Concerning prisoners’ visiting hours (PC. art. 52), they are allowed to relatives up to 4th grade (first cousins). There is no limitation to 1st or 2nd grade relatives (parents, children, siblings), nor any distinction between blood relatives or relatives by affinity. Visiting hours are organized by the Internal Rule of Function of General Penal Institutions and they may differ from institution to institution. What is common though in all the institutions, is that they must be at least once a week for half an hour. The Prison Board is responsible for the smooth function of visiting hours. The

⁶⁹ These people have no chances but to resort to crime simply to survive.

⁷⁰ Day release is mentioned and described in chapter 2.

Prison Board was set by law 2298/1995 (art. 9), and is composed by the Director, the social worker and scientist, regardless of specialty. If prisoners want a visitor outside of their family, they must request it from the Board. Visits are occurring in a predetermined place and they are only visual.



“Visiting hours” from the juvenile penal institution of Avlona; see:

<http://www.ministryofjustice.gr/site/el/ΑνήλικοιΦυλακισμένοι.aspx>.

No physical contact is allowed. As was already mentioned, both visitors and prisoners are under physical control by the guards (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 23-24). Several prisoners have argued that the Prison Board should allow former prisoners to visit their friends who still serve time, if they want of course.

“Something that should be allowed is for former prisoners to visit their friends inside prison. If someone has served 2-3 or even more years in prison the people he is in contact with 24hours a day, the ones who can truly understand what he is going through are his fellow inmates. That is why it should be allowed” (Prisoner, 2011).

Telephone calls and mail is among the rights of the prisoners, but with several limitations. Prisoners are free to call their relatives, mainly the ones who have the right to visit them⁷¹, at their own expenses, by using the common phones which are placed in a visually controlled area of the prison. The phones function with charge cards, which as a prisoner has mentioned are the prisons’ currency.

“Telephone cards and cigarettes are very important. The more you have in your possession, the more things you can do. That was the currency” (Prisoner, 2011).

⁷¹ Permission from the Prison Board is needed for prisoners who want to contact someone apart from their visitors.

Cell phones are strictly forbidden. Concerning mail, it is allowed to everyone without any limitation. For prisoners who do not have money, the institutions' social service covers the expenses (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 24).

Contact with one's family and social environment can be done with the use of furloughs, given from the penal institution. The institution of furloughs has a dual importance. It is essential for the prisoners' reconciliation with their family and the establishment of social relations but also for their employment and professional reintegration. According to PC, furloughs are given to all prisoners regardless of financial status, gender, nationality⁷² and social status as long as they apply for them and fulfill their requirements. They are distinguished to regular, exceptional and educational. Each category has its own prerequisites. Regular furloughs are granted under certain conditions. The first condition is their time and duration. They must not exceed the annual limit, which is 40 days a year and they are granted partially, from 1-5 days. The second condition is the class of convicts and the type of penalty. As Cheliotis (2005: 211) noted "the Prison Board is reluctant to grant a furlough to a convict with a drug-related offence, who serve a lengthy sentence, have committed disciplinary offence and/or have breached the conditions of a past furlough". The applicants are obliged to name the place of staying and how they will be financed during the furlough. The social worker is responsible to conduct a research and write a report concerning the above before the furlough is granted. In case the report is problematic, several restrictions can be imposed to the convict. The applicants are also obliged to appear at their local police station during their furlough in order to have their furlough warrants countersigned (Cheliotis, 2005: 212). Exceptional furloughs are granted for special reasons (professional issues, family issues) and they have 24 hour duration. In cases of emergency, like death of a relative up to 2nd grade or health issues they can also be granted directly from the institutions' Director. A very good example of this came from a prisoner in Agya.

"My father died so I had to attend the funeral. The Director took me with his car, drove all the way there and back again" (Prisoner in Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

Educational leaves are granted to students and pupils. University students can apply for 15 days leave during their examination periods (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 24-25).

⁷² The lack of family ties and the possibility of deportation make the Prison Board reluctant to grant a furlough to foreigners (Cheliotis, 2005: 211).

After its implementation in 1955, the furlough program has been subjected to severe criticism. The abuse of the furlough from several prisoners and their eventual reoffending during the years has given the media the excuse to criticize and condemn this institution. However, as the Director of the institution of Agya noted, furloughs are crucial for the prisoners' mental conditions and well being inside the institution.

‘The furloughs are important. When the convict goes out, he will experience the problems of his family. Upon his return his attention will be on his family, he won't cause any problems, because he would want to get another furlough and help his family even further’ (Director of Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

4.1.2 Education

According to (PC, art. 35), educational programs can take place inside the penal institutions, from primary school up to high school or alternatively with vocational programs. In this field many institutions run the ‘second chance school’. This is a school either for juvenile or adult prisoners which can provide them with basic education. There is also the possibility for the function of a one class school, plus the possibility of distant learning, by internet or by regular mail. Juveniles⁷³ are obliged to attend the courses whereas adults volunteer. Once the basic education is complete they can get their diploma, which is equivalent with those outside of the institutions and does not show where it was acquired. A major breakthrough happened with the school in the juvenile penal institution of Avlona. It is one of the best examples of cooperation and good practices. The reason for this success was not only that 1/3 of the juvenile offenders attended, but also the highly trained educational personnel who took the initiative to publish a newspaper, participate in local and international programs and cooperate with other organizations (Milioni, 2008). One of these organizations has been EPEA Hellas⁷⁴. It was founded in 2007 and it is the official branch of the European Prison Education Association (EPEA⁷⁵); it aims to promote and support the development of education in Greek penal institutions, along with the professional development of persons involved with it, according to Recommendation No.R (89) 12, of the Committee of Ministers to Member States of the Council of Europe⁷⁶ (1989). It works with other professional organizations and supports a variety of research in that field. Moreover, by collaborating with the state and the

⁷³ The compulsory education in Greece is 6 years in elementary school and 3 years in middle school (gymnasium). High school which is 3 years is not compulsory but most people attend.

⁷⁴ See: http://www.epea.org/epeahellas/?page_id=3.

⁷⁵ See: <http://www.epea.org/index.php>.

⁷⁶ See: http://www.epea.org/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=138.

school of “second chance” and within the framework of adult learning, it has created a virtual school that provides diplomas equal to those of universities⁷⁷. After finishing the basic education, prisoners can enroll for vocational or academic courses offered by technical schools or universities (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 50; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 26; Ross et al., 2010: 2).

Education is a very important aspect of the Greek law, every person has the right to be educated (Ekunwe, 2007: 32). Even though in several institutions is too narrow and is concentrated almost exclusively to basic skills whereas in other does not function as it should. There are prisoners who want to get higher level education but cannot due to the lack of infrastructure and specialized educational personnel⁷⁸. Because of this many prisoners find the way of teaching boring. Among them are many young adults. Young adults have been characterized as the most prolific of re-offenders. They can be resistant on sitting in a class room if the way of teaching does not appeal to them; as a result they may find teaching classes a waste of their time. These people prefer a different approach in education; one is presented by a side-wind, as a prerequisite to doing something which appears more conducive, such as learning a trade, or arts and drama (Miloni, 2008). Many prisoners, usually the ones who are already familiar with an art, do express it inside the institution. The resulting craftwork is usually sold in exhibitions on wins prizes in artistic competitions, which in return provides a decent amount of money for the prisoner’s personal account⁷⁹ (Owers, 2005: 9; Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 51).

In order to show the importance education has for prisoners and the assistance provided by the institutions but also the “other side of the coin”, inmates who are willing to learn but face the negligence of the institutions’ staff I will reflect on several observations which I encountered from my personal experience in 2005 concerning the institution of Korydallos, from the TV show *Protagonistes* in May 2011⁸⁰ concerning the institution of Avlona and from an article in a Greek newspaper in November 2011 concerning the institution of Thiva.

Case study 1.

E. is a foreigner who has been a prisoner in the penal institution of Korydallos for drug possession. He has been imprisoned for several years. When we discussed about educational programs he said: “When the system wanted to take money from EU they send us to school, trying to teach us computers. They put us in one room for 2 hours a week. The course was

⁷⁷ See: http://gym-par-avlon.att.sch.gr/public_html/eng_home/newspapers/2001/index_eng.htm.

⁷⁸ This is major issue if we consider the high amounts of illiteracy among prisoners.

⁷⁹ The prisoners can make use of this amount upon their release, or even manage to pay their sentence.

⁸⁰ See: <http://www.megatv.com/article.asp?catid=14693&subid=2&pubid=25353588> (in Greek language).

bullshit, we didn't do anything; the staff didn't let us. One time I was trying to write my name and my address, to make a postcard to send to my family, the guards came and took the computer away from me by saying that I am going to make some dirty business. What was the use of that course? They said they were creating courses for foreigners and EU citizens, but in reality they were justifying the money they got from EU. The only thing we could do for 2 hours with the computer was playing games. We completely wasted our time" (Prisoner, 2011).

Case study 2.

"M. is a prisoner who became a student. He is 20 years old and serves a 12 year sentence for possessing drugs, so far he has served 16 months. He gave the exams on the third grade of high school⁸¹ from inside the institution and passed to a Higher Technical Educational Institution. Twice a week he is getting educational leaves from the director in order to attend his courses. He is leaving the institution in the morning and comes back in the night. His professors are aware of his situation whereas his fellow students are not. The fact that he interacts with "free" people does not bother him, he prefers spending his time productively rather than stay behind the walls. He goes to the educational institution and back to the penal institution without a guard escorting him" (Theodorakis, 2011).

Case study 3.

"S. comes from Lithuania and serves a sentence of 15 years for drug dealing. So far he has served 15 months. He attends the school of second opportunity inside the institution and through it participated in a mathematic contest. He said he likes mathematics that is why he won the first prize in the contest. He did not go to receive the prize because of the cameras. The director gave him 100 Euros as a reward in order to keep him motivated and not stop his studies" (Theodorakis, 2011).

Case study 4.

"G. is a 30 year old woman who has managed to give the final exams from the institution's school of second opportunity and got accepted in the Higher Technical Institution of Florina in the department of Commercial and Quality Control for Agricultural Products. Her penal institution is far from her educational institution. Therefore, the inmate could not attend her courses or even enrol. The social services contacted the institution and informed that one of their inmates was among their students. They requested if it is possible to enrol her electronically. Their request was successful. G. not only enrolled herself in the institution but she was also able to take the exams of the first and second semester from inside the prison. Nine professors took turns in visiting the penal institution during the examination period, and deliver her the exam topics in sealed envelopes. So far G. has passed all the theoretical courses of the first and second semester" (Ethnos, 5 November 2011).

These cases prove that people who serve time in a penal institution and stopped their education did not do so because they lacked the will; they did so because they lacked the opportunities.

⁸¹ It is compulsory in the Greek educational system that all pupils who attend high school must give exams in a Pan-Hellenic scale at the end of the second and third grade of high school. The results from the third grade place the pupil to either a Higher Technical Educational Institution (ATEI), or a Higher Educational Institution (AEI).

4.1.3 Employment

Most offenders enter penal institutions with random job histories; moreover, some lack⁸² the proper educational skills to compete in the workforce. It is important for the penal institution to provide them with the necessary skills and experience in order to acquire a job upon release (Farabee, 2005: 31). For this reason workshops (carpentry, metalwork, cooking, etc.) are functioning inside the institutions where convicts can work and hone their skills. Pre-trial detainees are usually excluded from the workshops. Similar with education, work inside the institution is not compulsory (PC, art. 40). Compulsory work has had a serious negative critique during the 70's, in this manner, European legislations changed their work related policies from punitive to rehabilitative (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 26). Work is decided by the Prisoners' Council of Labor. The Council of Labor is consisted of 5 professionals, the responsible judge who acts as president, the director of the institution, the senior social worker, the warden and the agriculturist (if it is an open penal institution) or the workshops supervisor or the chief of the industrial unit or some other professional. Two kind of work are mentioned in the Greek PC (art. 41, par. 3) work inside and outside of the penal institution (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 26-27).

According to the Greek PC, a form of labor that is organized by agricultural units or small industries that follow the rules of free market can take place inside a penal institution. Prisoners are chosen according to their age, gender, skills and responsibility⁸³. The Council of Labor determines who will be employed and under what terms. Prisoners can also work for their own account inside the institution and also for public or private employers. In the case, the employer has to come with an agreement with the Prison Board (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 27).

It is mentioned in the Greek PC that prisoners are allowed to work outside the institution's premises, either in the public or private sector, or in Vocational Training Centers. Specifically, prisoners can work in industrial or agricultural-industrial units, and in small industries or in agricultural units or in several companies. The unit's administration collaborates with the Ministry of Justice to organize the work placement. The management off the institution is responsible for supervising the worker. Prisoners who are employed, or have already found a job can continue working with the assent of the Council of Labor, under the prerequisite to obtain a day release. It is

⁸² Even if the programs function properly inside an institution, due to the vast numbers of prisoners, not everyone can attend class (Owers, 2005: 9).

⁸³ Prisoners with health problems are excluded from employment (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 27).

noteworthy that the terms for continuing their job outside are very strict (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 27). Day release is mentioned in PC (art. 59-64) along with alternative sentences and is not fully applied (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 29).

The Minister of Justice is empowered by the PC to determine the salary for both types of employment. The money is saved in the prisoners' account by the social services and it is akin to half a normal worker's wage, which is 0.80 cents⁸⁴ per day. The money is given to the prisoner upon release. It is noteworthy that prisoners who work outside do not sign any contract; therefore, they are not entitled to unemployment benefits in case they get fired. They only have medical insurance. Plus 1/3 of their earnings go to the state as a tax. It has been argued by Courakis (2008: 1), that the amount of money prisoners are getting is not enough to help them make a fresh start upon release. As an example he says that prisoners working for 2 years if they are lucky enough to work that long, have 600 wages, with 0.40 cents a day means that after their release they will get 240 Euros. Additionally, another argument concerns the benefit of days. Every person who is employed gets the benefit of days, this means that every working day counts as 2 days out of their sentence. The same rule applies for prisoners attending school (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 28). Cheliotis (2006: 168 & 2009: 1) has argued that, the importance employment and education has, as "rehabilitative and re-integrative means", have been used by several prison authorities as a way of "institutional control", a "carrot-and-stick mechanism for incentivizing orderly behavior among prisoners". This "administrative convenience" he continues, means that the prisoner who is well behaved will be employed, not the prisoner who is more in need of it. Mitrosyli and Fronimou (2008: 28) have mentioned that employment is not a fundamental right for every prisoner according to the PC; it is more akin to voluntary work.

Furthermore, other arguments have been made concerning the value of the workshops. It has been argued in chapter 4, that they provide support positions not productive ones. This means that convicts use them as means of passing time; they learn little of value. Besides, due to the vast number of prisoners, only few can work. In 1994 from the 6.500 prisoners only 200 were employed, 1.000 was in agricultural institutions and the other 1.000 in closed institutions (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 53-54). Nearly 10 years later, in 2005, Aloskofis (in Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 67) conducted a study in the judicial penal institution of Korydallos with 2.708 workers, proving the aforementioned. The research showed that the vast majority (80%), while serving their sentence

⁸⁴ This was the amount in 2008, due to the financial crisis and the cuts in workers' wages, the amount may have changed.

either in the institution of Korydallos or some other institution, did not get the benefit of days. It has also shown that 14% of the people had worked from 1-300 days, 3,6% from 301-600 days and only 1,6% from 601-900 with the benefit of days, whereas only 1% had worked more than 900 days. Additionally, two more studies from the National Research Centre attempted to evaluate those provided training programs by examining the opportunities for reintegration for adult male and female prisoners on release from penal institutions and from juvenile prisoners. The first study examined the difficulties and the assimilation along with the re-assimilation men and women are facing in their work before their release. The results showed that they had work related assimilation problems before their incarceration. Those problems were intensified after their imprisonment. The researchers then interviewed representatives from each of the 16 institutions that were assigned in the apprenticeship and the preparation of former prisoners. The study accentuated the significant role of aftercare support has and the necessity for further assistance (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 101; Lampropoulou, 2005: 230). Fifty six adults and eleven juveniles were the subjects of the second study. The subjects had taken part in one of four vocational programs related to the Ministry of Education⁸⁵ (Adult Education Division) and were examined after their release. Six of the adults and one of the juvenile were female. The purpose of the study was to examine if the vocational training had helped them in acquiring gainful employment. The results showed that they have not learned anything valuable. The majority of them were working in the same placements even before imprisonment. These were unskilled and temporary jobs. In this manner the researchers showed the necessity for better planning in the aftercare field (Lampropoulou, 2005: 230-231).

4.1.4 Drug Abuse

As mentioned in chapter 3, in the field of substance abuse the Greek state has established two detoxification centers, in Thiva and in Kassandra. The program used in the centers is dry, voluntary, multiphase and has 2 years duration. The goal of the program is the physical and mental rehabilitation along with educational and vocational training. These will result in the participants' social and professional reintegration. The starting phase is the preparative phase and occurs in the penal institution where the addicted prisoner is held. This phase has 2 months duration. The second phase begins after the prisoners' transfer to the institution of Thiva. The phase is described as transitional. It combines elements of reformation and treatment. It aims in mobilizing the prisoners, in order to change their mentality, from 'prisoner' to 'patient under treatment'. The duration of this

⁸⁵ See: <http://www.minedu.gov.gr/english.html>.

phase is at least 4 months. The third phase is the following and lasts for at least 8 months. It follows the principals of the therapeutic communities and it occurs in special designed areas inside the institution. It aims in the psychological detoxification. The fourth and last phase is the socialization phase which aims in the reintegration of the participants into society. It occurs either within the therapeutic institution or inside open prisons or in specially designed apartments owned by the state which are located outside the institution. This phase has duration of at least 12 months.

In addition, to the detoxification centers, sensitization and support groups for drug addicts occur in the penal institution of Korydallos (judicial, for women and in the psychiatric hospital). Responsible for the groups are the Rehabilitation Unit 18 ANO which belongs to the Psychiatric Hospital of Attica and the NGO KETHEA⁸⁶. 18 ANO (18 ANΩ in Greek language) includes sensitization groups for Greeks, foreigners who speak Greek and foreigners who do not know the Greek language. The groups' aim is for the prisoners to realize the reasons behind their incarceration, to evaluate their living status and to strengthen their request for detoxification. Participation in the groups is voluntary. The prisoners must declare to the social service that they have been users of illegal substances and that they want to participate in the groups. The groups are open; there is no starting date or ending date for the program, nor a specific duration. Prisoners who participate in the groups ensure their immediate integration after their release to the Detoxification Unit of 18 ANO for former prisoners. This program is the connecting link for their successful reintegration to the society.

KETHEA (KEΘEA in Greek language), is a therapy centre for substance dependent individuals and has operated since 1983. It aims mainly in the rehabilitation of drug addicts through counseling, therapy programs (therapeutic communities) and reception – re-entry centers which are located in the municipalities of Attica, Thessaly, Thrace, Crete, Macedonia and Peloponnese. All drug dependent prisoners are entitled to participate in the programs. From its 22 programs I will briefly describe one, KETHEA EN DRASI⁸⁷. KETHEA EN DRASI operates in the Judicial Penal Institution of Korydallos, the Psychiatric Division of Korydallos and the Women's Penal Institution of Korydallos. With self-help groups it aims to inform about the effects of drug abuse and the existing treatment programs. In early 2000, it has launched a pilot program, a therapeutic community, in the Women's Penal Institution. The women/prisoners received support in order to be

⁸⁶ See: <http://www.kethea.gr/el-gr/home.aspx> (in Greek language).

⁸⁷ See: <http://www.kethea.gr/el-gr/θεραπευτικάπρογράμματα/κατάλογοσπρογραμμάτων.aspx?id=17> (in Greek language).

reintegrated into society after completing the program and being released. For this purpose, in 2002 it has also established the Centre for Released Prisoners in the centre of Athens.

A major problem with both the programs and the detoxification centers is that they can have a certain amount of prisoners. The vast numbers of inmates means that many people will have to either stay in line or not participate at all. Moreover, as with the other programs the prisoners who will participate in those groups are usually the well behaved ones which sometimes are not the ones in dire need. Many prisoners and professionals have argued that despite their best efforts, the penal institutions are not the proper place for drug addicted prisoners.

“Prison is not the place for drug addicts. These are people are ill, prison will not treat them. Once they get out with a leave they will use drugs⁸⁸” (Director of the rural institution in Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

“I have been here for several days, I have requested to see a psychiatrist, and I’m still waiting. I would have been better in a closed rehab program” (Prisoner in Avlona in Theodorakis, 2011).

They argue that drugs and other illegal substances are easier to find inside prison than outside and in many cases the prison staff knows it but does not do anything to change it.

“Is it easy to find drugs inside prison? Of course it is. It is easier to find drugs inside than outside. It is true; everybody knows that, it will never stop” (Prisoner in the institution of Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

“Prisons are full of drugs. You are sentenced for smoking a joint and when you are out you’re a junkie” (Prisoner in the institution of Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

“All directors knew that there were drugs in the wing. It is much easier to get drugs in Korydallos than in Omonoia⁸⁹. They even allowed alcohol brewing. They tried to quiet people down. They knew that when things were turning ‘hot’ for the prisoners, they allowed them to brew alcohol. It was very easy” (Prisoner, 2011).

The latest example proving the drug availability inside prisons was reported in November 2011 in a Greek newspaper. Two prisoners in the institution of Alikarnassos in Crete were arrested for drug trafficking with two civilians. The “mastermind” was a 23 year old foreigner who was imprisoned

⁸⁸ That is one of the main reasons for not granting furloughs to drug offenders.

⁸⁹ Omonoia is the central square of Athens, known as a drug-dealing hotspot.

for drugs on 2009. He was found having a cell phone in his possession which he used for the drug trafficking (Ethnos, 5 November 2011).

4.1.5 Leisure Activities

Bejan and Purice (2011: 410) wrote that “active participations from the prisoners in cultural and artistic events, urges scientists to reflect upon their need in the rehabilitation process”. All sorts of artistic events they continue are “good opportunities to put issues on the political and the public agenda that prisoners are facing upon release”. In this manner they conclude “theatre plays and other means of artistic expression are raising community regarding integration”. For this reason, many penal institutions are equipped with libraries whereas others have theater groups and art classes.



Theatre teams from KETHEA EN DRASI, see: <http://www.kethea.gr/el-gr/θεραπευτικαπρογραμματα/καταλογοςπρογραμμάτων.aspx?id=17>.

I have already mentioned that many prisoners express themselves through art and may even earn money by participating in contests or/and by selling their work. Additionally, I have found from Theodorakis' (2008) show concerning the Rural Institution of Agya that the inmates were able to play football or basketball on the institutions courtyard. Furthermore, by watching his show about women prison in Eleona (Theodorakis, 2011), I discovered that the aforementioned institution has 7.500 books and that inmates consider it as an “oasis inside hell⁹⁰”.

⁹⁰ See: <http://www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.fwtografia&id=675> (in Greek language).



The library in female prison in Thiva, see: <http://www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.fwtografia&id=675#23>.

Moreover, by watching his last show about the Juvenile institution of Avlona (Theodoirakis, 2011) I learned about the institutions' theater group.

However, good as the former examples may sound, they are not applied in every institution. Due to lack of personnel and proper facilities, prisoners are usually spending their time inside their cells. The following program which was presented in Theodorakis' (2008) show and concerns the institution of Agya shows that prisoners are spending 11 hours in their cell and 5 hours in a hall. These are 16 hours of non productive confinement.

Table 2: Daily program of prisoners in Agya prison

Daily Program	Weekdays
Wake-up time	07.00
Activities (work, school, free time, consultation hour with professionals, visiting hours)	07:50-12:00
Lunch	12:00-13:00
Return to the cell	13:00-15:00
Opening of the cells	15:00-16:00
Dinner	16:00-17:00
Free time within the wing	17:00-22:00
Closing of the cells, turning of the lights	22:00-07:00

Television and radio and walks in the hallway are the main means of entertainment. The latter is afforded by everyone, but the former are limited to few (Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 54).

4.2 After Release

Everything that occurs within the penal institutions' walls does not necessarily stay inside. Eventually it will follow the prisoners once they come out and return home. There are significant

numbers of consequences that must be taken into consideration concerning the increased number of prisoners. Since the majority of them, one way or the other, will have to face re-entry challenges, thus making this struggle the most difficult of them all (Zaitzow, 2011: 229; Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 62).

Among the difficulties, the most pressing ones include: the need of addressing what will be done with them upon their return to the society at the end of their incarceration. Where will they live, what means will they have to support themselves and/or their families, or others? Moreover, the specific problems many may face concerning their health conditions and well being, plus unique family and social problems. Mason (2004 in Enroos, 2010: 1) has noted that the sentence in a penal institution creates forced distances within the family and social environment that cannot always be covered via the furloughs or the prison visits. Reconciling these broken bonds, created by the distance can really take the toll on the prisoners. In case of incarcerated parents, it can be even more difficult if they have to deal with custody matters of their children (Crawley, 2007: 230; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 55). In addition, prisoners who have spent many years behind bars, have problems in facing the unknown. Many among them have aged inside and when they are out they experience a whole new world from the one they knew. Freed and Kallina (2003), provided a very good example on this, about a prisoner who was incarcerated for 24 years and when he was free he did not know how to use an ATM, apparently, he did not know what was an ATM. People who have been incarcerated for a long time have become institutionalized. The term has been used to define the psychosocial effects of a long-term incarceration (Crawley, 2007: 241). The final difficulty is the reaction of the society, the access to social capital and the stigma they have to bear.

Concerning those issues, in the field of aftercare the Greek PC does not set guidelines for many programs. It has already been mentioned that several NGOs have stepped in to provide assistance and care. Several of them have already been mentioned (Saint Xenii, KETHEA, and EPEA Hellas). However there are several more that should be mentioned and will be briefly described, ONISIMOS, PRAKSIS, ARSIS and KLIMAKA. ONISIMOS⁹¹ was founded in 1982 as a “Special Charity” corporation in order to morally and materially help prisoners and their families who lack the financial capacity. It was awarded in 2001 for its humanitarian work in the “Year of Volunteers”. It covers the prisoners’ basic needs (such as clothing, footwear, food, furniture, rental and payment of bills); it also collaborates with the social services and contributes financially to the

⁹¹ See: www.onisimos.gr (in Greek language).

release of poor prisoners and provides free legal support and coverage of legal expenses. Unlike Saint Xenii, ONISIMOS sets criteria for this financial support. The prisoner must not be a repeat offender. It is one of the few organizations that houses former prisoners temporarily in a hotel in the centre of Athens⁹². Moreover, it has helped in the creation and enhancement of many libraries within penal institutions, and it also distributes a monthly religious magazine called “Prisoner's Friends” (Φίλοι Φυλακισμένων in Greek language). In addition, it assists in vocational rehabilitation by contacting the proper authorities and directing the prisoner’s accordingly as well as informing them about employment programs.

PRAKSIS⁹³ is an independent organization which aims at the creation, application and implementation of humanitarian and medical action programs. Originally run by the Greek Branch of Médecines Sans Frontières (MSF, Doctors without Borders), until October 2004 it offered programs for 12 years via two polyclinics⁹⁴ based in Athens and Thessaloniki. Knowing the lack of infrastructure for penal rehabilitation that exists in the Greek state, PRAKSIS created the “Post Release Centre”. The main objective of the program is: “the provision of services and the development of appropriate networks, in order for the (re)integration of former prisoners, irrespective of nationality to be achieved effectively”. Services are free of charge and they include, (a) medical support, (b) psychological support along with skills development for social integration, (c) legal advice through networking with associate agencies, and (d) promotion into employment. “Networking, research and recording of needs are the tools for the protection of the rights of ex-offenders as well as for lobbying relevant state agents. Intervention policies and hence, a change in social policy, are the ultimate aim of this program”.

ARSIS⁹⁵ is a non-governmental organization (NGO) specializing in social support for young people and the protection of juvenile rights. It was established in October 1992 and operates in the cities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Volos, Larissa and Karditsa. ARSIS has been actively involved in youth detention facilities since 1994. Its aim is to create communication bridges with the participation of professionals and volunteers. Specifically it aims at the creative use of leisure time, the enhancement of the prisoner’s and former prisoner’s self-esteem and the practicing of their skills and qualifications. Moreover, they facilitate their expression and communication skills and finally they actively support the prisoner’s and in this case the former prisoners’ social integration. By

⁹² According to Courakis (2008: 5), there is no state owned building that can host former prisoners.

⁹³ See: <http://www.praksis.gr/default.asp?pid=2&la=2>.

⁹⁴ See: [http://mighealth.net/el/index.php/Doctors_of_the_World_\(MÉDECINS_DU_MONDE\)-GREECE](http://mighealth.net/el/index.php/Doctors_of_the_World_(MÉDECINS_DU_MONDE)-GREECE)

⁹⁵ See: <http://www.arsis.gr/22.htm> (in Greek language).

creating opportunities for creative activities, education, expression and communication, ARSIS seeks to alleviate the prisoners' stigma and support the youths after their release, through the creation of a stable and lasting bridge between the 'limit' and the freedom to try to remove prejudices and to support the prisoners' recent release from the penal institution. In order to achieve these goals, the means it uses are workshops for creative expressions along with vocational guidance and training. Additionally, they conduct visits to voluntary groups for communication and entertainment along with publications for the rights of prisoners and individual support and preparation for the time of release.

Founded in 2000 KLIMAKA is an NGO that supports the provision of mental health services and the implementation of social integration of vulnerable groups. Since 2002, KLIMAKA⁹⁶ has had juvenile prisoners as a target group for its intervention developments. In the same year the organization started, in the juvenile Penal Institution of Avlona, a pilot program concerning their psychosocial support and their preparation for social and professional re-integration⁹⁷. In addition, the organization created the Reception Office for Juvenile Offenders. The main idea behind this creation is that society is obliged to give the opportunity to imprisoned juvenile offenders to “grow” outside the borders of crime and to support their adaptation attempts in a smooth family and social environment. The aim of the Reception Office is the psychosocial support and re-integration of imprisoned juvenile offenders who are under conditional release from the Penal Institution of Avlona and those who have been referred by court decision from the Juvenile Court to attend a sociological-psychological program instead of a sentence due to law 3189/2003⁹⁸. Moreover, the Reception Office is active in providing counseling to youths who possibly may be in a critical state of developing mental disorders or who may be forced to offend because of their living conditions.

Additionally, with the programs meant for former prisoners by the previous organizations, which as Courakis (2008: 1-2) noted, have a limited reach, the projects provided by the state include a symbolic grant and other small allowances provided by several prisoners' organizations (if they still function that is), like the Societies for Released Prisoners. He mentioned that various additional projects are provided by the General Secretariat of Lay Education, the National Organization of Welfare, the Municipalities of Athens and other cities along, with certain technical institutions and

⁹⁶ See: <http://www.klimaka.org.gr/newsite/index.htm> (in Greek language).

⁹⁷ See: <http://kratoumenoi.blogspot.com/2010/05/equal.html> (in Greek language).

⁹⁸ See: http://www.dsanet.gr/Epikairothta/Nomothesia/n3189_2003.htm (in Greek language).

vocational training and support of the EU's Social Fund which, are offered by the law schools of various universities in Athens and Thessaloniki.

The most important programs are the ones implemented by the Unemployment Office (OAED⁹⁹ in Greek language) which includes financial aid for unemployed former prisoners equal to 45 days of work (up to 220,35 Euros), which is distributed in three doses right after the end of their sentence from the penal institutions' social service. Since 1984, the unemployment office finances employers for 3 years with 25 Euros per day to employ former prisoners but, with a rather unique requirement... the employee must find the employment himself/herself. This can prove very difficult considering the prisoners' lack of social networks. Additional programs of vocational training are also financed along, with financed programs with a grant of 16.600 – entrepreneurs for 2 years that include 150 vacancies for former prisoners. The prerequisite for participating in those programs is not to owe money to the state. It must be noted, that former prisoners are not entitled to accommodation and long-term counseling services (Courakis, 2008: 1-2; Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 74-75; Spinellis and Spinellis, 1999: 51-52).

National Statistic Services have proven that these programs are hardly enough¹⁰⁰ to assist the vast number of 5.000 and more prisoners who are released from the penal institutions every year. Courakis (2008: 2) noted that, they are nothing more than “drops of water in the vast ocean”. It is noteworthy that aftercare for prisoners has a crucial role in the political agenda of other European countries. In Germany, there are more than 3.000 Re-entry Centers (usually private) which collaborate with the municipalities, the communities and other religious organizations in order to provide a continuous assistance, even before release to prisoners who are in need (Courakis, 2008: 5). In Finland, when prisoners reach the end of their sentence, they are eligible to rent an apartment via government allowance. The social welfare subsidizes the rent until the prisoner becomes financially independent (Ekunwe, 2011: 420). In Greece, if we consider the width of difficulties that former prisoners have to face, it is no wonder that social, educational and vocational interventions are hard to accomplish (McEvoy, 2008: 41). In this manner, the majority of prisoners end up re-offending by utilizing the connections and knowledge along with the technical skills (mondus operandi) that were acquired whilst incarcerated (Courakis, 2008: 3). For those reasons, a new institution had to be formed. Following a change in the law on aftercare in 2004 (Presidential

⁹⁹ See: <http://www.oaed.gr> (in Greek language).

¹⁰⁰ See also chapter 3.1.

Degree 300/2003), a private-law, state-supervised organization was set up, EPANODOS¹⁰¹ (re-entry in Greek language) (Lampropoulou, 2005: 231).

4.3 EPANODOS

Several times, the state attempted to create and organize a coordinative organization, focusing in the rehabilitation and re-entry of detainees and former prisoners. The formation of a statutory, non-profit organization, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice, named EPANODOS was designed in the legislation of the Greek PC (art. 8 par. 1, law 2776/1999). The main goal of the organization has been “the vocational training and rehabilitation, along with the financial support and the gradual reintegration of former prisoners”.

“EPANODOS designs the re-entry policy and in a smaller scale provides additional services” (Manager).

Even though the design was in the Greek PC, the organization could not be formed without a Presidential Degree; which was finally issued 4 years later, on the 5th of November, 2003. However, this was not enough. For the organization to function properly, a Decision from the Minister of Justice was necessary. The Decision would detail the formation of the organization’s Council Board and was issued after 4 more years on the 3rd of March 2007 (Courakis, 2008: 6).

“EPANODOS was established in 2003 and started operating in 2007. In 2008 the organization started providing services to the former prisoners” (Manager).

“EPANODOS is the first state organized attempt in re-entry. It was supposed to have been formed many years ago. It started operating in the last few years and it has a lot of things to do” (Legal Counselor).

The designing and implementation of EPANODOS’s re-entry programs occurs via a three staged/phased intervention model.

“First is the welcoming phase, where the former prisoners’ request is expressed along with what we believe is their essential needs. After the welcoming phase we provide the information and we refer according to their request, either within the organization or with others organizations” (Researcher)

¹⁰¹ See: <http://www.epanodos.org.gr/> (in Greek language).

In the first stage which is the welcoming stage, the former prisoner expresses his/her request and EPANODOS covers what they consider as essential needs. Their request, is usually financial, however, EPANODOS does not offer money due to limited budgets, other organizations like ONISIMOS and the Hellenic Archdiocese offer money.

“We do not offer money, it is not in our policy, our budget is low” (Researcher).

Exceptions can be made, but they are very rare and take place after they approval of the Board Council. The researcher gave an example of one of their clients who could not afford to go to his hometown in northern Greece. EPANODOS agreed and paid the ticket. The essential needs that are covered by EPANODOS include, shelter for 10 days to a hostel for the first difficult days after release, telephone cards and bus tickets for the public transportation.

“We offer shelter in a hostel, bus tickets and phone cards” (Employment Counselor)

It must be noted that EPANODOS along with ONISIMOS are among the few organizations if not the only ones that provide shelter specifically to former prisoners. According to Courakis (2008: 5), there is no state building available intended for the sheltering of former prisoners. There was one, but it has not been used due to damages that occurred in 1981 after an earthquake. In the second stage the former prisoner follows a consultative process in order for the professionals to detect and define their actual request. The aim of the second stage is to deliver specialized assistance.

“We offer specialized information in matters concerning re-entry, for example the former prisoners know they are entitled to receive the unemployment allowance but haven’t received it yet, without knowing the reason” (Manager)

The organization has a data bank where the former prisoner can get all the necessary information concerning their matters i.e. their criminal record, the prerequisites for the allowance from the unemployment office, employment vacancies and more (Courakis, 2008: 7).

“Every client can visit our offices and look in the newspaper; they can do it by themselves or with our help. There are many who do not know how to look and what to do” (Psychologist)

This specialized assistance is what differentiates EPANODOS from the other organizations sharing similar mentalities. The former prisoners who address EPANODOS will be less troubled when dealing with one of the aforementioned issues for example than attempting to face it all alone. For example when it comes to employment integration, the former prisoners will have to face a rather big filtering. If they attempt to find employment by themselves, they will have to pass six additional

filters which are: a) health issues, b) drug abusers, c) type of offence, d) time of penalty, e) existence or absence of family and f) age. During this filtering procedure many may get disappointed and quit the attempt. Now, if they ask EPANODOS's assistance, the organization will provide some of the filtering via the consulting sessions thus, the client will be more prepared. However, due to high bureaucracy, and the existence of stigma trouble in Greece is more or less unavoidable.

“Many times I have called employers who in the beginning are congratulating us for our efforts but politely decline when we ask them to hire one of our clients” (Psychologist)

The third stage differs from person to person and does not necessarily occur all the time. The professionals offer consulting both psychological and in legal matters and provide a proper network to the former prisoners in collaboration with other organizations. If the person has needs that cannot be covered by EPANODOS then they are referred to other appropriate organizations.

“That is why we have to examine the needs of the prisoners in a long term basis in order to provide the proper assistance with the proper references to other organizations” (Manager)

At the end of the stage, EPANODOS provides the following up in order to see if the intervention was successful.

EPANODOS has created a network with both Greek and foreign organizations which have similar mentalities. Together they have launched many re-entry programs.

“We are members of international and European institutions that have the same philosophy as we do” (Legal Counselor)

Among the Greek organizations is, ARSIS, PRAKSIS, ONISIMOS, KETHEA, OKANA¹⁰² the Greek Orthodox Church¹⁰³, and the unemployment office, the Social Assistance Curators, the Ministry of Justice and various Ministries along with various shelters. The organizations do not overlap; on the contrary, each one continues where the other stops.

“We are forming a chain in order to cover efficiently all the needs of the former prisoners” (Manager)

¹⁰² OKANA (Οργανισμός Κατά των Ναρκωτικών in Greek language/Organization Against Narcotics) is a NGO focusing in drug rehabilitation. Unlike KETHEA, OKANA does not have projects focusing in drug offenders. It has however, conducted important researches concerning that group. See: <http://www.okana.gr/> (in Greek language)

¹⁰³ See: <http://www.ecclesia.gr/> (in Greek language)

According to the manager, EPANODOS's synergy with the unemployment office is very close. Courakis (2008:1-2) clarified that the unemployment offices' programs are the only programs aiming in the professional rehabilitation for former prisoners.

“We are working very close with the unemployment office and we try to take advantage of all the opportunities the former prisoners have in participating in its programs” (Manager)

Additional collaborations are with the General Secretariat for Youth¹⁰⁴ (hereinafter G.S.Y), the General Secretariat for Adult Education¹⁰⁵ (hereinafter G.S.A.E) and the General Secretariat for Gender Equality¹⁰⁶ (hereinafter G.S.G.E). With G.S.Y EPANODOS runs a program for juvenile offenders held in penal institutions. The program dubbed “I can as well- Μπορώ και Εγώ (in Greek language)” includes a workshop where participants can choose between two courses: either car mechanic or computer courses, the program also include Greek language courses for foreigners. The ones who chose the first had practical training in a garage; however, most of the participants chose the second. A degree is provided to every participant in this program.

“Participants can choose between computer courses or car mechanic. The program also includes Greek language courses for foreigners. After finishing their curriculum we try to integrate them into the workforce” (Manager)

“Among the courses, the most successful has been the computer course” (Psychologist)

Along with the G.S.A.E., EPANODOS has designed a project which focuses in training both detainees and former prisoners. Additionally, a project is being designed concerning female detainees with G.S.G.E. The aim of the program is to help them strengthen their maternal role and also assist them in establishing their own business, since they can acquire additional funding from the unemployment office.

Regarding foreign organizations, EPANODOS only two years after its foundation in April 2009 has successfully joined the network of members of the European Organization of Probation (CEP¹⁰⁷). CEP focuses in alternative penalties.

“In Greece the only alternative penalty is community service” (Manager)

Through this collaboration Greece has become the networks' 28th member country. Moreover, there is collaboration with ExOCOP¹⁰⁸ which is a European network with multiple projects focusing in

¹⁰⁴ See: <http://www.neagenia.gr/frontoffice/portal.asp?cpage=NODE&cnode=1&clang=1>.

¹⁰⁵ See: <http://www.gsae.edu.gr/> (in Greek language).

¹⁰⁶ See: <http://www.isotita.gr/en/index.php>.

¹⁰⁷ See: http://www.cep-probation.org/default.asp?page_id=65&news_item=220.

the rehabilitation of former prisoners. EPANODOS has also integrated with other European programs like Grundtvig¹⁰⁹.

“Through Grundtvig, experts in matters of rehabilitation and re-entry are exchanged between our country and others. We collaborate with our Italian and English colleagues that have similar goals with us” (Manager)

EPANODOS’s last registration as members has been with EOEf¹¹⁰. Most of the international level collaborations are through the ESPA¹¹¹ program.

The professionals implementing the programs based on the organizations’ intervention model include psychologists, social workers, employment counselors, sociologists, legal counselors, other health professionals and many volunteers from various specialties. In detail, the social worker offers solutions in survival problems for the former prisoners and guides them through the proper infrastructure and various networks. The clinical psychologist offers psychological support. The research parts are covered by the sociologist. The employment counselor focuses in aiding the former prisoners with finding and securing employment. Finally, the lawyer offers legal advices both to former and current prisoners. It must be noted that the lawyer does not escort them either to the court or to official hearings. The following table shows the professionals and their responsibilities.

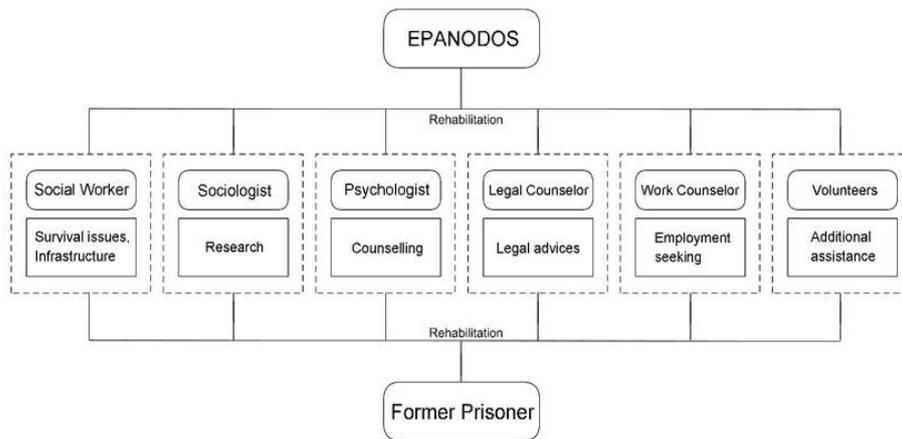
Table 3: Professionals and their responsibilities

¹⁰⁸ See: <http://www.exocop.eu/sixcms/detail.php?gsid=bremen02.c.730.de>.

¹⁰⁹ See: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm.

¹¹⁰ See: <http://www.eoef.org/>.

¹¹¹ Ε.Σ.Π.Α-Εθνικό Στρατηγικό Πλαίσιο Αναφοράς in Greek language/ NRSF- National Strategic Reference Framework, See: <http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/Default.aspx>.



From the table above, we can see that the professionals’ responsibilities differ; their role is to complete each other in order to provide the assistance needed.

“The importance of one professional over the other is completely subjective. Each one of us supports the other and starts working when the other has stopped” (Psychologist).

Volunteers play an important role. Among the interviewed professionals, one had started as a volunteer.

EPANODOS’s projects are meant for every person who has been incarcerated. In some cases the organization assists people who are still detained.

“EPANODOS is open to all former prisoners” (Researcher)

“Sometimes we offer –at least I do- legal consulting to prisoners, usually in matters concerning their release” (Legal Counselor)

Every person can visit the offices and see how he/she can be helped. Despite the fact that this has its risks since every person is unique and requires a different approach. The majority however,

according to the psychologist is foreigners with more men than women. The age categories are from 35-40 years old.

“The majority are foreigners, usually aged 35-40 years old. Out of 10, 8 are men and 2 are women” (Psychologist)

It has been noted in chapter 3 that half of the current inmates in penal institutions are foreigners (Baldwin-Edwards, 2001: 2). In a numeric scale they are more than the locals.

“Half of my clients are foreigners” (Employment Counselor)

This is due to the huge immigration wave which expands every day and to the fact that Greece is still ill prepared for it (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 3). The fact that there more elders than juveniles is because they have more adaptation problems and they usually lack family ties. Juveniles usually have a supportive network; some of the elders do not. There are thoughts of creating an institution focusing mainly on juvenile offenders but this is not certain yet. The existence or lack of family ties along with a supportive network is what actually defines the profile of the client of EPANODOS from that of the average former prisoner.

“The client of EPANODOS is the one who ‘hath not where to lay his head’ (Manager)

These people have many and pressing financial problems and not only, some of them are quite desperate and lacking motivation; they will visit EPANODOS because they face difficulties on a processing level.

“We come to you because you listen to our problems and you don’t treat us as criminals”
(Researcher)

As it has been mentioned this aspect is what differentiates EPANODOS from other organizations with similar mentalities; the fact that it offers specialized information in matters concerning re-entry. It should be noted that the existence or absence of family is not a prerequisite for visiting EPANODOS.

Like all official organizations EPANODS has set its short term and long term goals. The short term goals include the hiring of permanent employees from all the professions in order to cover the personnel shortage. The majority of its personnel are with fixed term contracts which are not certain if they will be renewed after their termination. According to the manager, during the time of the interviews EPANODOS had only 2 professionals working in a permanent basis in administrative

tasks. According to the psychologist, the government has discussed the provision of a budget for social workers but it has not been verified yet.

“A matter where I wanted to focus is that EPANODOS needs to have proper and permanent personnel. This matter is of top priority” (Manager).

“Our short-term goal is to have professionals working on a permanent and steady basis who will know their responsibilities and tasks” (Psychologist).

Raise the public awareness with several initiatives (TV spots, organizing of conferences and more) about all the people who are imprisoned in order to alleviate their stigma and secure the state’s and society’s assistance in EPANODOS’s work (Courakis, 2008: 8).

“A campaign should occur which will inform civilians about prisoners. Not all of them are criminals; a vast majority has done a mistake and got caught” (Researcher)

Secure an allowance to former prisoners and create the prerequisites so that they will be able to integrate to society by themselves without being dependant to any external assistance (Courakis, 2008: 8).

“We are trying to have prisoners integrate by themselves, via the use of their own potential” (Researcher)

Organize and establish a better cooperation with the municipalities, statutory organizations, penal institutions and NGO’s concerning re-offending by recently released prisoners and especially by drug abusers who constitute a high amount of detained offenders (Courakis, 2008: 8).

“There is a lack in communication between the different institutions which according to my opinion is a major problem” (Employment Counselor)

“There should be a program focusing on drug abusers because they are already a big group” (Manager)

The institutional modernization and activation of the Societies of Released Prisoners¹¹², the Committees of Social Support and the Societies for the Protection of Juveniles¹¹³ throughout

¹¹² See: <http://www.lawyer-life.gr/αθηνα/εταιρια-προστασιας-αποφυλακισμενων> (in Greek language).

¹¹³ See: <http://www.epaa.gr/> (in Greek language).

Greece¹¹⁴ and their collaboration with EPANODOS along with their setting up with paid and permanent professional personnel (Courakis, 2008: 8).

“A better design of re-entry should occur” (Psychologist)

Establish a better and more successful cooperation with the Social Assistance Curators concerning the protective supervision of released prisoners (Courakis, 2008: 8-9).

“The Ministry of Justice should make re-entry issues more visible” (Psychologist)

Support the formation of more volunteer groups focusing in aiding former prisoners (Courakis, 2008: 9).

One of the long-term goals is for EPANODOS to be able to provide assistance through a very good system to former prisoners who come to their offices and ask for help, and also to have annexes in other major cities (EPANODOS is based in Athens).

“We are trying to implement a good, structured system that will aid all the people who come to our offices and ask for help” (Psychologist).

“We are trying to have a targeted intervention in order to ensure that the former prisoners who come to our offices will get the provided assistance” (Manager).

“We are trying to create annexes in other major cities” (Employment Counselor).

A major issue with EPANODOS which is common with other organizations is that it is only in Athens. This means that former prisoners from other institutions will either have to visit Athens or come and live in Athens in order to get assistance. This can be problematic due to two reasons. First not all former prisoners have the financial capacity to travel and second, they have to show up in their police stations, hence their trip must be very short.

“The fact that former prisoners have to show up in the police station strands them in one place” (Employment Counselor)

That is why the interviewees said that EPANODOS should create annexes in other major cities.

¹¹⁴ The Societies for the Protection of Juveniles are active already in Athens, Piraeus and Salonika (Sakkoula, 2007 in Courakis, 2008: 8).

Additionally is the organization of shelters, where the former prisoners can stay until they are settled with a home of their own and a job. It should be noted however, that long term stay in this kind of hostels should be avoided due to fear of people becoming lazy or start illegal activities (Courakis, 2008: 9).

Another goal is the preparation from EPANODOS in collaboration with other institutions of educational and vocational programs aiming in the professional integration of detainees and former prisoners in the labor market. Hence detainees can participate even after their release (Courakis, 2008:9).

Continuing is the organization of industries or companies under the supervision of EPANODOS where former prisoners will be employed, along with the proper motivation to become entrepreneurs (Courakis, 2008: 9).

“A new draft of law will soon be enacted which will fund social economy entrepreneurships” (Manager)

Among the goals is for EPANODOS to coordinate its work with similar initiatives from foreign countries aiming in the raising the public awareness towards re-entry and adopting “good practices”; especially, if the initiatives are undertaken by the European Union, the Council of Europe or from other member countries (Courakis, 2008: 10).

“We participate in conferences where we exchange ideas in order to see the good practices our colleagues are implementing abroad and see if we can implement them here” (Legal Counselor)

Finally, is the revision of anachronistic provision of the legal system with certain suggestions from EPANODOS’s Professional Council, or/and from other institutions, which hinder the social integration of former prisoners (Courakis, 2008: 10).

“The state must become more aware and sensitive on re-entry issues; everything that has been happening was not necessarily good or brought positive results” (Psychologist)

It should be noted that even though EPANODOS constitutes the first official, state- supervised organization in the field of re-entry; it was set up with little help from the state. The grant it got was 50.000 Euros and subsequently secured an additional amount of 25.000 Euros. The majority of its activities are funded by donations and private sponsors.

“The majority of our budget has been from private sponsors, banks and the Greek parliament” (Manager).

It is clear, that after its formation and during its brief function EPANODOS has managed to accomplish a great deal of things in the field of aftercare.

“When I got here I found EPANODOS already on a certain level. During the 13-14 months of my stay I have seen the organization making leaps in all the provided programs” (Legal Counselor)

However, according to Cheliotis (2009: 13-14), it was also subjected to various negative critiques. The negative critique concerning the organization was that it lacks conviction in the possibility that every prisoner can be rehabilitated. This has been in reference to a paper presented in the national school of judges by the head of EPANODOS concerning young prisoners in seeking employment after imprisonment. According to the paper, their problems after release appear insurmountable. Given the choice, they would prefer to live inside the institution than outside. This is due to possible chronic drug addiction and an attribute of laziness resulting from their incarceration. He continued by arguing that any rehabilitative hope would be placed on the younger ones ‘where the branch is not yet crooked’. If we take this statement into consideration, then the riots and protests that occurred over the years were nothing more than means of breaking the prisons’ monotony, not struggles and attempts for better living conditions both inside and outside of the institution. Additionally, the head of EPANODOS published a manual instructing citizens how to minimize their vulnerability against criminals, thus intensifying their already existing fear towards them. Cheliotis (2009: 14) concludes his criticism by saying that “it requires quite a stretch of the imagination to believe that such an organization can actually help prisoners find their way back into a community that never wished to incorporate them anyway, more likely, the function of EPANODOS is to provide an ever more punitive system with a veneer of humanism –a ‘human face’, as the suggestive buzzword of the day has it”. Concerning this critique, the manager said:

“Listen, I believe that a negative critique is excused. What EPANODOS has offered is little compared with what it should have offered. I understand it, I am critical about the operation of EPANODOS myself” (Manager)

Regardless of the negative critique, what is important is that EPANODOS exists; the professionals working in EPANODOS are struggling to motivate the former prisoners and sustain an essential re-entry dynamic.

“For those who find motivation or are already motivated the programs are effective” (Researcher)

“We are struggling for the ‘essence’, not the image” (Psychologist)

“So far there has been a remarkable effort from the professional of EPANODOS without much help” (Employment Counselor)

Concerning the programs provided by EPANODOS, there is a qualitative evaluation and it is in a smaller scale. That is because EPANODOS has a limited budget, is located in Athens and has not been functioning for a long time. As it was mentioned earlier, not all former prisoners are from Athens or will come to Athens to receive help.

“I will say that we do a qualitative job which unfortunately does not cover everyone’s needs” (Manager)

“I will grade our programs in a scale from 1-10. Legal support: 9, psychological support: 9, social support: 10, employment seeking support: 6, and finally practical help 3 (1 for the bus tickets, 1 for the shelter and 1 for the phone cards). We cannot offer more at the moment” (Psychologist)

“There is a lack in follow up, due to EPANODOS’ operating for a small amount of time so far” (Employment Counselor)

It is clear from the professionals’ grading that the consulting model is going very well and most of the provided services. An example was provided by the manager concerning the aforementioned qualitative work. When the professional of EPANODOS were designing the educational program with G.S.Y, they went back to their archives to check their files and see if there were any juveniles who have been to EPANODOS and who would want to participate in that new program. They were pleased to learn that a majority was already working. Although it was not certain if it was EPANODOS that made the difference or if it was their motivation, it was nonetheless a very positive feedback.

“I cannot draw a conclusion, but that is a very positive message. It is a valid feedback for our attempts” (Manager)

Time will tell how EPANODOS will manage to survive in the future and how it will manage to assist the former prisoners.

III. EMPIRICAL PART

1. Methodological approach

Rehabilitation of former prisoners is one of the main concerns of social sciences and social policy in particular the last years. However, the majority of the studies conducted were focused on the

prisoners' rather than the scientists' perspective. The voices of the services recipients have to be heard, but so do the voices of the professionals who are asked to develop and deliver those services. In addition, not many people know who actually the prisoners are. They still have the perception that all inmates are criminals, usually of the worst kind. Those issues are presented in this study, via qualitative research, since it is one well suited for matters as sensitive as this one (Konstantinidis, 2007: 106). The knowledge acquired from a qualitative study is important for the evaluation and, later on, the development and implementation of specific programs able to cover the increasing needs of the increasing number of convict offenders and pre-trial detainees, both locals and foreigners, inside and outside the penal institutions.

Mason (2003 in Kostantinidis, 2007: 107) mentioned that a qualitative research aims in developing a holistic perspective, based on detailed data, presented in their natural, social environment. Using solely a quantitative method, the researcher may focus too much on hard data and overlook small but significant details that cannot be reflected in numbers. But with a qualitative approach the researcher can become the "voice" of the interviewed. According to Ezzy (2002: xii), qualitative research is done through establishing relationships with people, places and performances. Qualitative research, along with qualitative data analysis, involves working out how the things that people do make sense from their perspective.

According to Daly (1992), qualitative research is very sensitive when studying specific groups and they adapt in the understanding of meanings, interpretations and subjective experiences. This can be achieved only by stepping into their world, so that their world becomes our world. The interpretive process at the heart of qualitative data analysis involves trying to understand the practices and meanings of research participants from their perspective.

In my research, experience has a main role; through the personal experience of the professional in EPANODOS and through mine in Korydallos institution I study the phenomenon. I tried to use, as much as I could, daily life language, so that my point would come across to people outside of academic circles as well (Gonzalez de la Fe, 2003 in Kostantinidis, 2007: 106).

2. Data collection and data analysis

The tool I chose to conduct my research is the semi-structured interview with individuals. According to Ritchie (2003: 36-37) it is the most widely used method in qualitative research. Interviews as a tool have been widely used in order to access people's experiences and their inner feelings, perceptions of reality and attitudes. Based on the degree of structuring, the division of interviews falls into three categories: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2005 in Zhang & Wildemut, 2009: 1¹¹⁵).

It has been argued that "a structured interview is an interview that has a set of predefined questions and the questions would be asked in the same order for all respondents" (Zhang & Wildemut, 2009: 1). The intention of this standardization is the minimization of the effects of the instrument and the interviewer on the research results. They are similar to surveys, with the exception that they are administered orally rather than in writing. Semi-structured interview is known for its large flexibility, allowing the use of a detailed thematic guide or a skeleton that covers the basic questions that are going to be used in the interview procedure. The process is both dynamic and inductive. The researcher's function is that of a tool in the collection of data and attempts to understand the world through the eyes of the interviewed (Konstantinidis, 2007: 106). According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006:116) semi-structured interviews have several characteristics including the engagement in a formal interview between the interviewer and the respondent, the development and use of an "interview guide".

According to researchers (Kvale, 1996; Kandylaki, 1997; Robinson, 1988 in Konstantinidis, 2007: 106) collecting qualitative data through an interview can be used when the research is focusing in the subjective meaning of a social situation or a phenomenon. The use of an interview allows the analytical reference of an experience using the exact words the research subject has used. Kvale (1996 in Kostantinidis, 2007: 106) stresses that interviews are used in order to ensure larger amount of thematic categories based on the personal experiences of people, on their ideas, their beliefs and their daily habits. Its aim is to get as much knowledge about the interviewee as possible. I decided to use semi structured interviews because influenced by the theory, they provide a clear set of instructions and can provide reliable as well as comparable qualitative data. As suggested by the relevant literature, I prepared the questions ahead of time. I had a paper-based interview guide that I

¹¹⁵ Zhang and Wildemut (2009): Unstructured Interviews: available in: http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~yanz/Unstructured_interviews.pdf.

¹¹⁶ See: <http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.html>.

followed. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed for the analysis and they took place in the central offices of the organization. It was important for me, as the interviewer, not to try to suggest to the person how I was expecting them to respond. My goal was to genuinely listen to the voice of the interviewee (Rice & Ezzy, 1999 in Ezzy, 2002: 68).

My data consists of 5 interviews (n = 5) with specialists, collected in March 2011. The specialists, as I have mentioned in the introductory part are working in the sole official organization in rehabilitation and re-entry service for former prisoner in Greece, EPANODOS. The interviewees included the organizations' Manager, the Employment Counselor, the Psychologist, the Legal Counselor and the Researcher. The Manager is a lawyer and criminology professor in the Law School of Athens. The Manager has a general experience of 20 years and has worked in EPANODOS for 1,5 years. The Employment Counselor has a degree in sociology and a master's degree in criminology. The Employment Counselor has 4 years overall experience and has been working in EPANODOS for a year. The Legal Counselor has a bachelor and masters degree in law and criminology, has been working since 2000 and has been in EPANODOS for 3 months. The Psychologist has a bachelor in psychotherapy and a master's degree in hypnotherapy. The Psychologist has 3 years overall experience and has been in EPANODOS for 6 months. The Researcher is an associate legal counselor with a degree in law and criminology that focuses on the research part in the organization. The Researcher has been working in EPANODOS for 2,5 years.

A research permit was required and obtained by the organizations' council board in order to conduct my research and to comply with the ethical norms and practices. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity; hence I have used their profession as a reference, also omitting their gender. Participation in the interviews was voluntary and based on informed consent.

Based on the existing literature I extensively studied, my research question was formulated as:

1. How feasible is rehabilitation and re-entry in Greece?

Theory is not perceived as a deductive toll but rather as a guiding way to the research process. As a way of analysis I used thematic coding (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 26-37¹¹⁷). The analysis was

¹¹⁷ See:

http://books.google.gr/books?id=lstE3peAdPMC&printsec=frontcover&hl=el&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

conducted in various stages. At first, the interviews were transcribed. Following, I formed and thematized the four main categories: a) rehabilitation and re-entry system in Greece concepts and programs, b) EPANODOS, c) re-offenders and d) initiatives on re-entry. The content of each category was formed by information extracted from the interview corpus and was used accordingly. The categories focus on specific subjects but they are intertwined. They are connected with each other, so the key themes/dimensions can be found in all four of them. The key themes/dimensions were formed in the final stage and, in accordance with various sources (see, for example McEvoy, 2008: 18-19; Enroos, 2010: 4) and they are the following:

Management: A successful management is crucial for the social policy process and hence re-entry process. It is clear that the managing system in Greece is very slow and inadequate. Due to bureaucracy and other factors many sectors did not develop as they should have.

Funding: Every program that needs to be formed and implemented requires money; thus, the existence or lack of funding is a matter of major importance. Many projects stopped due to cuts in funding. Organizations could not be formed due to lack of money and professional personnel cannot be hired in institutions because there were no funds available.

Immigrants: Half of the current prison population constitutes of immigrants, especially illegal ones. The immigration wave in Greece has become very big so, they form a category of their own, with their own unique culture and mentality.

Stigma: In order to have a successful procedure the stigma must be alleviated. Most of the programs stop because of the stigma the former prisoners have. Regardless of their offence, they are branded as criminals and cannot integrate into society.

IV. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

1. Management

Rehabilitation and re-entry as a process in Greece is very theoretical, there are laws, scientific conferences, published articles pointing what should be done, however in reality only few are happening and there is always room for improvement. Re-entry is a political matter and perhaps it does not concern the Greek politicians.

“Rehabilitation and re-entry are fields that have never been properly plowed” (Legal Counselor)

“The difference between theory and practice is absolute” (Psychologist)

“A better and bigger intervention could occur. Re-entry has a political cost” (Researcher)

The description provided by the Legal counselor and the Psychologist encompasses the disorganization and the lack of preparation in the Greek system. To be more specific, it is mentioned by Ekunwe (2011: 420) that a successful reintegration should start the moment the person enters the penal institution. The state is obliged since it is noted in the reformatted Greek PC, to create the preconditions for a successful re-entry. This however, does not occur all the time.

“Re-entry should start from inside prison” (Employment Counselor)

“A preparation must start from inside the institutions” (Researcher)

“There is no preparation” (Psychologist)

As it has already been discussed in chapter 4, the Greek PC does include reintegration programs which were the following: educational programs, recreational activities, employment focused activities and sensitization groups for drug dependants. Several of those programs have been successful, but do not happen in every institution.

“Some of the penal institutions prepare their inmates, not all of them though” (Manager)

Some of the programs occur individually in certain institutions in collaboration with the institutions and the nearby organizations, i.e. an intervention in Thivas' institution does not necessarily occur in other institutions around the country. The programs lack a solid base and continuity. They have fixed term personnel and are usually formed to cover short term needs.

“Prisons have the ‘sound door’ syndrome” (Employment Counselor)

The Employment counselor provided a very good example concerning the aforementioned description. If a boy starts attending school in one prison and later is transferred to a new one, he will lose his coherence and will have to start from the beginning. This is because the teaching methods and teaching material of the new school are different from those of the previous. A majority of them are the outcome of the devotion of certain professionals and therefore are subjected to change, either because the prisoners are too many or because the professionals are requested to do more than they can provide (McEvoy, 2008: 41).

“Based on my personal view, there are people willing to work inside the institutions, especially the social workers, but they are few in comparison to the vast number of prisoners. Whatever program they want to apply is impossible in practice” (Legal Counselor)

One of the reasons for this was that the state when forming programs did not follow the three stages of the social policy process mentioned by Guba (1984) and Rist (1994 in Ezzy 2002: 37) which involve: policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation. The first stage includes the definition of the problem and the evaluation of current options. In the case of Greek former prisoners it is the definition of who enters the penal institution along with the definition of their request and the fact that they have to be perceived individually. There is no filtering as to who enters prisons.

“There should be a better filtering as to who ends up in a penal institution. Imprisonment should be a last resort” (Employment Counselor)

“Every prisoner is different and has to be seen within a different scale” (Manager)

A person who has been imprisoned for a debt, for example, may not need rehabilitation; it is possible that the person did not break the law intentionally and with the existence of alternative sentences, he/she should not have been imprisoned in the first place. The former prisoner’s request, on the other hand, almost always has a practical aspect; usually it is financial. Nevertheless, if the request is put in a long term basis and seen past the coverage of basic needs, it will emerge that their needs are deeper and require a different intervention.

“That is why we need to conceptualize the meaning of re-entry along with the model of re-entry” (Manager)

Policy implementation is the translation of policies into projects. Rist (1994: 550 in Ezzy, 2002: 38) described it as follows: ‘the concern becomes one of how to use the available resources in the most efficient and effective manner in order to have the most robust impact on the program or condition at hand’. In Greece, organizations are making attempts in re-entry in a scientific and managerial level but they lack in infrastructure and manpower.

“Greece is the land of ideas, not action” (Psychologist)

Finally, policy evaluation which is the last in the policy cycle, the issue here though, is if the program objectives have been achieved (Rist, 1994: 553 in Ezzy, 2002: 38). In some programs this can be perceived as a double edged sword. For example the jewelry workshop which was mentioned in the theoretical part by the Employment Counselor. The project is successful but the workshop itself has no connection with the labor market. Only a selective few of the participants will be able to use the acquired knowledge in the labor force.

“Some of the workshops have no real connection with the labor market, for example the jewelry workshop for women” (Employment Counselor)

Thanopoulou et al., (1997: 48) have mentioned that many of the Greek laws and modifications were never fully applied. Moreover, some passed because they had to. In addition Courakis (2006: 9) cited Roscoe Pounds’ (1910) study concerning “*law in papers and law in action*” which defines the difference between theory and practice. This gap according to Mitrosyli and Fronimou (2008: 21) is getting wider due to the non convergence between the ‘reformatory model’ and ‘jurisdiction model’.

“The system in Greece is very theoretical; there is always room for improvement” (Researcher)

“The whole re-entry system is very theoretical. Few things are actually happening” (Legal Counselor)

In the beginning of the chapter I mentioned that re-entry has a political cost and has not been among the priorities of the Greek politicians. This is verified by Courakis (2008: 1), who mentioned that in the field of aftercare the Greek PC does not set the guidelines for many services. For this reason, many NGOs and faith based organizations were formed and took the ‘responsibility’ to provide the

needed care and aftercare (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000: 146). EPANODOS has been the state's first official attempt in the field and it happened quite late.

“There are two or three church funded organizations which provide charity and EPANODOS in the field of rehabilitation and re-entry” (Legal Counselor)

“The first official organization and re-entry is EPANODOS. Before, the whole process was done by NGOs” (Manager)

The way EPANODOS was created mirrors the bureaucratic process which was eloquently described by Hertzfeld (1992 in Cheliotis, 2009: 13) “the buck-passing is consisted: clerk to supervisors, registrar to superiors, deputy mayor to mayor, mayor to prefect and minister, minister to no-one”. This has been one of the best examples concerning the existing gap between laws in theory and laws in practice, as well as the crippling bureaucracy and lack in efficient management tactics and infrastructure in Greece.

2. Funding

The existence and lack of funds has been crucial for the design and implementation of every project, not only in the field of aftercare but in every field. Farrell and Clark (2004: 11) have mentioned that countries with high economic welfare spend more money per capita on criminal justice than countries with less economic welfare. In the case of Greece the finance of re-entry has always been an issue, since it has a political cost. Re-entry has not been the state's main priority as was described in the previous chapter, so as a sector it was never fully funded. This according to the interviewees has had several severe effects both in a general level and in EPANODOS. These effects are getting more ominous during the financial crisis.

“There is a ‘restrained mentality’ due to the crisis” (Employment Counselor)

The lack and the cut of existing funding have affected the research and development sector. As the interviewees mentioned, experts cannot travel easily to participate in international conferences and meet with their European colleagues in order to see the good practices used abroad and implement them in Greece.

“For example, unlike our European colleagues we cannot travel and participate in conferences. Our contact with them is mainly by phone” (Researcher)

Moreover, organizations are closing, personnel are not hired in the institutions and organizations, programs are stopping, shelters are shutting down. The needs of the former prisoners however, continue to grow. The crisis has made the prisoners’ request for covering their essential needs more imminent.

“What I notice is a greater need which is expressed more intensely by the citizens who are in need of EPANODOS’ assistance. They have more requests for shelter and money” (Manager)

“I know that the programs of the unemployment office have been shortened due to the crisis” (Legal Counselor)

To begin with, the states’ assistance towards re-entry has been financial and in some cases it has been inadequate.

“The only assistance the state provides is financial” (Employment Counselor)

There are other ways for the state to help; for example, by providing one of the state-owned buildings to be used as a shelter. Courakis (2008: 5) has mentioned that there is not even one building that can host former prisoners during their first days after release. There used to be one, but it has not been used since 1981, after it was damaged by an earthquake. In the case of EPANODOS we saw that for a private-law, state-supervised organization, it was formed with a rudimentary amount of funds.

“The states’ money is rudimentary and minimal. Of course it could provide better funding so that we could deliver more and improved programs” (Researcher)

The fund EPANODOS receives from the state is not enough to cover the basic expenses and provide the necessary services. Funding is approximately 60-65.000 Euros per year. If we take into consideration the rent, the salaries for the personnel and the services, then we will realize that it is not enough. As I have mentioned in chapter 4, a majority of its funding comes from private donations and sponsorships which have also stopped due to the crisis.

“We have had a cut in our budget. I mean that we were covering many of the prisoners’ needs by donations and sponsorships; these have now been diminished” (Manager)

The most common phenomenon depending in the lack thereof of funding is the hiring of personnel in the re-entry programs, both in the institutions and in EPANODOS. Due to lack of funds, most of the institutions are understaffed and cannot cope with the vast numbers of prisoners; an example was provided by the psychologist concerning the penal institution of Korydallos in Athens.

“In the judicial prison of Korydallos where I have worked, there are only two psychologists, before that there was only one and in 2005 there was none” (Psychologist)

Courakis (2008: 1) mentions that social services inside the institutions have as a rule few specialists which can hardly make a difference to a population of few hundred or more. They can only cover the surface-basic needs. Whatever program they may possibly want to apply will be practically impossible. Moreover, due to the lack of personnel and the lack of funds some institutions require more work from their staff without compensating them. For this reason some workers do only what they have to do; tit for tat.

Another phenomenon resulting from the lack of funds and the lack of personnel is for professionals to perform duties which are not included in their job description. This, as the Researcher, Employment Counselor and Psychologist has noted, has been common in EPANODOS.

“It is common for EPANODOS because it is a newly formed organization, for professionals to perform duties outside of their field of expertise” (Researcher)

“Even though I started working as a psychologist I was asked due to lack of personnel to work on the employment integration” (Psychologist)

“It was common for me to do things outside of my field of expertise. I had taken some responsibilities of the social worker (Employment Counselor)

This of course, has its risks. Professionals may or may not be able to follow through.

Lack of funds affects the programs a lot. Since the state funds are rudimentary, the majority of re-entry programs occur with funds from the EU. The European funds stop once the program is completed. Unfortunately the state does not refund them even if they were successful, thus the program has no continuity.

“The unemployment office has several employment and entrepreneurship programs functioning for brief periods which have the tendency to stop once the grant is over” (Legal Counselor)

A very good example was provided by the Manager and concerned an international pilot program called Integra that took place among penal institutions in 1995. Among the collaborating countries was Finland with the institution of Oulu. The aim of the program was to teach female prisoners how to make jewelry and how to sell them afterwards; train them how to become entrepreneurs. The results of the program were very promising and successful. However, when the European funding stopped, the program had to end. In Greece, the project was taxed with objective criteria which resulted in a tax amount of 1.000.000 drachmas (approximately 3.000 Euros), regardless of any income deriving from the sales of the jewels. The participants could not afford to pay the tax which at that time was quite high. Moreover, there was no refunding from the government. Thus the program had to stop. Many similar programs shared the same fate.

3. Immigrants

It has been noted in chapter 3 that half of the current inmates in penal institutions are foreigners (Baldwin-Edwards, 2001: 2). The immigration wave is getting bigger every day and Greece is still unprepared for it. Whereas immigrants were originating from Greece some decades ago, now they arrive to Greece. The country cannot integrate so many immigrants; many of them still illegal (Spinellis & Spinellis, 1999: 3). They form a unique category due to their different culture and mentality. As I have already mentioned they are the first ones to be held responsible for a crime due to the fear the local population has towards them and they are the first ones to end up sleeping rough after release.

“Many of the former prisoners coming to EPANODOS are immigrants having problems with their legal status or a lack thereof. There aren’t many things that we can do for them since they are illegal; our hands are tied” (Manager)

Many immigrants are imprisoned for petty theft whereas others just for being illegal (Baldwin-Edwards, 2001: 5). In theory they are entitled to request for help and receive the services provided for former prisoners and participate in re-entry programs, but the problem is that they cannot demand anything, both in the field of employment and welfare.

“We have an imprisoned illegal population and on the other hands we have no tools to help them” (Researcher)

Both EPANODOS and other organizations cannot help them find a job if they don't have legal papers nor integrate them in the black market, obviously. Thus, those former prisoners have no choice but to re-offend in order to survive. This is a serious problem which has intensified during the last two years.

4. Stigma

The Employment Counselor said that a person sent to a penal institution has more chances on re-offending.

“Deprivation of liberty equalizes deprivation of work” (Employment Counselor)

Former prisoners are facing many difficulties when they are looking for a job. The lack of training from inside the institutions along with the lack of re-entry programs and the lack of knowledge about what they are going to face once outside are two of the main hindering factors. However, the biggest hindering factor for all former prisoners has been the stigma they have to bear for the rest of their lives. People believe that everyone who has been incarcerated is a criminal and a possible danger for the community. The public is unaware that prisoners are not only killers or rapists but also people who owe money to the state or people who did a mistake and got caught. The director of the rural prison Agya noted (Theodorakis, 2008) that among the crimes, the ones against property and the ones for drug abuse are usually repeated; crimes against life are rarely repeated. Murderers are unlikely to commit another crime (Ekunwe, 2011: 423). Nonetheless, people are not willing to help formerly incarcerated people. An example was provided by the Psychologist who contacted a fast food restaurant that had a vacancy in order to hire one of EPANODOS' clients. The person responsible politely refused by saying that they ran a family business when the 'situation' of the client was mentioned. The reason they said was that it may be awkward for the other employees.

The public cannot be blamed for having this attitude towards former prisoners since their stigma is imposed by the state itself in the form of the criminal record. It automatically bans former prisoners from a vast category of professions.

“The criminal record is a barrier” (Employment Counselor)

“A relevant factor in the re-entry process is the criminal record which apparently is a major barrier for employment integration” (Manager)

The criminal record has been a prerequisite for positions both in the public and the private sector. In the private sector employers can place any requirement they want. This is partially illegal, an abuse from the side of the employers. Data authorities forbid them to ask for a criminal record and yet they do. The Legal Counselor gave a very good example in this matter.

“Let us say that I go and ask for a job. The employer will ask me to provide a criminal record check. I will reply that it is illegal. Will they employ me? No, they will not” (Legal Counselor)

Even for assistant positions like that of a waiter it is required. In other cases, even if they employers will not require a record from the employee they will put him/her through a huge filtering in order to eventually find him/her a flaw.

5. Good practices

Even though the social sector is shrinking due to the financial crisis, affecting EPANODOS as well, it has been noted that things are getting better and there are many good practices ready to be implemented. Primary among these practices is the digital convergence¹¹⁸ which aims in covering the gaps created by the lack of personnel inside the penal institutions.

“The most important program which will occur within the next 2 years is the digital convergence. Digital software into which EPANODOS participates” (Researcher)

The program of digital convergence which was mentioned by the Researcher is going to be software which will be included in all the country’s penal institutions. With this program, digital annexes will be established in every municipality and welfare offices. Among the software’s functions is to inform and prepare prisoners about issues concerning the re-entry procedure 6-8 months before their release. The prisoners will be able to know, where they can get a shelter or where they can get a free meal or even what are the requirements in order to apply for a program in the unemployment office. The biggest obstacle which has been a lack of preparation from understaffed institutions and hindrance from the bureaucratic system are going to be covered from this program. This however is

¹¹⁸ See: http://www.infosoc.gr/infosoc/el-GR/newopis_digital/ and <http://www.digitalplan.gov.gr/portal/> (in Greek language).

not without its hindrances, since it requires for every institution to have several computers and access to the internet. Some institutions do not have money to buy beds for example, much less get computers.

Moreover, after taking into consideration the continuous problem of imprisoned drug abusers and certain health issues that appeared in several penal institutions (i.e. the incident of Tuberculosis in the penal institution of Malandrino¹¹⁹); the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with O.KA.NA started a pilot program funded by the E.S.P.A. initiative in the penal institutions of Korydallos, Patra and Komotini¹²⁰.

With this “strategic’ collaboration the Ministry of Justice aims in:

- a) Evaluating, dealing and preventing the spread of transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis) among the prisoners
- b) Creating the possibilities for therapeutic interventions for prisoners while they are serving their sentence
- c) Evaluating the results of the aforementioned therapeutic interventions within the prison environment
- d) Reducing the death of imprisoned drug abusers

The pilot program is promising and as the current Deputy Minister of Justice Mr Petalotis¹²¹ noted “we are starting a new important strategic collaboration with O.KA.NA, following similar previous activities with University Clinics, Hospitals and private institutions which aims in upgrading the already provided services inside the country’s’ penal institutions. Although the times are difficult, we are innovative and adopt alternative ways in improving the conditions of the penal institutions both for the prisoners and the personnel”.

6. Suggestions

There are many “*rocks in the path from the penal institution to home*”, there are also as many rocks in the design and implementation of re-entry intervention, and their elimination would provide a smoother trail for helping former prisoners.

“The Greek government should start fixing the system. The system should be fair. What is the use of rehabilitation when the system is punishing you; arrest you for not doing anything? They want to rehabilitate someone for what? The person arrested may be

¹¹⁹ See: http://news247.gr/ellada/krousmata_fymatiwshs_stis_fylakes_malandrinoy.860435.html (in Greek language).

¹²⁰ See: <http://kathimerini.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx> (in Greek language).

¹²¹ See: <http://www.sferikos.gr/radio/index.php/2011-11-26-11-03-27/1325-2012-02-28-15-37-37> (in Greek language).

innocent, not a criminal. He does not need rehabilitation, now you want to rehabilitate him for what? Greece has a long way to go” (Prisoner, 2011).

“I wish that the whole problem will not intensify and that a common attempt will be made” (Psychologist).

“The quicker people will mature the easier it will be for them to alleviate the stigma for former prisoners from their mentality” (Researcher).

“The whole system should change, starting from the police and the court system and ending in penal institutions. People who work within the system are doing their best without having any additional help. The state should create more shelters and help practically” (Employment Counselor)

“Judges, criminal investigators and advocates should spend some time from their education inside a penal institution... (Theodorakis, 2011) ... They do, in France; I believe that this is very good because there people imprisoned for minor reasons. By living with them they realize that there have been many incidents of injustice” (Prisoner in Eleona, in Theodorakis, 2011).

“A model that we, as EPANODOS, would wish for, would be for the organization to “give birth” to sister organizations in other cities and have more similar operating systems” (Legal Counselor).

“A different formula should exist concerning prisoners who owe money to the state. These people should not be imprisoned” (Director of Agya in Theodorakis, 2008).

“A new institution should be formed that will have only pre-trial detainees” (Prisoner, 2011).

In Finland, for example, when prisoners are at the end of their sentences, the state provides them with an opportunity to rent an apartment. Automatically they become eligible for a government housing allowance. Their rent is subsidized by the social welfare office until the former prisoners can support themselves financially (Ekunwe, 2011: 420, 428). Furthermore, several scientists believe that in order for professionals to understand the prisoners they should serve some time or have already served some time in prison as well. Only this way they can truly understand what they are going through assist them better.

“When it comes to re-entry a successful organization should be run or at least include a former prisoner among its employees, because they know firsthand their problems. If it is run by ex-prisoners then it is also a way for the government to give job to former prisoners” (Ekunwe, 2011¹²²).

It is a common saying in several prisons that only a prisoner can understand a fellow prisoner.

¹²² Citation from the course: Politics Penology and Corrections.

6.1 CRIS – Tampere

Following this mentality, a community based non-profit-organization was formed in Scandinavia from former prisoners and drug addicts, CRIS (*Criminals Returning Into Society*). CRIS was formed in Sweden 1997 and exists in eight European countries¹²³. The organization's association in Finland started in 2003 and has been operating in seven different localities. The organizations' principal mission is the reduction of society's reliance on incarceration.

In Finland CRIS has “proven useful in cooperating with the government and the society at large by providing services for those in need”. This is because the Finnish penal system assists only 20 per cent of the released prisoners (Ekunwe, 2011: 415). Four keywords define the organizations' concept; these are honesty, solidarity, comradeship and abstinence from drugs. The organizations target groups are ex-convicts and drug addicts who have decided to start a new life and return to society, the goal is the support of prisoners in freeing themselves from the triangle of drugs, crime and prisons. Experienced older members of CRIS try to help convicts in similar circumstances especially during their first period of freedom. They function as an integrating link between new members and society and its authorities on the other hand. Being aware that prisoners after their release are confronted with pre-existing arrays of social networks, plus, many of them have been extremely isolated from those networks which may have resulted in their alienation with their families it provides a social network and functions as a meeting platform for those people. Hence, the re-entry process for those people is not a lonely process (Ekunwe, 2011: 415).

CRIS knows that a successful re-entry should start prior release. For this reason, people are contacted while still incarcerated. The contacts are maintained throughout the sentence and are intensified some time before the prisoner's release. An important gesture from CRIS is that a number of its members wait to meet the prisoner outside the walls of the penal institution. This way they show the new member what true comradeship means. The prisoner must have neither the time nor the place to fall back in his/her old criminal way of living. After release the prisoner will start to build up his/her new life, using the networks of CRIS. Overall CRIS offers peer support, experience

¹²³ See: http://www.kris.fi/files/84-An_international_scientific_conference_on_global_perspectives_on.pdf

and confidential service. The support starts few months before the prisoners' release and continues until the person can cope by himself/herself.

CRIS has been cooperating in several projects, both in national and local level. The goal of the projects is the improvement in the opportunities of released prisoners in education, labor market integration, housing and self support. The services the CRIS offers are being bought by the Finnish Criminal Sanction Agency and the City's social and health care. This is a common practice in Finland, where the state and the city are responsible for covering the citizens' social services. CRIS's services and projects are willingly being financed by the city. According to CRIS's webpage the services include:

- a) Supported housing
- b) Rehabilitative working activity
- c) 5 hour drug rehab
- d) Partial rehabilitation during sentence
- e) Accommodation during the leave from prison
- f) Young offenders programs
- g) Support for community service
- h) Criminal Lifestyle-program

Concluding, the values of CRIS work are the voluntary and mutual agreement to the support of persons who have a history of problems with the authorities. The members and the clients share a similar history with the drug, crimes and prisons triangle. As the members have said, "*it is more difficult to maintain a dishonest lifestyle with staff, which has the same background*". The Staff and Aid person can be reached continuously. The staff function is to bridge the gap between the authorities and the prisoner. This enables cooperation and future planning. Finally, through peer support, it is easier to approach professional help and authorities.

"You can all draw your own conclusions as to what kinds of resources and financial input the work of CRIS takes to achieve the required results in the aftercare of prisoners. I also ask you to consider the financial savings in the future, if we are able to cut short the prison cycle of more and more prisoners. Not to mention the humane treatment of prisoners, the enabling and improvement of their life prospects, as well as the acknowledgement and respect of their human dignity" (Valkama, 2010¹²⁴).

"Members of CRIS Finland are ex-cons, they go inside prisons and they consult prisoners, they are a good example" (Ekunwe, 2011¹²⁵).

¹²⁴ Citation from his presentation in the conference: Global Perspectives on Re-entry.

¹²⁵ Citation from the course: Politics Penology and Corrections.



CRIS participating in the Homeless' soccer cup and CRIS Finland summer camp in <http://www.kris.fi/?id=163>

CRIS members offer a living example of a changed lifestyle to prisoners, an example of clean life and integration to the society.

6.2 Convict Criminology

It is a fact that most studies concerning life inside the penal institutions and life outside were conducted through indirect observation by academics who most of the times as Ross and Richards (2003 in Richards et al., 2011: 199) noted, “were not able to penetrate the secrets and mysteries of the prison world itself”. Similar to what Freek and Kallina (2003) and Theodorakis (2008, 2011) did in their reports, most academics have entered either one or more penal institutions, spend some time touring the premises under escort and interviewed some of the prisoners and the personnel. Later they left to check their collected data and compose their reports. This way of research, scientific as it is, can have several methodological flaws; since the interviewed people are usually being monitored by prison staff or security cameras. “Under these conditions, the responses of subjects are affected and their reliability is inevitably compromised”. In other cases, the published work does not reflect what inmates know about “day-to-day realities of confinement” (Ross & Richards, 2003 in Richards et al. 2011: 199-200; Cheliotis, 2009: 13-14).

For these reasons, a new school appeared in USA¹²⁶ in mid-1990s, the school of Convict Criminology¹²⁷ (hereinafter CC) (Richards & Ross, 2001: 177; Ross et al., 2009: 151; Ross et al., 2010; Richards et al. 2011: 200). The school has adopted the shape of essays and empirical research which are being conducted by its members in order to “educate the public, academics, and policy makers about the realities of confinement, and the social and psychological impediments to

¹²⁶ The worlds' largest criminal justice system is that of the US. Over seven million people are either imprisoned or under probation or parolees (Mays & Winfree, 2005; Wacquant, 2005 in Richards et al., 2011: 198).

¹²⁷ See: <http://www.convictcriminology.org/>.

community re-entry¹²⁸” (Richards & Ross, 2001: 180; Richards et al., 2011: 200-201).. The members consist of convicts, ex-convicts or “non-convicts” who are students or professors of sociology, criminology, criminal justice and related disciplines. The groups’ original members are ex-convicts academics who have managed to combine their past experiences from the penal institution with their present as professors in order to provide a provocative approach to the aforementioned academic studies (Richards & Ross, 2001: 181). Being an ex-convict however, is not a prerequisite to join CC (Richards et al., 2011: 201).

The fact that most of the Convict Criminologists are familiar with the penal institutions’ environment and politics, gives the school an advantage. Convict Criminologists have the ability to compose research plans that assist the needs of both the institutions’ staff and the prisoners. They are familiar with the process, they are accustomed to the institutions’ culture and they can interpret possible hidden meaning behind responses. “With their capacity to empathize with their subjects, they are able to collect better interviews and more reliable data” (Richards et al., 2011: 200-201). Furthermore, senior members function as role models, mentors and advisors for prisoners and former prisoners who are finishing their degree in social sciences.

V. CONCLUSION

Main findings

All resettlement efforts should be about seeking to promote or/and enhance the desistance¹²⁹ associated factors. Simply put, the best resettlement policy not only reduces the pains of imprisonment (being separated from family, be detached from work and being isolated in a negative environment) but also actively seeks the encouragement of those attachments, roles and situations that appear to be associated with success upon release. Of course this is easier said than done (Maruna, 2007: 652).

The Greek PC in general has many innovative practices as we have seen; many of them were also mentioned by the experts in EPANODOS but lacks in the necessary human resources, infrastructure and technical support. Not to mention the lack of funding which during the last years and especially

¹²⁸ Their work is important. In Greece for example, according to Lampropoulou (2005: 206) the limited state awareness of the usefulness of criminological studies, funding and support has resulted in fragmentary and unambitious studies.

¹²⁹ The study of desistance essentially asks why individuals stop offending. Research in this area has particularly highlighted that imprisonment interferes with, and is detrimental to, the maturation process that supports offenders stopping offending (Jewkes, 2007: 721).

this year, it is more crucial than ever; Plus, the huge immigration wave and the stigma which still is not alleviated. Thus it cannot accomplish in creating new programs and of course keep running them. They are kept only in papers, only in legislation, sometimes they can even be cancelled and instead laws from previous decades are used that are considered “ancient” in modern terms and are not aligned with the existing state. As a result they cannot solve the daily problems faced by offenders along with their social and professional rehabilitation (Mitrosyli & Fronimou, 2008: 31; Thanopoulou et al., 1997: 52-53).

From a comparative perspective and based on case study examples of the Greek penal system, it seems to be evident that Greek judiciary still exhibits far greater propensity to pass custodial sentences (Cheliotis, 2009: 7) so, it still trust the idea of punishment and penalty, which leads to the fact that the penal institutions are crowded and become the most important institution of penal institution’s administration. Penological history itself has examples of reformative initiatives that have fallen prey to “administrative convenience”, a term given by Rothman (1980 in Cheliotis, 2006: 186), to say that they have been utilized mostly as means to deal with operational difficulties like the penal institution’s overcrowding, or the institutional order and less to promote their originally intended rehabilitative aims.

As Owers (2005: 12) pointed, what happens at the end of the sentence is crucially dependent on what happens during it. This is a serious work that needs to start at reception, not a few weeks before release. Rehabilitative interventions-especially drug treatment and help with problems such as finding accommodation or/and employment, that were supposed to be delivered “through the gate” could contribute to the reduction of re-offending. Because of this, many offenders leave the premises in a no better, and sometimes considerably worse, condition than the one they had before imprisonment (Hudson et al., 2007: 631; Richards & Ross, 2001: 178). As Karydis and Koulouris (2002) noted, “the lengthier sentences may well be a mean managed by judges in order to control the release process before even offenders are placed behind bars” (Karydis & Koulouris, 2002 in Cheliotis, 2009: 7). As the head of the Lawyer’s Association of Thessaloniki mentioned, “the judicial system of Greece produces more offenders than the penal institutions can hold”. In simple words, the more people are locked, the more former prisoners are going to be created (Maruna, 2007: 651). The conditions existing inside the penal institutions are not what someone would expect from a European country in 2011. Already after a decision the European Court of Human Rights fined Greece for the existing inhumane conditions in the penal institution of Ioannina. In the time of financial crisis, Greece is called to pay 500.000 Euros (Ethnos, 28 February 2012). Due to this, the

Ministry of Justice vote for the release of approximately 700 prisoners who have served part of their sentence which does not exceed 5 years.

In order to develop a new concept, methods and practices of penalty and penal systems, it is important to consider that each national system of justice and penalty follows the social, cultural, political and social systems of that particular society (Ezzy, 2002: 37). In the Mediterranean countries the sociopolitical system and judicial system was not developed that fast as it did in the rest of Europe. Re-entry is not more mature in Greece as it is in Portugal for example. The reason for this was that, as a country, Greece has not experienced democracy until 1974¹³⁰. After that year, when democracy was restored, the new political system was established and the social system with all its references was delayed as a result.

Therefore, as the former Minister of Justice Mr. Kastanidis¹³¹ (2010) stated, the process of change of the penal system is a multifaceted process, which takes time and which needs to be seen as a multiple layer of several actors as well as values of the prevailing society. European countries have proceeded further on their agendas. What for Greece may be new, for other countries can be automatic, daily. In Greece things need time to mature. The faster they mature, they easier it will be. It is possible that ideas do not ripen so quickly but they take effect soon. Rehabilitation and re-entry may not have advanced; however, the required procedures have started. EPANODOS has been created, re-entry is now among the states' political agenda, and new programs are implemented. I believe that the positive results will appear in short time.

Dissemination of results

Krueger and Casey (2000) mentioned that it is recommended to provide the finished results to the participants of the research, should they ask for it. A gesture as such shows that the researcher valued their participation, and also demonstrates what was done with their input. Assuming issues of obtaining their consent for publication of the study have been covered in the early stages of the research, the questions left to be answered are the following: what is the research going to offer to all parties involved and how it could aid future studies.

¹³⁰ Between 1967 and 1974 Greece was under military junta.

¹³¹ See: <http://www.newstime.gr/?i=nt.el.article&id=20987> (in Greek language).

Finishing the study I will provide complete copies to every participant. This was one of the requirements from EPANODOS when I requested their permission to conduct my research. The recorded interviews will not be published. I will be expecting feedback from them, as promised, in order to make the proper evaluations. Moreover I intend to publish my findings as an article in order to benefit the scientific community.

Since it provides an in depth study of a topic, that of the rehabilitation services of former prisoners, but from a different perspective, that of the specialized personnel, which has not been used before, and from the only official, newly formed organization, along with identification of each professional's opinion; the research can be used for further study. Moreover, the same participants can be benefited by having a chance to have their voices heard and acquiring an insight to their community from another professional and academic standpoint (Krueger and Casey, 2000).

Ethical Issues

Ethics in qualitative research have a unique importance due to the immediate and frequent contact between the researcher and the people interviewed. In my research I did not address the participants by name, but by their profession. I clarified that their names will not be mentioned. The participants shared their professional and daily work life in the organization through their experiences in a secure and discreet environment. Trust was important in the development and establishment of relations between me and the interviewees since anonymity and trust issues not only have a moral dimension but also they affect the quality and procedure of the research (Konstantinidis, 2007: 108). The participants' permission for the conduction of the research is probably the most important ethical issue in the qualitative research procedure (Finch, 1984 in Konstantinidis, 2007: 108). In this research I applied for permission explaining in paper the structure of my research and the reasons for conducting it. Moreover, I included a copy of my questionnaire and a reference letter from my supervisor. Additionally I agreed on sharing the results with them once it was finished.

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Appendix I

Questions

Professional's background

1. What is your profession?
 2. What is your education?
 3. What is your working experience?
 4. How old are you?
-
1. How do you understand the concept of the rehabilitation and re-entry system in Greece?
 2. What is included?
 3. Are there differences between theory and practice?
 4. Are there any similarities?
 5. What is the main focus of rehabilitation and re-entry?
 6. What are the professions and which are playing the bigger role?
 7. What is the practical concept of the system?
 8. What is the contribution of the state in them?
 9. What are the given services and programs?
 10. How do they work?
 11. Do they start from inside the penal institutions?
 12. What does EPANODOS offers and where does it focus?
 13. Do you face financial difficulties, especially now with the crisis?
 14. What are the short and long term goals?
 15. Who are your target groups (men, women, immigrants, locals, drug addicts)?
 16. Do you cooperate with other organizations?
 17. Do you cooperate with international ones as well?
 18. Which are the new challenges in rehabilitation and re-entry in Greece?
 19. How effective would you judge the given programs?
 20. Are you aware of the percentage of re-offenders and according to you, what is the main problem for it?
 21. What are the options for development in Greece about rehabilitation and re-entry?
 22. Are there any plans, or ideas, any good practices ready to start?
 23. Is there anything more you would like to add?

Appendix II

The journalist Stavros Theodorakis and the cameraman Fanis Karagiorgos after a special permit from the Ministry of Justice entered and spent 3 days in the agricultural penal institution of Agya in Chania Crete. They talked with prisoners and recorded their daily life in all of the institutions places. The places include the cells, the restaurant, the courtyard, the visiting area, the animal and farming units that function outside of the institution's perimeter.

The inmates, among them many sentenced for life, talk about their life before prison, the institution's conditions and also for their plans after release.

The show "Protagonistes" aired on December 17th 2008.

Appendix III

On this show, the journalist Stavros Theodorakis along with the cameramen Maria Marraki and Xristo Spanakos and the journalists Lina Papadaki, Stefanos Gogos and Vangelis Georgiou spent 2 days in the Special Juvenile Detention Institution of Avlona. Theodorakis through the personal stories of the interviewed inmates presents the condition of the institution and their daily life along with the problems they are facing. The offenders who talked to the journalist included:

Stephen, 21 years old, the "*newcomer*" who has been imprisoned only 5 days ago after robbing the kiosk of his village. He is a chronic drug addict and all he wanted was to see his family.

Romeo, the "*old one*", he is serving time for armed robberies and for attempting to kill a police officer. He has mentioned the fights in the hallways and the unwritten laws of the "elder" prisoners inside the cells that everyone has to follow without a question.

Savvas, from Albania, the "*ideologist*" who blames the penal system and said that "*if someone enters the penal institution in the age of 18 and goes out in the age of 30, he does not have any other alternative than re-offending. 80% of the offenders returns, the other 10% dies from drug abuse*".

Minas, the "*student*" who is accepted in the technical university and takes few hours leaves from the institution in order to attend his courses. His professors are aware of his situation whereas his classmates are not. He is 20 years old and serves a 12 year sentence for possessing drugs.

Mohammad, the “*lifer*”, sentenced for life before he turned 20 he was sentenced 3 times for life for a murder he insists he has not committed. He is married and a father of two children.

Pantelis, the “*writer*” he has served 6 months of his sentence and he is attending the institution’s high school. He said “*no matter how noble is your heart, if you stay in prison for a long time you forget everything. When you think that life is unfair and judges are unfair, then you change, you lose your humanity. Your heart hardens*”.

Giorgio, the “*politician*” from Moldavia whenever he gets the opportunity he blames the penal system. He has a kidney failure and attends the B grade in high school. Every 2 months he is doing blood dialysis in the hospital of Korydalos.

Ali, the “*actor*” from Afghanistan his sentence is 12 years for drugs. He participates in the institutions’ theatrical groups. His complaint is that his parents do not believe that he is imprisoned.

Sasha, the “*mathematic*” from Lithuania, he was awarded from the Mathematical Society by participating in their contest through the institution.

The show “Protagonistes” aired on May 15th 2011.

Appendix IV

In this report, which has taken place in 2011, the camera probably for the first time records the daily life and routine of women imprisoned in the female institution of Eleona Thiva. Stavros Theodorakis talked to women serving time for: financial crimes, drugs, robberies and murders. Among the prisoners the people who talked where:

Konstantina, “Tina” of C wing, a judge who serves time for participating in a scandal concerning judges.

Ioanna from Thessaly who wants to “demolish prisons.”

Nantia, who describes herself as inmate and not as imprisoned and who is being fed only with juices for the last 249 days.

Santo a 24 years old from Albania who lives in her cell with her 2 ½ old son.

Thamar from Georgia who “for the sake of a man”, serves time for drugs.

K. a juvenile with a Japanese mother and an Egyptian father, she hopes to be released very soon.

Eleni a lifer who has served 12 years “she has done everything” from robbery to murder.

Sofia, a prisoner who works in the library and supports that the prisons’ school is “an oasis next to hell”.