

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

(Training needs assessment report of civilian prison staff in Albania)

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i. Abbreviations

CoE	Council of Europe
CPT	The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture & Inhuman Treatment or Punishment
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EPR	The European Prison Rules
EU	European Union
GDPA	General Directorate of Prison Administration of Albania
NGO	Non Profit Organizations
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Training needs assessment report of civilian prison staff in Albania

The training of prisons staff is a very important issue as it equips the prison personnel with knowledge, skills and attitude to exercise their duties well and with respect of the rights and dignity of prisoners. Thus, the training process is part of developing and maintaining a skilled, motivated and committed prison staff workforce. Within the framework of the 2-year project B-ComPetent “*Boosting Competencies in Penitentiary Staff in Europe*”, a Consortium of 7 inter-sectoral partners<sup>1</sup> are making a preliminary analysis of training gaps and identification of the best practices.

Through this process, these organizations aim to contribute to an effective and coherent application of EU laws and standards on the treatment of foreign prisoners by designing and implementing a train-the-trainers program (face-to-face and e-learning), combined with sharing of best practices, awareness-raising actions and practical multilingual tools.

The total number of staff within the General Directorate of Prison Administration of Albania (GDPA) is **4325**, of which **3431** are uniformed staff and **870 are civilians**, whereas each penitentiary institution has one director. The institutions of Execution of Criminal Decisions in Albania are classified in the following manner: Low security; Ordinary security; High Security; Detention. The penitentiary system in Albania is currently composed of 24 places of detention, of which: 1 institution for female offenders, 1 juvenile institution, 1 special institution that treats persons with court order related to ‘mandatory medical treatment’, 1 hospital for medical treatment of prisoners and 20 institutions for detainees and prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

The recruitment and testing of prison staff is being done by the Academy of Security, where it is proceeded with one-month training and practice in penitentiary institutions. The new staff is recruited based on a new rule book prepared with Council of Europe expertise, setting strict professional and integrity criteria. The new recruits will also benefit from new initial and in-service training curricula based on the Council of Europe standards and good European practice. To effectively deliver the modernized curricula, CoE experts have trained the trainers at the Security Academy, about the specific training for prison staff in line with European Prison Rules recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

According to the amendments<sup>4</sup> made by law, after the recruitment of prison staff, it is obligatory to attend the initial one-month training. On the other side, the General Directory of Prisons, is the competent authority that makes the assessment of the training needs for prison staff and then

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<sup>1</sup> University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli - Law Department (Italy); University of Barcelona - Observatory of the Penal System and Human Rights (Spain); Fundació Bosch I Gimpera (FBG) – Spain; Associazione Antigone (Italy); Avokati i Popullit Albanian Ombudsman (Albania); European Centre (Albania) and Prodos Consulting (Italy)

<sup>2</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/actionplan-prison-system/native/1680968ab1> p. 5

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/new-prison-staff-recruits-to-be-trained-in-line-with-council-of-europe-standards>

<sup>4</sup> Ligi...

delivers continuous training at the premises of the Training Centre. The prison staff have the opportunity to deliver specific programs and moreover to receive credits and to be promoted.<sup>5</sup>

According to the prison system in Albania, a strategic action plan is drafted for 2019-2022. Concretely, the Strategic Objective no. 3 of this Action Plan is related to staff training, including managerial staff. This objective foresees the enhancement of a professional penitentiary service, through focused and sustainable training. Within this objective, there are/will be organized several activities which are/will be implemented from the Ministry of Justice, Training Unit and Section of the GDPA.<sup>6</sup>

The 2019 EU Commission Progress Report for Albania<sup>7</sup> *inter alia*, notes that the government needs to develop programs to reintegrate returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families. Efforts are also needed to improve the programs to prevent radicalization in prisons, and strengthen the monitoring mechanisms, involving civil society and religious communities. Online radicalization content in Albania is on the rise.<sup>8</sup> The authorities need to enhance their online monitoring and response capacities, and also enhance their efforts to empower civil society to develop positive and alternative narratives online.

The aim of this report is the identification and assessment of the training gaps in prison front-line civilian staff and in existing dedicated training programmes in Albania, with regard to human rights and foreign prisoners' rights protection. Furthermore, this study aims to propose concrete actions for the training of civil and penitentiary prison staff on foreign prisoners.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://ata.gov.al/2019/04/11/programe-specifike-per-trajnimin-e-punonjese-te-burgjeve/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/actionplan-prison-system/native/1680968ab1>

<sup>7</sup> Progress Report 2019, p. 25 - <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf> p.38

## II. METHODOLOGY

This report was compiled with a methodology that combined, by one hand, desk research for national and international trainings delivered for prison staff, institutional and policy framework on training needs of civilian staff, and by the other hand, the processing of data collection interviews and focus group meetings on this issue.

As core elements, it contains a summary of all existing trainings in the field, as well as other relevant materials, such as national laws, regulations or 2019 EU Progress Report for Albania. In order to finalize the study methodology, a kick off meeting with the People's Advocate and the representative of the Head of Social Issues Sector from the General Directory of Prison staff was organized. During this meeting, the working group benefited from the know-how exchange to draft the study, and questions that have been addressed within it.

This methodology is based in the *triangular method*, which was adopted to prepare the study through including a comprehensive set of information. Thus, the working team pursued the following steps:

*Submission of 6 tailored questionnaires* to gather data. In order to collect relevant data, the team reviewed and adopted the triangulate method to the concrete context, in order to measure the effectiveness of the current applied system for the training of prison staff and possible options for the future. Interviews were conducted with target group representatives from the 24 prisons in Albania. Each of the 6 tailored questionnaires had a specific objective, which at the end converged with the overall study objective. The questionnaires were grouped as below:

- a) Prison Authority and Prison Manager (Ministry of Justice, Guarantor, Prison Director/Manager, Vice-Director, etc.)
- b) Prison Staff (including members of the army/police corps)
- c) Front-line civilian prison staff (i.e. trainers of front-line prison staff, educational staff, social assistants, forensic psychologists, social workers, etc.)

In order to have a representative sample, whose results won't derive statistical deviations above the standard deviation, the questionnaires were distributed randomly. The total number of each interviewed category was:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| a) Prison Authority and Prison Manager: | 26  |
| b) Prison Staff:                        | 332 |
| c) Front-line civilian prison staff:    | 67  |

Thus, we come to the conclusion that the sample is representative of the overall population of prison staff in Albania.

The other pillar of the study methodology was the organization of *two Focus Groups*, respectively on 21<sup>st</sup> (12 participants) and 29<sup>th</sup> (13 participants) of April 2020 via [Zoom Platform](#). The discussion was focused on outlining the existing weak spots and training gaps, with members from several

prisons, such as: Prison directors, Heads of the Directories of Police of some regions, educational staff, social assistants and social workers, chiefs of security in some different prisons, psychologists etc. During the focus groups, the representative of the Centre and People's Advocate aimed to address 2 issues interlinked with each other, in order to have a feedback from all the above-mentioned target groups on the current situation of prison staff in Albania and the challenges that they face in their daily work. The two main issues addressed were:

- (a) The training gaps of prison staff and practical obstacles to human rights protection in the correctional facilities, with special regard to foreign inmates' rights.
- (b) Discussions with prison authorities on the overcrowded prisons, general education of prison staff, welfare and wages, the recruitment criteria for new prison staff, courses and the final program.

As mentioned above, the participants at focus groups established the floor to foster dialogue and exchange their experience and challenges. The main issues were related to lack of civilian staff and lack of interpreters. The lack of the latter ones, forces prison staff to find alternative solutions such as, translation from the prison staff or other prisoners that know the language. Another issue is related to the continuous training, which is mainly focused on police or army bodies in the prisons. Civil staff trainings are not a structured practice. There is a need to organize and deliver more trainings, especially for civil, forensic and medical staff. Multicultural trainings or trainings focused on ethnic tradition should be kept in mind. A dedicated fund for interpreters is very necessary, in order to come in help to the foreign prisoners.

After all the above-mentioned issues, the working group collected all the specific information/outputs, and analyzed them based on the comparative method, in order to identify a set of recommendations. All the involved actors ensured full collaboration and availability to provide the needed information.

### III. EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMMES WITH REGARD TO HR PROTECTION IN ALBANIA

Throughout the years, several trainings were conducted for the prison staff, from different national authorities such as the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Directory of Police in collaboration with its other sectors, international organizations such as Council of Europe, OSCE, Swedish Project etc., as well as Albanian non-profit organizations.

*The General Directory of Prisons* has conducted initial and continuous trainings for all the categories of prison staff. During 2019, **2062** prison staff have been trained, or **45%** of total staff number. Initial and continuous trainings were delivered on career development trainings for security service employees, trainings on the prevention and management of violent extremism, on escort and transport procedures, on capacity building of management staff, risk assessment, etc.<sup>9</sup>

*The Council of Europe (CoE)*, assists the six Western Balkans Horizontal Beneficiaries including Albania, in overcoming the shortcomings and practical deficiencies and building synergies throughout the region related to identification and rehabilitation of violent extremist offenders in prisons.<sup>10</sup> This initiative is being implemented in collaboration with CoE, the Albanian Ombudsman and OSCE. Several trainings are organized within the scope of the Regional Action “Enhancing penitentiary capacities in addressing radicalization in prisons in the Western Balkans” implemented by the CoE.<sup>11</sup>

Within this action, the prison Administration and other Governmental and non-governmental institutions in Albania worked together with the CoE towards improving the protection of prisoners’ rights and supporting their rehabilitation and reintegration back into society. In that direction, the representatives from the General Directorate of the Prison Administration, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, National Preventive Mechanism, NGOs and international partners were engaged in the penitentiary prison reform and probation practitioners, where they exchanged views on good approaches, lessons learnt and weaknesses regarding the provision of induction and in-service staff training on violent extremism and radicalization. It was considered to raise awareness of social assistants, forensic psychologists or social workers in prisons, in order to provide more care and attention to the rehabilitation of the prisoners and to reduce the possibility of their radicalization, but also to the other detainees, due to isolation.<sup>12</sup> This Action aims to enhance the capacities of prison staff, including managerial, rehabilitation and health care staff, to apply human rights standards in their daily work.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, trainings for prison staff have been conducted in Albania on *mental health care*, namely on suicide prevention. In these trainings, there have participated medicals, security and social staff

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dpbsh.gov.al/newweb/?fq=brenda&gj=gj1&kid=103>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/enhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/enhancing-training-provision-in-western-balkans-region-with-regards-to-radicalisation-in-prisons>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.drejtesia.gov.al/newsroom/lajme/strategji-kombetare-per-te-perballuar-sfiden-e-luftes-kunder-ekstremizmit-te-dhunshem-dhe-radikalizimit-ne-burgje/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/enhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania>

from selected prisons, who enriched their knowledge and practical skills on how to best enforce CoE human rights standards for mental health patients.<sup>14</sup> In addition, trainings have been conducted even on *prevention and treatment of transmissible diseases* and drug-related problems. They were focused on introducing CoE and CPT standards regarding common transmissible diseases such as HIV, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis. Doctors, nurses and dentists increased their knowledge and exchanged good practices on management of drug-related problems including mental health issues with each-other and the international experts.<sup>15</sup> Other trainings regarding medical ethics and medical screening have been delivered, including screening of mental health problems in prison.<sup>16</sup> Within the CoE project, a study visit to the Foreign Prison Service has taken place, which focuses on the rehabilitation activities for different categories of prisoners, including women and sex-offenders, on prisoners' individual sentence planning and regime, pro-social modelling and effective prison management.<sup>17</sup>

Different Albanian NGO's organized trainings regarding different aspects of violent *extremism phenomenon*, the importance of facing it and the approach that needs to be used through fighting it.<sup>18</sup> Trainings were also conducted for teachers and youth workers in the use of the COPOSO method, which stands for "Contributing Positively to Society" and is an experience-based method for juvenile (ex-)detainees aiming a successful reintegration through Urban Arts and Sports.<sup>19</sup>

Taking into account the above mentioned situation, this intervention aims to make a screening of the overall situation, problems, and needs on civilian prison staff training in Albania in the places of detentions. Furthermore, this study aims to propose concrete actions for the training of civil and penitentiary prison staff on foreign prisoners. A particular attention will be given to the challenges for conceptualizing the areas of intervention and raising questions for policy development as how, when and the means that needed to be used by Albanian government and all the other relevant actors, with the main aim to find solution for the skills gap.

The finalization of this study would not have been possible without the collaboration and contribution of all relevant actors of the field, such as: The Ministry of Justice, General Directories of Prisons, The General Directory of Policy and other stakeholders operating in this field.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/suicide-prevention-session-for-70-multidisciplinary-staff-in-albania>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/training-seminars-on-prevention-and-treatment-of-transmissible-diseases-and-drug-related-problems>

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/enhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania1/-/asset\\_publisher/QfU1bn9GaviC/content/training-seminars-on-medical-ethics-and-medical-screening?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Ftirana%2Fenhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania1%3Fp\\_id%3D101\\_INSTANCE\\_QfU1bn9GaviC%26p\\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\\_p\\_state%3Dnormal%26p\\_p\\_mode%3Dview%26p\\_p\\_col\\_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p\\_p\\_col\\_count%3D1](https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/enhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania1/-/asset_publisher/QfU1bn9GaviC/content/training-seminars-on-medical-ethics-and-medical-screening?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Ftirana%2Fenhancing-the-protection-of-human-rights-of-prisoners-in-albania1%3Fp_id%3D101_INSTANCE_QfU1bn9GaviC%26p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p_p_col_count%3D1)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/albanian-prison-staff-visits-the-irish-prison-service>

<sup>18</sup> <https://ahc.org.al/trajtime-me-stafin-e-burgjeve-lidhur-me-ekstremizmin-e-dhunshem/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.nhc.nl/helping-young-detainees-explore-their-hidden-potential-an-international-training-in-tirana/>

## IV. MAIN TOPICS OF RESEARCH

### 4.1 Current Organizational Structure of the Penitentiary System in Albania

A total of **425 people**, including prison authorities, managers, prison staff and civilian prison staff in Albania were interviewed in this survey. More specifically, 9 of the interviewed were prison authorities, 17 were prison managers, 332 were prison staff and 67 were civilian prison staff. The survey consisted in *6 questionnaires*, grouped in three pillars such as: prison staff, prison staff training and staff working with foreign inmates.

### 4.2 General considerations entailed from the questionnaires of prison authorities and managers (2.1 & 2.2 Prison Authorities and Managers about prison staff and prison staff training)

A total number of **26 prison authorities and managers** were interviewed with questionnaires about prison staff and prison staff training. According to their answers, more than half of the prisons do not have the *proportional number* between prison staff and the total number of prisoners, which shows a **discrepancy** of Rec. 1999 (22) of Council of Europe. This discrepancy comes from the prisons overcrowded. Regarding the standard of *general education* of prison staff, the answers lean towards a positive result, with most answers between **4 and 6** (6=very adequate). This applies to both penitentiary and civil staff.

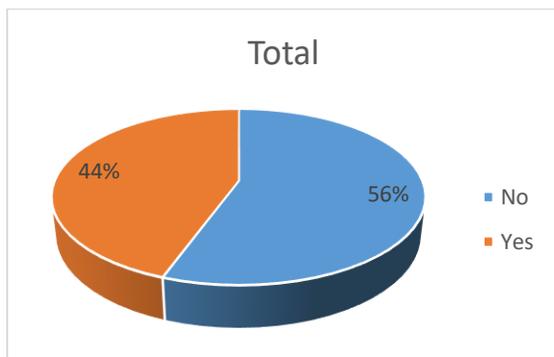


Figure 1. Proportion between prison staff & prisoners

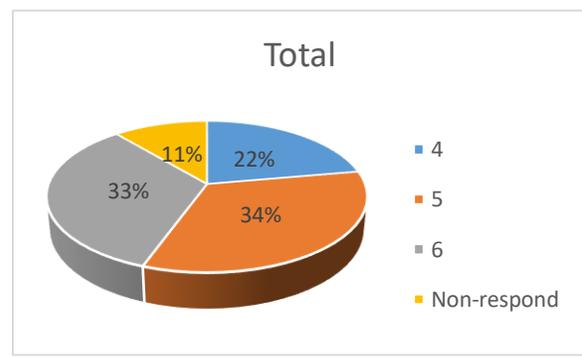


Figure 2. Standard of general education

75% of the interviewed state that when selecting new prison staff, they *take full account* of values, criteria and skills such as *integrity, humanity, cultural sensitivity, professional capacity, adequate education level and linguistic abilities, gender balance*, etc. **95% of the interviewed** stated that prison staff receive trainings before they enter into duty, as this is a good method for disseminating the necessary information to new members of prison staff, especially regarding the treatment of prisoners and respect to their fundamental rights. A negative aspect of the trainings is that they are **not organized at suitable intervals, particularly for civil staff**, so they are rarer than needed. The interviewed state that the trainers are professionals, but the training programs are not revised regularly which sometimes causes a *repetition* of training thematic and curricula. 21% of the interviewed think that this comes because of the *low level of economic resources*, while 79% have not responded or do not have information on the economic resources provided for training courses.

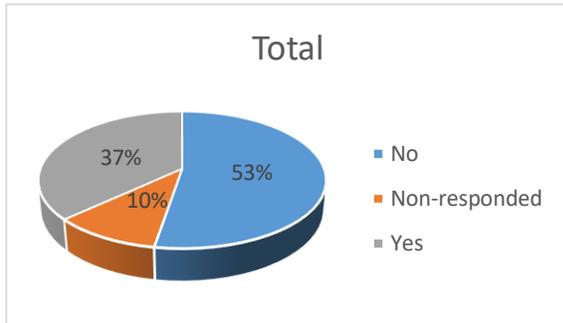


Figure 3. Suitable training intervals

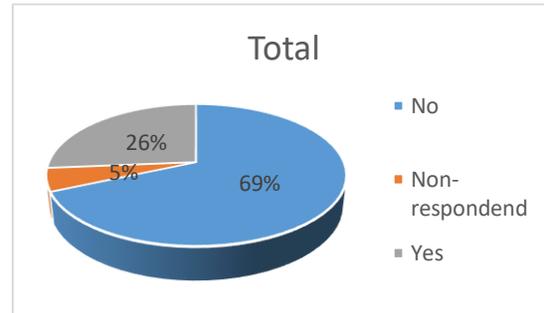


Figure 4. Revision of training programs

#### 4.3 General considerations entailed from the questionnaires of prison staff (2.3 Prison staff about training interval and content)

A total of **245 prison staff** were interviewed with 2 questionnaires about training courses and their content. **98% of the interviewed** state that they have received trainings during their recruiting phase, which shows for the importance of receiving trainings and knowledge before becoming a member of the prison staff. They state that they receive training courses regularly during their everyday job, and that they are *delivered at suitable intervals*. Regarding the evaluation of training quality courses, 93% of the interviewed state that they are above average (excellent, good level, appropriate), from which **45%** have evaluated them as *'at a good level'*. 88% of the interviewed state that these training courses have contents which tackle problems and issues arising from their work experience. This shows for a *relevance* of the training thematic and curricula, as seen from the prison staff's perspective.

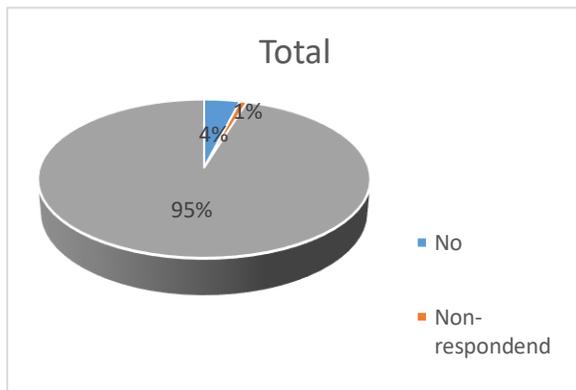


Figure 5. Suitable training intervals

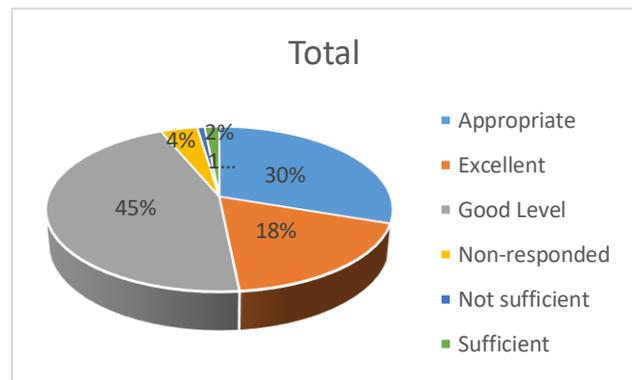


Figure 6. Evaluation of training courses

The training curricula contains instructions in the international and regional human rights instruments and standards, especially the ECHR, the ECPTITP, and the EPR<sup>20</sup>, includes provisions of the ethical rules for prison staff, specifically of the European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff, and include specific instructions of the rules concerning respect for plurality, non-discrimination

<sup>20</sup> The European Convention on Human Rights, the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman Treatment or Punishment, the European Prison Rules.

against any prisoners on the basis of race, color of skin, language, national or social origin, association with a national minority, birth or other status, or on the basis of the type of offence alleged or committed by a given inmate, etc. 34% of the interviewed state that they have received *studies of socio-cultural aspects* during the trainings, especially in the area of deprivation of liberty, 24% have received *cultural diversity management* instructions and 9% have received *knowledge on political geography*. Thus, according to the training contents main of studies were delivered on socio-cultural aspects.

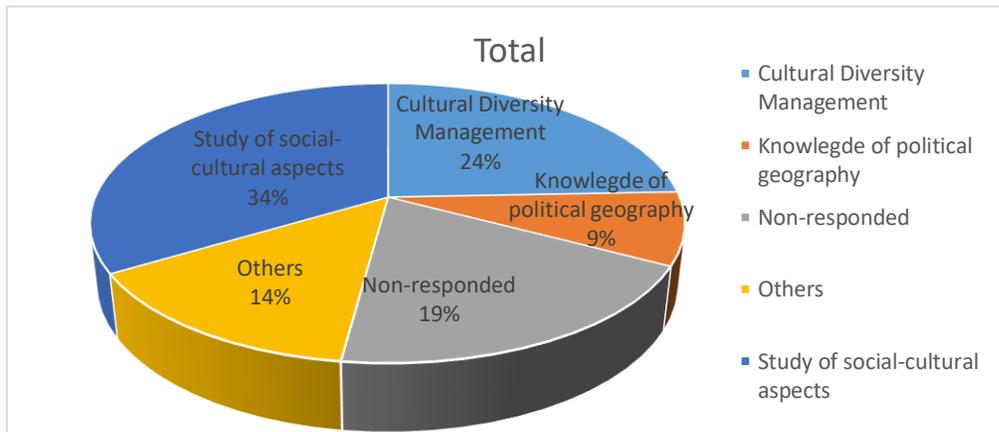


Figure 7. Content of training programs

**78%** of the interviewed state that training programs provide sufficient skills to prevent radicalization, racial hatred, xenophobia, cultural divergences and fights. As regards, this issue, the majority of prison staff have been trained.

#### 4.4 General considerations entailed from the questionnaires of prison staff working with foreign inmates (2.4 Prison staff about staff working with foreign inmates)

A total of **87 prison staff** were interviewed who specially work with foreign inmates. The results of this questionnaire show for a low level of engagement towards facilitating foreign inmates' stay at prison facilities. **Only 20%** of the interviewed stated that there is penitentiary prison staff specifically assigned to foreign prisoners, and **only 25% of this 20%** state that penitentiary prison staff gets a specific training on foreign prisoners' rights, cultural diversity management and special needs.

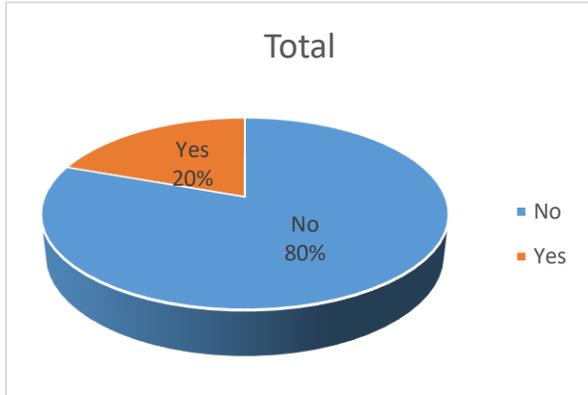


Figure 8. Penitentiary prison staff specifically assigned to foreign prisoners

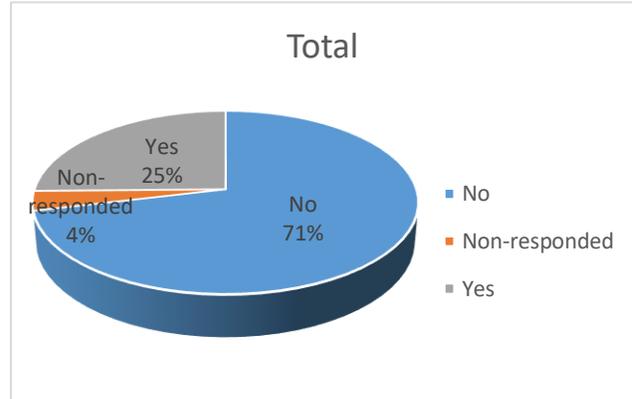


Figure 9. Specific training of foreign prisoners

In 87% of the cases, these trainings do not include language courses and when they do, the only options are *English, Italian and Greek*. There is no Albanian to English translator. The daily communication between prison staff and foreign inmates is usually done with the help of other inmates, social workers or prison staff, or even *by body language*. When asked if the penitentiary institutions promote the development and maintenance of a relevant relationship between foreign prisoners and their relatives or consular representatives, about 60% of the interviewed have answered **positively above average**.

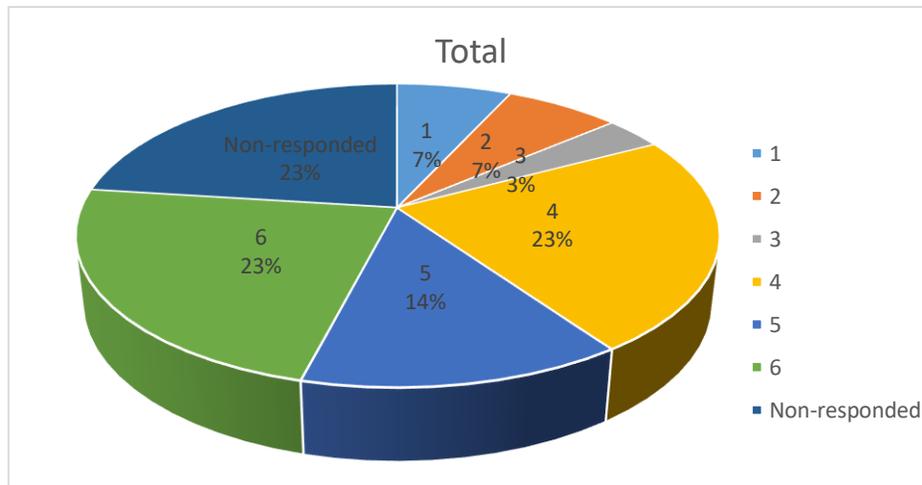


Figure 10. Promotion of relevant relationship between inmates and their families

Concerning the Figure 10, **60% (4-5-6)** of the interviewed stated the penitentiary institution highly promotes the development and the maintenance of the relevant relationship between foreign prisoners and their relatives.

#### 4.5 General considerations entailed from the questionnaires of civilian prison staff (2.5 Civilian prison staff)

A total of **67 civilian prison staff** were interviewed within the framework of this assessment. When asked about what they deem essential for working in prison, they listed a number of skills and knowledge, such as: *Communication skills, good management skills, essential knowledge on working with prisoners of different categories, e.g. third-age prisoners, drug users, suicide attempts, mental health problems, etc., general knowledge on the character of human beings and branches of psychology, social work, philosophy, sociology, organizational skills, legal knowledge, physical abilities, discipline, etc.* **96%** of the interviewed stated that **salaries are adequate** to attract and retain suitable civilian prison staff, but **81%** of them stated that they **are not paid as professionals**. These contradictors answered are related to the standard of the country. Thus, according to the average salary in Albania, the civilian prison staff salaries are adequate, but referring to the payment as professionals this is a low standard.-

81% of the interviewed mentioned that the training courses they receive, **include specific guidelines** on rules regarding respect for the majority, non-discrimination against any prisoner on the basis of race, skin color, language, religion, association with a national minority, birth or other status, etc., or based on the type of criminal offense alleged or committed by a particular prisoner. Most of the civilian prison staff have answered that they receive study of *social-cultural aspect training* (63%) and *cultural diversity management* training (27%). Overall, 79% of the interviewed state that, based on their work experience, the level of training courses is **above average** (mostly answered sufficient and appropriate).

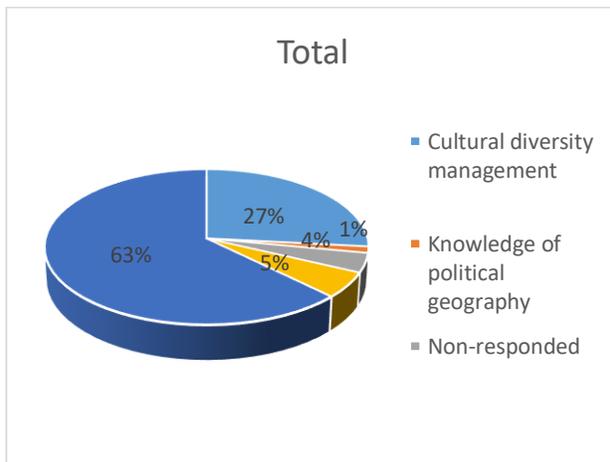


Figure 11. Content of training programs

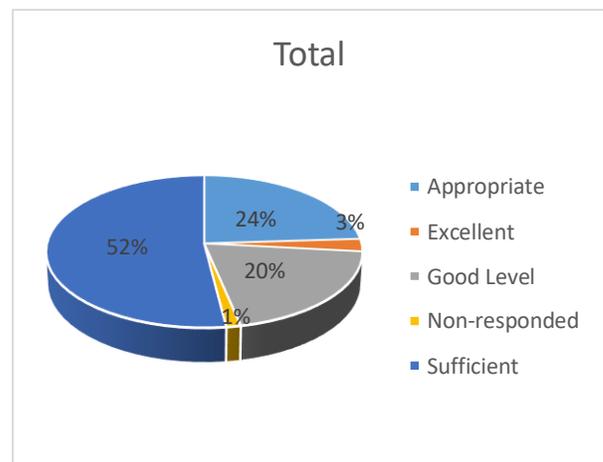


Figure 12. Evaluation of training courses

## V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS – Ermonela Xhafa

For several years, the Ombudsman has been focusing on constitutional obligations to improve the conditions for the treatment of inmates to guarantee respect for their fundamental rights and freedoms in accordance with European Union laws, as well as with European Prison Rules, the improvement of prison security, social rehabilitation for the reintegration of inmates, social and economic life, improvements of the rights of juveniles in prisons and enforcing the principles under the Juvenile Justice Code. Also, an important issue related to the final solution for the prisoners sentenced to compulsory treatment, which will lead the encouragement of the relevant state institutions at the central level, to take further steps to improve the current situation.

Referring to the Article 60/1 of the Albanian Constitution, “*The People's Advocate defends the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of individuals from unlawful acts or omissions of public administration bodies*”. Taking into account the need of monitoring the institutions where the freedom of persons is limited, where the probability of violation is higher, the implementation of the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT)<sup>21</sup>, are of an important issue.

Last week, was adapted the new law “On the rights and treatment of inmates and detainees”<sup>22</sup>. Regarding the improvements in the penitentiary system, this is the most important law of the revised legal package. In this regard, the National Mechanism for Prevention of Torture, as well as the Special Section at the People's Advocate have given their contribution as part of the technical working group at the Commission for Legal Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights.

### ***Recommendations:***

1. The Foreign prisoners shall be treated with respect for their human rights and with due regard for their particular situation and individual needs.
2. The prison administration should have sufficient financial resources to improve living conditions, social activities and training as effectively as possible regarding the specific situation and specific needs of foreign prisoners. The prison regime shall accommodate the special welfare needs of foreign prisoners.
3. Foreign prisoners who so require shall be given appropriate access to interpretation and translation facilities and the possibility to learn a language that will enable them to communicate more effectively
4. The juridical system and the prison staff must take the necessary action to avoid discrimination and to address specific problems that foreign that foreign persons may face while subject to community sanctions or measures, in prison, during transfer and after release.

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<sup>21</sup> OPCAT, adopted by law no. 9094, dated on 03.07.2003, “For the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT)

<sup>22</sup> This law abolishes the previous law no. 8328, dated 16.4.1998.

5. Foreign offenders sentenced to imprisonment shall be entitled to full consideration for early release.
6. During admission and detention, foreign prisoners shall be provided the information, in a language they understand, about:
  - their rights and duties as prisoners including contacts with their consular representatives; the main features of the prison regime and the internal regulations; rules and procedures for making requests and complaints; and
  - their rights to legal advice and assistance.
7. The prison authorities shall assist foreign prisoners, who wish to inform of their families, legal advisers, consular representatives, or any other persons or organizations competent to assist them.
8. Decisions regarding the allocation of foreign prisoners shall take into account the need to facilitate their contact with the outside world and to facilitate their potential isolation.
9. When appropriate under security conditions, foreign prisoners should be accommodated in prisons where there are other prisoners of nationality, culture, religion or language.
10. Of great importance for the well-being of foreign prisoners is the accommodation, nutrition, hygiene, clothing and health care services.
  - Decisions on whether to accommodate foreign prisoners together shall be based primarily on their individual needs and the facilitation of their social reintegration, while ensuring a safe and secure environment for prisoners and staff.
  - Facilities for sanitation and hygiene shall, as far as practicable, accommodate the cultural and religious preferences of foreign prisoners, while maintaining appropriate medical standards.
  - Rules that require prisoners to keep their appearance clean and tidy shall be interpreted in a manner that respects prisoners' cultural and religious preferences, while maintaining appropriate medical standards.
  - Clothes provided by prison authorities shall not offend the cultural or religious sensibilities of foreign prisoners.
  - Where clothes are not provided by the prison authorities, prisoners shall be allowed, subject to the requirements of safety and security, to wear clothes that reflect their cultural and religious traditions.
  - Nutrition should take in account of the cultural and religious requirements of prisoners, prison authorities shall, where possible, provide prisoners with opportunities to purchase and cook food that makes their diet more culturally appropriate and to take their meals at times that meet their religious requirements

### **The Prison Staff**

1. Training of the prison staff (guards and civilian) may include learning languages spoken most often by the prison staff (guards and civilian) working with foreign prisoners should

be selected on the basis of criteria that include sensitivity, interaction skills and language skills.

2. We even suggest that the staff participate in foreign language courses, based on a study that can be done by GDP, according to work needs.
3. The staff involved in the admission of foreign prisoners must be trained to deal with them. Training programs should be evaluated and reviewed periodically to ensure that they reflect population change and social circumstances.
4. The staff who deal with foreign nationals' inmates need to receive trainings on national, regional and international human rights laws, practices and standards regarding their treatment. This practice should be performed continuously.

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