

# **B-COMPETENT: Boosting Competences in Penitentiary Staff in Europe**

## **TRAINING NEEDS REPORT OF CIVILIAN PRISON STAFF IN SPAIN AND CATALONIA**

(Observatory of the Penal System and Human  
Rights)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Regarding the national report on training needs in the case of Spain and Catalonia, we must begin by saying that it has been impossible to follow the work plan stipulated by the project, not only due to the circumstances of global health emergency but also due to the difficulties of making prison administrations an active participant on this project, and the almost null existing public information in this regard. The results presented in this report are therefore partial, being based only on a part of the foreseen sources.

Like the other partners of the consortium, we actively participate in the preparation of the documents to work on this Work Package. Regarding the interviews, from the OSPDH team we actively participate with opinions on the documents prepared for the consortium, so that in some cases, for example, the answers would allow broader responses. In this sense, we must highlight that when we sent the questionnaires to the Deputy Director General of Rehabilitation and Health Programs of the Catalan Prison Administration, Mr. Carles Soler, although he stated that it was interesting, he wanted to note that some of the questions offered excessively dichotomous answers (yes or no), which made it difficult to pronounce on some points, for example, on initial training. On the other hand, as responsible for **Deliverable 2.1 Training needs report of civilian prison staff in 6 countries**, we prepared and sent to the other partners of the consortium a document of general methodological guidelines so that all national reports could follow in order to obtain the results that would be used to prepare the aforementioned Deliverable.

But, as has been advanced, unfortunately we have not been able to develop all the methodology foreseen for the preparation of the document for Spain and Catalonia, since we have not been able to obtain answers to the questionnaires or deliver the focus groups, having to limit ourselves to the analysis of the training curricula offered by administrations. In the latter case, we have not been able to access all the documentation necessary to carry out an in-depth study.

Already on March 11, contacts with the Catalan prison administration began at the hands of Mr. Carles Soler, through which he was presented with this project, its objectives, and the methodological needs required. All this exchange was paralyzed on March 14 as a consequence of the Royal Decree 463/2020, which declared the State of Alarm for the management of the health crisis caused by COVID-19<sup>1</sup> and extended up to six times by decision of the Plenary of the Congress of Deputies, in the sessions held on March 25, April 9, April 22, May 6, May 20 and June 2020 ending on June 21. As of June 16, we had resumed this contact and, given that the institution was in full de-escalation, we were referred to the person in charge of Communication and External Relations of the prison administration. After many weeks, he announced that given the nature of this investigation they should consult with the person responsible for data protection of the Department of Justice, as well as the Area that manages the research and ICT issues of the Secretariat, and requesting us more information and our CVs. It will not be until August 6th that we will receive authorization to carry out this investigation of the Secretary of Criminal Measures, Reintegration and Attention as well as the Collaboration

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2020-3692](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2020-3692)

Agreement and confidentiality document of the Planning and Strategic Projects Area. It should be noted that during this process we have requested to hold focus group with those responsible, but we have not found an answer.

In the case of the central state prison administration (General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions -GSPI-, which is in charge of all the Spanish prison, except those of Catalonia), after some informal contacts with workers from the central state prison administration, without success, we achieved, at the beginning of July, a specific contact that was kindly provided by Mr. Soler. We then wrote to the GSPI Deputy Director General for Open Environment and Alternative Penalties and Measures. From there the proposal was sent to the unit in charge of coordination and institutional relations to assess the relevance of the administration's collaboration with the questionnaires.

In the meantime, we also contacted Mrs. María Puerto Solar Calvo, lawyer of the GSIP and who collaborates as a liaison of the administration for EuroPris. We managed to have a virtual meeting with her on August 5th to whom we could personally explain the project. Although Mrs. Solar expressed her interest in the project and explained some things about the functioning of the administration, she expresses serious doubts about the possibility of obtaining information in this regard as much of this information is not collected publicly, or is dispersed among other organizations, such as workers' unions, etc.. It will be on August 12th when she informed us that the GSPI does not see the utility of the project at this time, given that the respective unit had many other requests for collaboration and few resources, and that the greatest effort of the administration at the time was in managing the de-escalation and the new Covid infections that were appearing in prisons.

In the case of Spain, one of the most affected countries in Europe, the decision of the central government was to decree the State of Alarm, which meant reducing economic activity to essential services and establishing a generalized confinement of the population. This new reality represented a huge management challenge for public administrations that were not prepared to respond to the pandemic, but, in particular, it was even more complex to manage for places such as prisons where large numbers of people live together and where the appearance of the virus could unleash a very serious situation, as the most important human rights organizations warned from the beginning, starting with the United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights.<sup>2</sup>

Seeing that it was impossible to have the questionnaires in Catalonia on time (and its total impossibility for the AGE), we decided to propose, as indicated, the possibility of holding focus groups to be able to speak with the people responsible for training and other managers of both administrations on the content of training programs, namely on training on human rights and foreign deprived of liberty. Although the Catalan administration was in favour of holding such focus groups, as of the date we prepare this report, at the end of the holiday period, it has not been possible to deliver their practice. As explained, in the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/SP/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25745&LangID=S>

case of the GSPI, the authorities determined that there was no special interest in collaborating with the project, given that they were at a time of great pressure and limited resources to do so.

For all these reasons, we decided to prepare the following national report based on other sources of information, such as the analysis of existing training programs. It should be said, also on this point, that access to updated information has been limited, especially in the case of the GSPI.

It is important to note that, despite the difficulties in achieving a formal collaboration, we have had a good receptivity from the contacts we have made at the moment and that, through informal exchanges and interviews (by email and Zoom), we have managed to get some opinions and reflections on the subject.

## **2. TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR CIVILIAN WORKERS IN PRISON ADMINISTRATIONS IN RELATION TO WORK WITH FOREIGN PRISONERS**

### **2.1 The GSPI. General Secretariat of Prison Institutions**

Based on Royal Decree 952/2018, of July 27, which develops the basic organic structure of the Home Affairs, the Training Area of the General Deputy of Human Resources of the GSPI oversees the initial and continuous training and promotion. This said Sub-Directorate will have the powers in (art. 5.4):

- a) The administration and management of the personnel who provide service in the centres and services dependent on the GSPI. [...]
- c) The training and improvement of the personnel belonging to the Penitentiary Corps attached to the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions.

An example of the development of these competencies is the recent Decentralized Course in Social Skills, Personal Interaction and Peaceful Conflict Resolution. The call for this course has been published this September, 2020, and its general objective is to facilitate knowledge and strategies that can help to learn the specific procedures designed for the prison environment in the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the exercise of assertive authority. The course lasts 20 teaching hours to be carried out during working hours and will take place in 35 Penitentiary Centres in which their Directors, in the analysis of the annual training needs, have expressed the priority that their civil servants receive training in this matter. The Annex II of this call establishes that the content of the course will be as follows: Relationship and Communication; theory of conflicts; recognition of the conflict; emotion and conflict or dynamics. Thus, it can be observed that none of said training refers to language learning or training regarding the fundamental rights of the foreign prison population

In order to know what the training of prison staff should cover, we have reviewed the latest public calls for the access to the institution, since these shows the agenda (areas) that applicants and future workers should know.

It should be taking into account the last call approved by Resolution of October 9, 2019, of the Undersecretary, modified by Resolution of June 4, 2020, for selective tests for admission, through the system general of free access, for 900 places of the Corps of Assistants of Penitentiary Institutions which reflects the content the said test. Thus, in its ANNEX II it establishes the training material content for the access to this work and related to *The organization of the State. General Administrative Law. Personnel Management and Financial Management*: (Fundamental rights and duties) of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, the Ombudsman, the Judicial Power, the Territorial Organization of the State, the structure of the European Union, the structure and functions of the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions, the legal regime of the personnel at the service of the Public Administrations; The *Criminal Law* (The Spanish Penal Code: Structure and content, on the forms of suspension of the execution of custodial sentences, security measures, and the criminal jurisdiction); *Penitentiary Law* (Supranational regulation, , Penitentiary Law (Rights and duties of the inmates, benefits of the Penitentiary Administration. Healthcare. Hygiene and nutrition. Religious assistance. Penitentiary Social Action, the Penitentiary Regime, security in Penitentiary Establishments, Prison Treatment, the employment relationship in the prison environment, the Services for the Management of Penalties and Alternative Measures., control of prison activity by the Surveillance Judge, or the economic regime of the Penitentiary Establishments)); *Human conduct* (Techniques for evaluating human behaviour, formal and informal control, inmate code, jargon, and language, prison subcultures, psychological effects of imprisonment, or imprisonment and socialization).

Just in this last topics, one can infer that something related to foreigners' rights or in relation to the needs and specificities of foreigner's subjectivity will be studied, but no specific mentions or development in these regards are known.

It is striking that in the assessment scales (of the recent call approved by Resolution of June 11, 2020 for a general competition for the provision of jobs), training and improvement courses are awarded up to a maximum of 10 points, bearing in mind that only one course per area will be valued up to a maximum of four training and improvement courses of those expressly included in the Annex III of the call, given or received within the framework of training for employment in Public Administrations and official language centres, not being able to assess those belonging to a university career, doctoral degrees, those derived from selection processes and diplomas related to conferences, seminars, symposia, masters and the like.

In the content of the call, no special observance is taken into account, in relation to the knowledge of languages of the group of inmates on whom this project determines as its objective, or to its peculiarities, and therefore, no assessment of these kind of merits is

related. However, it can be considered that it assesses courses related to "Intercultural coexistence and attention to diversity"

As Ms. Solar informed us in the interview, the Framework Programme for attention to the foreign population (the latest is the Framework Plan for Educational Intervention with Foreign Inmates of 25 February, 2019), is very ambitious but she expressed that the staff is faced with national legislation that promotes the expulsion of many foreigners who commit crimes and, therefore, the effort dedicated by professionals to work with this population can be futile and, therefore, frustrating.<sup>3</sup>

Reality shows how other organizations, in collaboration with the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions, assume part of the training related to the object of study of this project. This is the case of the project promoted by the Instituto Cervantes and the GSPI launched in June 2019 regarding the teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language aimed at prison officials and NGO volunteers who teach Spanish to non-Spanish-speaking foreign inmates. The Spanish didactic course lasts 20 hours and has two parts. The first is taught in two days at the Centre for Penitentiary Studies in Madrid, and the second at the headquarters of the Cervantes Institute for two more days. The course is taught by teachers, from the Education departments of the autonomous communities, who teach regulated education in prisons, for a maximum of 30 participants. It should be noted that of the more than 51,000 prisoners in Spain, some 9,000 do not know Spanish enough. Of these, more than 1,500 (almost all men, except a hundred women) participate in projects to learn or improve the language<sup>4</sup>.

It should be highlighted that the European Program for Training in Human Rights of Legal Professionals in the 28 member states of the European Union (*HELP in the 28*), sponsored by the Council of Europe, have undoubtedly collaborated in the additional training, especially with courses related for example to *Fight against racism, xenophobia and homophobia*<sup>5</sup>. In particular, the course interactively covers key concepts concerning the European non-discrimination law (of the Council of Europe and the EU) and the body of jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), in addition to the decision of the European Committee of Social Rights. More specifically, the course consists of two modules: one dealing with racism and xenophobia and the other on homophobia and transphobia. A link is also provided to a specific module on *Roma*, the largest minority in the EU. One of the key reference materials for developing this course has been the Handbook on European Non-

<sup>3</sup> We have not been able to access the content of this Plan. [https://www.institucionpenitenciaria.es/es/webweb/export/sites/default/datos/descargables/publicaciones/Documento\\_Penitenciario\\_4\\_completo.pdf](https://www.institucionpenitenciaria.es/es/webweb/export/sites/default/datos/descargables/publicaciones/Documento_Penitenciario_4_completo.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cervantes.es/sobre\\_instituto\\_cervantes/prensa/2019/noticias/curso-espanol-reclusos-extranjeros.htm](https://www.cervantes.es/sobre_instituto_cervantes/prensa/2019/noticias/curso-espanol-reclusos-extranjeros.htm)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.coe.int/es/web/help-country/help-in-the-28#spain>

Discrimination Law jointly developed by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and the European Court of Human Rights<sup>6</sup>.

Training courses offered by public servants' unions themselves are also active in this regard, promoting and training their members, but they usually are against to the training plans of the administration itself, which they consider that doesn't meet the needs of prison workers. This was staged by the refusal to sign the GSPI's training plans in the meetings of the Training Work Group, held on June 15 and 23 of the current year. After proposals presented by the organizations, which they consider have not been addressed, the CSIF and ACAIP-UGT unions have not signed the Training Plan presented by the General Secretary of Penitentiary Institutions for the 2020 financial year<sup>7</sup>.

## 2.2 The Secretariat of Criminal Sanctions, Rehabilitation and Victim Support – Catalonia (SMPRAV)

In the case of SMPRAV, we have been able to obtain more information about the content of the training courses. Within the Catalan administration, the institution in charge of training prison staff is the Centre for Legal Studies and Specialized Training (CEJFE) of the Department of Justice, from which the Area of Investigation and Training in Criminal Enforcement is derived, which has two units, of Initial Training in Criminal Enforcement and Continuous Training in Criminal Enforcement.

In the case of this administration, we have been able to access some information relevant to the objectives of the project that was available on the institutional websites of the Department of Justice as well as some of the prison workers unions.

If we observe the specific agenda that has been made public for the different calls for tenders for the recruitment of personnel in the field of criminal enforcement<sup>8</sup>, or both prison guard and civilian workers (social workers, psychologists, social educators and lawyers), we can see in the list that there is a topic relating to foreign population: “*The internal population: rights and duties. The special relationship of legal subjectivity of inmates and inmates. Participation of inmates in the activities of the establishment. Generic characteristics of the incarcerated population in Catalonia. Main indicators of prison services and rehabilitation, problems, etc. Specificities of intervention in the prison environment: young people, women and foreigners.*” If we analyse the agenda developed<sup>9</sup>, we can see that in point VI of the Topic it deals with the “Specificities of intervention in the penitentiary field: young people, women and foreigners”. This section begins by saying that “Art. 9.6 ROFSEPC [Regulations for the organization and operation

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.coe.int/es/web/help-country/help-courses#spain>

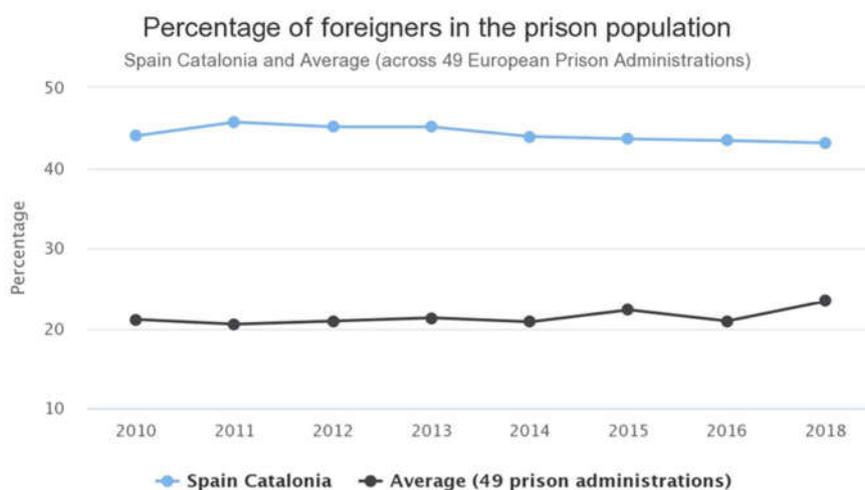
<sup>7</sup> <https://acaip.es/formacion/formacion-ii-pp/item/22241-acaip-ugt-y-csif-no-firman-el-plan-de-formacion-de-la-sgiipp>

<sup>8</sup> For example, RESOLUTION JUS / 335/2018, of February 27, [https://dogc.gencat.cat/ca/pdogc\\_canals\\_interns/pdogc\\_resultats\\_fitxa/?action=fitxa&documentId=811058](https://dogc.gencat.cat/ca/pdogc_canals_interns/pdogc_resultats_fitxa/?action=fitxa&documentId=811058)

<sup>9</sup> For example, in the case of psychologists: [https://agrupaciopresons.ccoo.cat/wp-content/uploads/sites/75/2017/11/tema\\_7.pdf](https://agrupaciopresons.ccoo.cat/wp-content/uploads/sites/75/2017/11/tema_7.pdf)

of criminal enforcement services in Catalonia] establishes those groups of people with the most risk of social exclusion, which determines the need for an interinstitutional, multidisciplinary approach and from all the areas according to public or private with respect to this intervention ".

In this sense, the Administration recognizes that foreigners are considered a risk group together with young people and women. The Catalan Administration is aware of the importance regarding the specific treatment of foreigners, not only for a qualitative matter but because in Catalonia these people represent a very high percentage, over 40% of the total. If we look at the following graph, we can see how since 2010 this percentage has remained over 40%, well above the average of the Council of Europe countries. Although in the prisons that depend on the GSPI, this percentage has fallen to around 20%, in the case of Catalonia it remains the same



\* Data for 2010-2016 had a date of reference to 1st September for each reporting year. The date of reference was later changed to 31st January meaning that there is no value for 2017.

Source: Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics (SPACE)

Source: Europris<sup>10</sup>

This high percentage of foreigners in prison forces a large part of the design and operation of activities to be adapted to these people. The agenda being studied indicates that this adaptation must be given following as objective the constitutional purpose of deprivation of liberty, which is social reintegration. It indicated that since 2002, the prison services of Catalonia carry out actions that affect structural, organizational and socio-educational aspects to meet the needs of this population. It explains they develop the Intercultural Mediation Plan, which focuses above all on the role of mediators with respect to possible cultural conflicts. In the case of workers, it indicates that the mediators have several missions: i) to advise them on interculturality and immigration issues so that they can adequately attend to the needs and interests of foreigners; ii) assist them in oral and documentary translation tasks. However, we have not been able to obtain more details on how these mediators are selected and what training they have.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.europris.org/agency/general-directorate-of-prison-regime-and-resources-cat/?tab=statistics>

Beyond these specific agendas to access the competition for job vacancies, CEJFE offers courses for social and criminological training. Among them a course with Code 48/07/01 of online training on immigration issues aimed at prison management units is offered. A 10-hour course that focuses on the management of legal procedures such as formalizing the entry and release of a foreign person to prison, processing expulsions from the national territory, etc. We have not found specific courses on how professionals should work with this population.

Likewise, CEJFE offers up-to-date and in-depth training in criminal enforcement for the second semester of 2020. Among the courses it offers, there are courses aimed at professionals from: i) the General Directorate of Criminal Enforcement in the Community and Juvenile Justice; ii) prison services; iii) the SMPRAV. However, nothing appears related to working with foreign inmates. What does appear are specialized training guides for different groups (heads of service, social educators, lawyers, pedagogues, internal managers) in which, due to the titles, it could contain material related to the project, but to which we've not got access:

- i) Immigration and criminal enforcement
- ii) Understand the Maghreb
- iii) Interculturality and criminal enforcement
- iv) Understand cultural diversity.

The most relevant that we have found for the purpose of the project is in a Circular from the SMPRAV. This is Circular 2/19<sup>11</sup> on immigration and prisons in Catalonia, and although it is the only one of the rest of the circulars and instructions of the SMPRAV on the subject, it is relevant because its content is part of the curricula that applicants to prison guard workers<sup>12</sup>. We have not been able to find out if this Circular is also part of the curricula that civilian workers must study.

This Circular of 2019 mainly aims to regulate in detail a series of procedures in which the execution of the sentence can be seen in the case of the foreign population (classification, exit permits, social integration, expulsion, return to the country of origin, suspensions and substitutions of sentence, and procedures for managing documentation for residence or work). It is not a training to learn to work with foreign prisoners, taking into account their cultural, language, and day-to-day needs, but rather aimed at formalizing the complex legal labyrinth in which foreigners tend to find themselves where the custodial sentence is mixed with the administrative measure of expulsion. However, the Circular is important because it takes into account international regulations and expressly includes

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[http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits/reinsercio\\_i\\_serveis\\_peni/serveis\\_penitenciaris/instruccions\\_i\\_circulars/circulars/circular-2-2019.pdf](http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits/reinsercio_i_serveis_peni/serveis_penitenciaris/instruccions_i_circulars/circulars/circular-2-2019.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Announcement of specific competitions for merits and training for the provision of various commandments and singulars in the area of internal regulation and administration of the penitentiary centres of Catalonia (2019) [http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/serveis/treballar\\_depart/concursos/llocs-comandament-jus014/jus014-llistesdef.pdf](http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/serveis/treballar_depart/concursos/llocs-comandament-jus014/jus014-llistesdef.pdf)

Recommendation CM / Rec (2012) 12 of the CdeE. Together with it, it collects two other documents as a guide to work on this field: the *Handbook on inmates with special needs* of the United Nations Office against Drugs and Crime (2009), and *Life trajectories of imprisoned foreigners*, published by the Social and Criminological Research Area of CEJFE in 2011. In this sense, the Circular mentions that based on these texts it is that "it proposes the creation of specialized services, both at the central level and in penitentiary centres, [as well as] the deepening of the information and training of the personnel who serve the foreign population." Based on the recommendations of the 2011 study, it indicates that since it is impossible for professionals to be constantly updated on the abundant legislation on the matter, specialized teams are created in each penitentiary centre to function as references.

For this reason, the Circular, although it explains that in the CPs there are sufficient means to attend to the foreign population, it provides functional criteria to respond to this specialization: that in each centre there is an Orientation and Reception Service (SOA) to coordinate all the action and comply with the objectives of the Circular, including advising multidisciplinary teams and other bodies with specialized information on foreigners and for the management of specific cases. In order to deepen this, the Circular has among its objectives "To improve the training and specialization of prison staff in this matter." The SOA of each centre is coordinated by the legal technical secretary or the deputy director of treatment in open regime centre or in those centre where there is no technical secretary. This service also includes at least one lawyer and one social worker or head of social work programs.

The activity of this Service it must serve to coordinate all actions in the prison centre on foreigners and for provide technical support to bodies, professionals and collaborators involved in this matter and the concrete competences are:

1. Coordinate and supervise the actions and criteria in the field of immigration that are applied in the centre in accordance with regulations.
2. Assess and detect needs for care, intervention or management with the foreign population and make proposals to both the centre's board of directors and the central services in order to address them.
3. Develop specific procedures, guides, activities or other instruments for the coordination of actions at the centre in this matter.
4. Advise the multidisciplinary teams and other bodies of the centre that request it providing specialized information on foreigners and attending to any queries they may have on the management of specific cases.
5. Organize information sessions and reception activities with inmates, directly or with the collaboration of other professionals.
6. Carry out coordinated actions with external bodies and entities for the management of documentation, the processing of residence or work permits or obtaining support external for foreigners.

7. Participate in the treatment boards providing unified criteria regarding the proposals and resolutions affecting the foreign population of the centre.
8. Establish monitoring and review mechanisms to ensure that it is kept up to date the documentation of the foreign inmates of the centre

However, we have not been able to obtain information on how this objective is met in practice.

In any case, the important thing about the Circular is that it recognizes the complexity of the legal and rooted situation of foreigners and looks for ways to help reduce these difficulties: “Foreigners who enter prison face additional, specific difficulties. of his condition. The deficiencies in the knowledge of the language, in addition to the immersion in a little-known cultural, social and legal context, often make them disadvantaged when accessing the resources of the prison context, to effectively exercise their rights and, in short, to access the mechanisms for rehabilitation [...]. Finally, the limitations imposed by the regulatory framework on immigration matters to access regularization for work and residence intensify when the person has committed a crime”. That is why the Circular states that “for the purpose of assessing the expulsion provisions and the application of prison policies, it is insufficient to differentiate only between foreigners who have the possibility of regularization and those who do not. From the perspective of the inalienable purpose of social reintegration in prison, other assumptions must also be considered, in which the management of reintegration itineraries involves a special complexity and requires an individualized approach. For this reason, the Circular states that “It is necessary, therefore, to promote the development of activities and services that, from the first moment, guide the foreigner in their adaptation to the prison environment and facilitate access to resources and the effective use of their rights”.

The Circular mentions that, beyond the creation of the SAO and a central commission for coordinating criteria and procedures and updating information, the Council of Europe Recommendations propose measures to reduce the potential isolation of this prison population and facilitate their process of social reintegration.

### 3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Regarding Catalunya, we can identify some good practices (although it is the normative level, it will be necessary to see in practice how they are carried out),

From the content of the courses analysed, it can be seen that the Catalan administration takes into account the 2012 CoE Recommendation and consider that the “Foreign prisoners shall be treated with respect for their human rights and with due regard for their particular situation and individual needs.” However, it does not seem yet that it develops

training programs that cover all the subjects and specificities set out in the Recommendation.

The Catalan administration has been active in providing mechanisms for foreign prisoners to have access to interpretation and translation in order to facilitate communication with professionals. This is planned as we have seen in Circular 2/2019 where it provides for the provision of this service by the new SOAs.

Based on European recommendations, the Circular of 2019 specifies that:

1. “The multidisciplinary teams have to ensure that foreigners obtain adequate information about their criminal and prison situation, their rights and obligations, the regulations of the centre and the unit, the procedures for accessing services and programs, and also other legal and administrative aspects that affect them”. That, if they do not have knowledge of Catalan or Spanish, the SOA must provide them with assistance in their own language, through professionals or collaborators, documents or adapted audio-visual media.
2. That the social workers know the external support network that it has in Catalonia and in its country of origin. It is especially important that people who have ties in other countries can communicate regularly with their family or with people with whom they have ties.
3. Contact with their social and cultural context: Prisons must facilitate the access of the foreign population to information on the social news of their countries and to their own cultural and religious practices. Multidisciplinary teams must take this objective into account in the planning of cultural and educational activities, in contact with cultural and religious representatives and with collaborating entities, and in accessing the media in libraries or other spaces, such as ICT classrooms.

Although it seems that the Catalan administration is aware of the unequal situation in which foreign prisoners find themselves compared to nationals, in terms of access to rights, and of the importance of training workers, we have not been able to find specific training programmes aimed at civilian workers for their work with this population.

Regarding the General State Administration, in the public accessible information accessible, it has been found that the training offered to future prison administration operators is scarce, if not null, to strengthen the implementation of European regulations on the protection of the rights and special needs of foreign prisoners. It has been observed, through the syllabi that must be passed for access to work in the prison administration, that said training is focused on two basic concepts: Security and Management, resulting tangential and very minority training in diversity, in the field of intercultural mediation or education in values, highlighting the deficiency in the field of legislation on the fundamental rights of inmates and, very particularly, in the promotion and respect of the fundamental rights of foreign inmates.

All this is perfectly reflected in the content developed by the Prison Administration itself through Instruction 03/2019, relative to the Comprehensive Intervention Program with Foreigners of February 14, 2019.

This regulation establishes the mandatory constant communication of the Penitentiary Administration with the State Security Forces and Corps for every one of the circumstances that occur when a foreign subject enters prison. Thus, from their admission, for both remand and convicted prisoners, which must be communicated within a period of 5 days from when it occurs to the Provincial Police Station, and the release itself that must be communicated in advance of 3 months to said Police Station, reaching then situations of administrative expulsion orders after his release from prison. The same communication must be made in the cases of transfers from penitentiary centres.

It turns out the clear commitment of the prison administration to the expulsion of the foreign inmate by establishing that although the immigration variable must be taken into account to elaborate the intervention models, treatment programs, classification, permits and grade reviews, it establishes that this it must be carried out "with the purpose of replacing the execution of the rest of the sentence for their expulsion".

In fact, this regulation declares the “priority nature that the basic training of foreign inmates must have in prison regulations”, above the rest of their training, highlighting that it is conducive to achieving the first objective.

In conclusion, from what we have been able to analyse, we can see that there is an awareness of the difficulties presented by foreigners in prison and, therefore, of the need to act with specific plans. However, as we have seen, this action is often based almost exclusively around the complex legal labyrinth in which these people find themselves and in the face of legislation which promotes expulsion. It is important that the prison administration tries to intervene to safeguard the rights of foreigners in these complex processes, but it is also necessary that emphasis is placed on other specific needs of this population. It is therefore that other specific plans are lacking and that they reflect international standards in this area. Finally, what seems to be lacking in a very general way are training plans on these issues (beyond the legal ones) for civilian staff.

