

Abstract

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Communication behind the grids: the experience of the prison radios

There are two basic goals for the law enforcement nowadays: on one hand, all those who are judged by the independent judiciary to be separated from society and on the other hand to do everything to ensure that the prisoners have the chance to reintegrate into the community. The realization of the above resocialization objective can be facilitated by a number of methods.

In 2005, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and the BBC signed a cooperation agreement about prison radios. This is how the Prison Radio Association was set up in 2006, and the world's first prison radio started its broadcasting in the HM Brixton Prison in 2007. Since 2013 the PRA broadcasted in more than one hundred UK and Wales prisons and 99% of prisoners have heard about the program today.

Since that time, similar initiatives have started in Scotland, Sweden, Israel, Australia, Trinidad and Tobago. And in 2014, the first prison radio in Central-Eastern-Europe started its broadcasting in Hungary at the Vác Prison.

All those experiences show that even those underrepresented groups like prisoners could benefit a lot from some aspects of freedom of expression. PRA is an example of everything that is commonly referred to as the third leg of the three-stage media system, the alternative or community media. It is built on the content created by prisoners and broadcast to the prisoners. With this new tool, prisoners have begun to engage in entertainment, learning and development to be able to break out from the periphery.