

Job Shadow Panevezys Correction House November 2017



About Panevezys Correction House:

The Panevezys Correction House is the only one of Lithuania's 11 penal institutions to house female offenders.

Currently all women and underage girls convicted in Lithuania (with the exception of prisoners serving a life sentence) serve their sentences at the Panevezys Correction House irrespective of their previous convictions, severity of the crime committed, regime or other criteria. At present, an average of 265 convicts serve their term here, including first-time offenders, repeat offenders, underage girls, women raising children (under the age of three years) in the mother-and- child unit, and women sentenced to punishment in the form of arrest. The staff of the Panevezys Correction House consists of 143 employees. 1 % of the inmates (2017) have higher (university/college) education, 6 % have vocational education, 34 % have secondary education, 34 % have basic school education, 17 % have primary education and 8 % have no formal education. Inmates under 16 years of age must attend compulsory secondary school. Older prisoners have the opportunity to attend further education.

Organization:

The visit was planned in collaboration with the deputy director of Panevezys Correction House, Loreta Skrickiene. During the planning process we were in regular contact via email and we received a program of content for each day before we arrived. Practical organization was also carried out in cooperation with our host.

The program was as follows:



Tuesday 21. 11.17

- At 1200 it was time to meet at the prison and be given an orientation and tour.
- At 1300 there was a meeting with vocational teachers at the prison.
- At 1430 to 1730 we participated in the stress management and art therapy classes.
- At 1400 to 1545 we participated in primary education.
- At 1400 to 1545 we participated in cooking class.
- At 1800 we travelled by car to visit the “Women and child” centre.
- At 1930 we went to the city centre to have dinner with our host, Loreta Skrickiene.

Wednesday 22.11.17

- At 0900 to 1530 we participated in a number of classes (English, mathematics, Russian, Lithuanian)
- At 1100 there was a meeting with the teachers from primary, basic and secondary education.
- At 1300 to 1600 we participated in the hairdressing class.
- At 1300 to 1600 we participated in cooking class.
- At 1600 to 1730 we attended a school performance on Lithuanian history and tradition.

Thursday 23.11.17

- At 0900 to 1500 we participated in biology, ICT, Lithuanian and mathematics.
- At 1300 to 1500 we participated in sewing class.
- At 1500 we attended a summary meeting with the prison staff.

The goal of our job shadow visit:

The aim of the visit was to follow regular classes and courses in different subjects to gain an understanding of the goals, methods and certification in another country. We focused on identifying best practice, the use of ICT and how foreign inmates were included in education.



Prison policy:

Education plays an essential role in the prison system. The Lithuanian Penal Enforcement Code supports inmate education and training based on European Council Recommendation 87 for European Prisons, “to provide opportunities for all prisoners to pursue at least some of their individual needs and aspirations, to improve the prospects for their successful social resettlement, the morale and attitudes of prisoners and their self-respect.”



Our team received a guided tour of the prison on 21/11/17:

There are separate sections of the prison house, including areas for first-time offenders, repeat offenders, mothers with children, women participating in the drug rehabilitation program and women under arrest. The average sentence length is six to seven years at Panevezys.

Visit room – this room is open for visits from lawyers, friends etc. (any approved visitor). The room is divided into two sets of three cubicles with a glass dividing wall. Telephones are used to communicate with inmates behind the glass screen. There is also access to a public telephone in the inmate area. For the ‘common regime’ category inmates, two fifteen-minute phone calls (+ one extra call) per week are permitted. ‘Light regime’ category inmates can have one call a day (+ one extra call), ‘strict regime’ category inmates – two calls a month (+ one extra call).

Visits from family members take place in a separate room, which is more open, with groups of tables and chairs around the room and toys available. More than one family may use the room at the same time. Family visits can be: short-term (until 3 hours) and long-term (until 24 hours). There are three bedrooms, with a double bed in each, available for overnight visits.



A prison shop is located outside the school building. Maximum allowable sum for shopping is established by the law depending on the group/inmate category (‘common regime’ category inmates can spend 110 EUR a month, ‘light regime’ category – 148 EUR a month, ‘strict regime’ category – 72 EUR a month). Inmates attending school only, receive around 3 euros per month as a social benefit. Inmates working in the prison’s house-keeping unit can earn from 35 EUR to 196 EUR a month (the average income is 35-70 EUR a month). Those who work in the state enterprise operating at the correction house can earn from 1 to 100 EUR a month (depending on the amount of the work done). Unfortunately we were unable to visit the shop, but the guide explained that basic foodstuffs etc. are sold here.

The canteen is located in the same building as the school. The cookery classroom is at one side of the canteen area. In the prison library, one inmate trustee teaches basic

computer literacy to small groups. The library is well-stocked with a good range of books and has five computers at desks.

The school also has a large auditorium with a stage and seating where various events and sessions are scheduled for the whole inmate population.

Living spaces – dormitories with between four and twenty inmates to a room are common. Inmates have a single bed and one locker/chest of drawers. Some inmates have their own TV here (provided by themselves/their family) but there are TVs provided in communal areas.

Repeat offenders are housed separately to first-time offenders but the accommodation is of the same type. They are also able to access the school and courses.

The addiction treatment unit is a separate area and inmates attending the program live in the unit full-time. They do have the option to attend some classes in school as well if they wish. The program is full-time for one year, following a three-month preparation course from which the most motivated students are selected. The rooms are smaller, with two or four inmates living together. The therapist is an ex-addict who works exclusively in the unit with this group. There is a group room for therapy and a separate kitchen shared by the inmates in this unit. While there is no specific follow-up program run by the prison, inmates who are released can voluntarily access a program on the outside and the prison will help them to connect with this team on release.

The prison also has a small Catholic chapel on site where priests can visit and hold services. Other faiths are also allowed access to this chapel for visits from officials. For larger services the school auditorium is used.

The prison also houses a sewing factory, run by a state-owned company independent of the Justice Department. Many inmates choose to work in the sewing factory.

The medical unit has a sickbay where inmates can stay for up to seventy-two hours. The unit can carry out some basic medical procedures and prescribe some medicines; a gynecologist is also on site at specific times during the week. More serious illnesses and childbirths are treated outside the prison in hospital. There is also a dentist working in the unit, again for basic procedures and check-ups.

The mother and child unit inside the prison is also a separate unit. The mothers have their own rooms, shared with their children. A doctor is on site and the unit has a playroom, laundry room, bathrooms and separate kitchen. Mothers are taught about hygiene, food preparation, cleaning and other child-rearing skills. Mothers accommodated outside the prison in the mother and child house are free to visit the unit to see friends and visit the doctor. Mothers are permitted to live on the unit until their children are three years old, after this the child must be placed with a family member or in care if there is no conditional release for the mother. The unit can house up to twelve mothers with children at a time.

Throughout the prison inmate's art and craft work is displayed everywhere. Colorful murals decorate the walls in the mother and child and medical units. There are large

numbers of plants and flowers in halls and rooms. This is due to a social project initiated in the prison called 'Green Spaces'. The inmates are encouraged to grow and care for plants and flowers during their sentence.

The mother and child house is located outside the prison in a suburb of Panevezys and was opened in April, 2016. Despite initial opposition from the neighbors the project has so far been successful, with no violations of conditions by the nine inmates housed here to date. Five mothers are currently living in the house with their children, they each have a large room and there are two shared kitchens, bathrooms and large living/play rooms – one on each floor. The house is manned at all times by a guard (working in shifts) who also teaches the inmates about cooking, cleaning, childcare etc. and helps to find activities in the town e.g. festivals, children's groups. Social workers visit the house weekly and a psychologist also visits. New mothers are observed in the house for up to four months to ensure they are functioning well and caring properly for their child, if there are problems or violations of the conditions they can be returned to the prison.

The mothers described an average day in the house – 'taking care of the children, preparing food, going for a walk, going to the shops, playing in the garden, gardening, cleaning – just regular life! The best thing about the house is being able to have your kids with you until they are four, being able to go outside, go to the park – the kids in the prison don't see the outside world at all, some of them are afraid of people or public transport when they come out, this is much more normal for our kids.'

Informal education:

The Panevezys Correction House has a well-developed programme of informal education, with a range of activities directed towards self-improvement. In addition to a compulsory social rehabilitation programme which focuses on social and legal education for integration into society on release, the Panevezys Correction House runs 24 different training, educational, correctional and psychological programmes, engaging about 90 % of all inmates. Available programmes take a holistic approach to rehabilitation with training on healthy living, stress and anger management, and creative arts.

Formal Education - Vocational

The Panevėžio Profesinio Rengimo Centras is the biggest vocational training centre in Northern Lithuania and has been responsible for vocational training in Panevezys Correction House for the last twenty years. The centre itself has over 1000 students studying a range of professions, including mechanics, building, electronics, agriculture and the services – hairdressing, cooking, cosmetics, massage etc.

The inmates in Panevezys can access three professional courses: sewing, cooking and hairdressing. These are "one year" programmes, which result in formal qualifications, the same as students outside the prison receive. If inmates are released before they complete their programme they can finish this at the training centre in Panevezys. Courses run from September to June in each profession. Short courses are also offered, a

gardening programme has just been completed and inmates receive an informal school certificate for this.

Entry requirements are broad, even those without basic education can access the training. Currently access to the programmes is free and unlimited; some inmates complete all three programmes during their sentence. However, the Lithuanian government is currently considering limiting inmates to one free programme. Official citizenship or residency of Lithuania is required for vocational training, foreign citizens/residents can only access informal/short courses. The prison currently has two inmates without Lithuanian citizenship, but both have residency permits and are therefore able to study. Foreign national inmates without residency are relatively rare in the Lithuanian system at the moment.

The teachers explained that the inmates of the Panevezys Correction House are very keen to undergo vocational training. Last year 33 % of inmates graduated with qualifications in dressmaking, cooking and hairdressing.



The courses are weighted at 30% theory and 70% practical training, with 120 hours given to theoretical subjects, including: language, economics, aesthetics and civil security. Practical and theory examinations take place at the end of the course. Lesson planning follows the training centre's curriculum for professional qualifications, which is a national curriculum. Writing CVs and interview skills are built into the programme to help inmates prepare for work.

Formal Education – Academic



The school in Panevezys Correction House employs ten teachers' altogether, they teach some classes in the prison and some classes at the secondary school in the town. The same qualifications are offered inside the prison as outside and the classes follow the national curriculum from grades 1-4 primary, through grades 5-10 basic and up to grade 12 upper secondary. Formal certification is achieved via the national school system and issued by the local partner school.



External examiners are able to visit the prison to assess qualifications. One student is currently studying a university degree. The school currently has about 80 students, 50% of the inmates have not completed basic education on entry (up to grade 10, lower secondary). Schooling in the prison is offered for those who have not completed their basic education previously. Schooling is compulsory for the inmates under 16 years.

Some students may not wish to attend school but must come to classes as part of the conditions of their imprisonment (if schooling is included into their sentence plan). For these students the teachers try to talk to them and encourage them to see the positive benefits of completing their education. They have a lot of discussion and support when starting their education to motivate them to participate and this generally works well.

The school relies on documentation from the inmates' previous schools/colleges to assign levels and courses. Some diagnostic testing may also be used but this is relatively rare. There are some problems when documentation does not match what the inmates believe they have achieved previously, or when their skill levels appear to vary greatly from the expected level. Currently, approximately 20 students (25%) are unable to read and write. These students are enrolled in the primary education group (grades 1-4) and learn basic reading & writing (Lithuanian), Math's and English. These women are usually of Romany origin and have had very little experience of education previously. In many cases they do not speak Lithuanian but the teacher is usually able to communicate using Russian in the first instance.

ICT – there is no access to the internet outside the teachers' office. Teachers can use the internet to find and print resources or download multimedia resources for use in the classroom via USB. Most classrooms have one PC for the teacher only, but the largest classroom (often used for the primary level group) has 2 extra PCs and a SMART-board attached to the teacher's PC. There is an ICT room with 9 PCs on the Windows 7 OS with Microsoft Office 10 installed. These PCs are also without internet capability (for security reasons) and therefore some programs are unavailable for use.

Budget – the funding for school teachers and equipment comes from the school and not the criminal justice system. Allocation is based on need; however there are strict restrictions on what can be brought into the prison. For example, there are no practical's/experiments in the sciences as the resources cannot be taken into the prison.

Inmates need to like and respect the teachers to build good relationships. One advantage is that the teachers are not employed in the prison system, they are seen as separate to the guards and students call them, 'people from freedom'. They are a link to normality and the outside world for many students. As students begin to make progress and achieve goals they become much happier in education and positive towards learning. They know they will have exams and want to achieve qualifications to show what they have learned.

Higher grade students have ethics lessons as part of their educational development. The classes are focused around developing a sense of right and wrong. They use films and examples of ethical dilemmas to explore a range of issues and discuss good and bad in different situations. Sometimes issues raised can be directly relevant to students' own cases and if there is a potential for conflict this can be a concern for the teacher, but the students have dealt with this confidently and sympathetically to date.

Thanks to our host:

We would like to thank our host and her team in Panevezys for doing a great job with the organization of our visit. A special thanks to Loreta Skrickiene.



Thanks also to the inmates who spoke to us. They gave us a present when we were going home, chocolates with Lithuanian text on. The text means: “start the day with a smile”.

When three great days at the Panevezys Correction House were over, we drove to Vilnius and travelled home by plane the next day.



Results and impact attained

Our key results from the trip are that we have observed many different courses and methods from primary, basic, secondary, vocational and informal education. We have a good sense of how teaching takes place in this prison and we have identified examples of best practice in teaching and learning. We have one example of course certification from the prison. We have also gained great new contacts for our project.