



UNESCO Chair of applied Research
for Education in Prison



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Chair

**CÉGEP
MARIE-VICTORIN**

Newsletter

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A Word From the Editorial Desk



This new issue of the newsletter focuses on interdisciplinary collaboration and synergy between research and practice, as evidenced by the unique mix of students and incarcerated people (initiatives such as Clemson's), and the rich exchanges at recent meetings at the Société de criminologie du Québec. These meeting spaces reveal the strength of education in prison, not only as a transmission of knowledge, but also as a vector of emancipation and shared learning.

Education in prison is recognized today as an essential lever for creating rehabilitative environments where a positive climate and quality interactions encourage learners to project themselves into a life without recidivism. The UN Prison Matters 2025 report stresses the importance of these environments, stressing that the presence and integration of prison staff in this process is key to promoting social justice and well-being in detention.

Inspiring examples such as multimedia libraries in Cambodia, which are being transformed into real educational centres offering literacy, digital training and cultural spaces, demonstrate that beyond simple instruction, these places become spaces of hope and self-reclaim.

Finally, the portrait of the research reveals a need to balance approaches between groups and environments to support the journey of incarcerated people. It highlights the importance of fully integrating prison actors into the ecosystem of socio-community reintegration and adopting adapted educational practices in order to respond to the complex challenges of reintegration and social transformation throughout the prison continuum.

We are well aware that the various settings concerned with education in prison are going through a difficult period and we hope that the elements presented in this newsletter will encourage those who read it to continue their important work.

Best,

The Chair's team

Community of Interests

Chair's Activities

Conference and symposium

The Chair at the Société de criminologie du Québec Conference



From October 28 to 30, the team from the UNESCO Chair in Applied Research for Education in Prison took part in the Société de criminologie du Québec Conference in Victoriaville. Bringing together researchers, practitioners, and decision-makers, the event—held under the theme “Rethinking Practices in Criminal Justice”—provided a rich space for reflection on transformations, adaptations, and innovations in the fields of social justice and community reintegration.

The presentations and workshops highlighted the diversity and depth of contemporary criminology approaches. Among the presentations, Bastien Quirion (University of Ottawa) offered a humanistic perspective

on interventions with justice-involved individuals, inviting participants to rethink practices through a reflective lens that restores the voices of those most affected, notably through self-narration. Catherine Arseneault (Université de Montréal) explored the impact of incarceration on the relatives of incarcerated individuals, emphasizing the often-overlooked role of these informal agents of desistance who support reintegration journeys.

In another vein, Jérémy Côté (Université du Québec en Outaouais) introduced the concept of disciplinary capital, illustrating how sports activities in prison can serve as a lever for intervention and social reintegration. Finally, Cédric Gray Lehoux and Anne-Marie Courtois (First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission) showcased justice approaches led by First Nations communities, which renew perspectives on victims’ rights and restorative justice at multiple levels—community, regional, and national.

Our colleagues Marc-André Lacelle and Fanny Theurillat-Cloutier also facilitated a workshop on “Non-Formal and Informal Education in Halfway Houses,” based on research conducted in a transitional residence in East Montréal (Saint-Laurent). Their work highlights how educational practices support social reintegration in contexts marked by structural and human challenges.

These three days of exchange reaffirmed the need to develop cross-cutting practices where knowledge, experience, and disciplines intersect to rethink justice and education in correctional settings.

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Publication: *Apprendre + Agir* — Special Issue on Education in Prison

Learning and Transforming:

Practices and International Perspectives on Prison Education

The 2025 special issue of *Apprendre + Agir*, the result of a collaboration between the Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICÉA) and the Chair, brings together nine international contributions demonstrating that, despite numerous challenges, innovative practices—such as exchange programs, artistic workshops, adapted digital education, and support for educators—promote reintegration, resilience, and dignity for incarcerated individuals. These studies also show that prison education goes beyond the transmission of knowledge; it creates a space for dialogue, expression, and identity reconstruction.

Participation in the First Québec Criminology Week



From March 15 to 21, 2026, the very first Québec Criminology Week will take place, organized by the Ordre professionnel des criminologues du Québec and the Société de criminologie du Québec. This initiative aims to highlight the contribution of criminology in understanding, preventing, and reducing crime. The goal is also to raise awareness on the role played by criminologists in the justice system. The Chair is pleased to collaborate and participate in this inaugural large-scale event.

Organizations and people wishing to become partners or collaborators are invited to express their interest.

Contact: gmorel@ordrecrim.ca

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NEWS

Cambodia: Prison Libraries Becoming Multimedia Education Centers



For over a decade, Cambodian prisons have been transforming into true learning spaces thanks to the work of Sipar, an NGO committed to education since 1991. In partnership with the General Department of Prisons and the Ministry of Education, Sipar is turning correctional facilities into places offering reading, training, and offline digital tools.

Launched in 2012 and now present in all 28 prisons nationwide, the initiative is evolving into Multimedia Learning Centers (MLCs) integrated into national education policies. These centers provide book lending, literacy classes, cultural and creative activities, certified training programs, and access to offline digital content.



A pilot project supported by the Fund for Innovation in Development (FID) also enables inmates nearing release to follow self-paced learning paths on Moodle, covering basic education, English, computer skills, and life skills—all supported by trained staff.

The results are significant:

- 20% of Cambodia's 50,000 inmates use the libraries regularly
- 130,000 books circulate monthly
- Literacy classes achieve a 90% success rate
- 96% of learners in pilot prisons feel better prepared for reintegration

With more than 630 libraries established across the country, Sipar demonstrates the essential role of reading and knowledge in dignity, well-being, and social reintegration. In a prison context often marked by isolation, multimedia libraries open spaces for intellectual

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freedom, learning, and hope—key foundations for a more confident return to society.

To learn more, watch the webinar “[Reading Behind Bars](#)” by Sipar in partnership with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

For more information -Visit: www.sipar.org.

Italy: “ Carcere, il suicidio di un educatore ci interroga tutti ”

The article discusses the suicide of a teacher at Cremona prison (Italy), presented as symptomatic of a prison system in deep crisis, marked by severe overcrowding (613 inmates for 394 places) and a decline in educational provision, with an imbalance between available resources and the prison population (one teacher for approximately 100 students). The contributors describe educational work as being highly emotionally stressful, often carried out in great isolation, even as the profiles of incarcerated individuals become more complex (migration, mental health, addictions). Their work would require strengthening the network and links with health services, psychiatric services, and local resources. The suicide of a legal and educational officer is seen as a “failure” of the system and policies, in a context of chronic unease affecting both inmates and staff, exacerbated by recent directives that restrict the scope for action and increase feelings of frustration. Those interviewed emphasize the constitutionally central role of education in detention and call for “taking care of those who take care”: recognition and reinforcement of educational teams, supervision mechanisms, psychological support, and better working conditions appear to be necessary conditions for providing an appropriate and beneficial working and teaching environment.

Diugordi. L., (2025, novembre). Carcere, il suicidio di un educatore ci interroga tutti. Vita.it. Tiré de <https://www.vita.it/carcere-il-suicidio-di-un-educatore-ci-interroga-tutti/>

USA: Clemson Students Teaching in correctional Facilities

Clemson University showcases its Humanities Prison Initiative, a project under the Creative Inquiry program that enables students to teach poetry, Greek mythology, and other literary themes in several detention facilities, including the Greenville County Detention Center. Among them is Brett Porter, an English major who leads weekly classes, encouraging participants to use drawing as a form of expression.

Focused on access to education and restorative justice, the initiative has led to the creation of a nonprofit organization—the [Restorative Scholars Initiative](#)—dedicated to supporting educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals in South Carolina. For Porter, the experience has been transformative: he has decided to pursue legal studies and now envisions a career in law or legal advocacy.

Sikes, P. (2025, April 14). A view from the inside. Clemson News. Clemson University. Review of <https://news.clemson.edu/a-view-from-the-inside/>

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Canada: Innovation and Education in Prison — Two CSC Initiatives to Watch

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is introducing technology-driven and educational projects in correctional settings:

In April 2025, a two-part [CTV W5](#) report highlighted how some federal prisons—such as Bath Institution—are experimenting with Internet access for educational purposes, including virtual reality, to provide incarcerated individuals with new learning opportunities and experiences.

In addition, CSC has launched a podcast series titled “[Beyond Prisons](#).” Episode 18, released in October 2025, focused on [education in prison](#), featuring the testimony of a teacher from Cowansville Penitentiary and a learner, who shared insights on the transformative impact of learning while in custody.

Ottawa: ComPaS Training Offered in French for the First Time

Témoignages du collectif

Au début du cours, je doutais d'avoir une « voix » qui mérite d'être entendue. Ce que j'ai découvert, c'est que je n'avais pas besoin de trouver ma voix, mais plutôt de développer une capacité plus profonde à écouter.

Le but n'est jamais d'étudier ou d'aider les autres participants du cercle, mais bien d'apprendre ensemble. Et quand on écoute quelqu'un sans tenter de résoudre ses problèmes ou de donner le bon conseil, on commence à apprendre de cette personne.

Il s'agit d'un espace où l'on vient pour apprendre avec l'intégralité de ce que nous sommes. Chacun contribue à travers ce qu'il-elle est physiquement, émotionnellement, mentalement, et spirituellement.

Je pense que la société serait bien moins ignorante si tout le monde mettait au moins une fois les pieds dans un milieu carcéral. Bref, tout le monde devrait suivre ce cours.

Être reconnu comme étudiant universitaire avec la carte d'étudiant est un grand impact pour moi qui m'encourage à poursuivre mes études après et pendant ma détention par le système carcéral.

ComPaS

COMMUNAUTÉ DE PARTAGE DE SAVOIRS

Une pédagogie en milieu carcéral où l'apprentissage se fait par l'écoute et le partage

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ComPaS
COMMUNAUTÉ DE PARTAGE DE SAVOIRS
Une pédagogie en milieu carcéral où l'apprentissage se fait par l'écoute et le partage

Qu'est-ce que le cours ComPaS?
Un cours de type séminaire, inspiré du modèle Walls to Bridges, qui permet à un même nombre d'étudiant.es internes (personne incarcéré.e) et externes (personne provenant du milieu universitaire ou collégial) d'apprendre ensemble aux moyens de pédagogies inclusives.

Qu'est-ce que le collectif?
Le collectif ComPaS est né en 2023, lors du premier cours en français donné à l'établissement de détention de Hull par deux facilitateurs de l'Université d'Ottawa (Sandra Lehalle et Alexis Truong).
Le collectif, composé des facilitateurs et des étudiant.es internes et externes, offre pour la première fois, en 2026, une formation en français.

DEVENIR FACILITATEUR.E

5 JOURS DE FORMATION
Une formation dans la région d'Ottawa-Gatineau du 6 au 10 juillet 2026 à l'Établissement de détention de Hull et à l'Université d'Ottawa pour les professionnels.le.s du milieu de l'intervention et de l'éducation (présence obligatoire).
1200\$ +tx*
Code: 1957S-tx

Postulez pour la formation avant le 1er décembre 2025 en signalant votre intérêt à l'adresse courriel ci-dessous
ComPaS-W2B@uottawa.ca

* Prix réduit pour 2026 en raison d'appuis de l'Établissement de détention de Hull, de l'Université d'Ottawa et du Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche sur la citoyenneté et les minorités (CIRCEM).
* Les participant.es pourront recevoir une attestation de formation professionnelle.

The ComPaS (Community of Shared Knowledge) training will be offered in French for the first time from July 6 to 10, 2026, at the Hull Detention Facility and the University of Ottawa. Designed for professionals in intervention and education, the program allows participants to become familiar with the ComPaS approach and learn how to implement it in correctional settings.

ComPaS is based on an inclusive, experiential pedagogy that brings together incarcerated students and external participants.

Program highlights:

- Introduction to the ComPaS model
- Workshops on justice and equity
- Indigenous teachings
- Experience sharing
- Development of a final project
- Guidance for building partnerships with correctional institutions

The reduced cost for the 2026 training is \$1,200 + taxes, and participants receive a professional certificate upon completion.

To apply or for more information: ComPaS-W2B@uottawa.ca

Portrait of a Researcher

Rosemary Ricciardelli



Dr. Rose Ricciardelli recently returned from Uganda, where she led a research training initiative for prison staff. In this conversation, she shares insights on prison systems, program development, education, and the needs of correctional officers—drawing comparisons between Uganda and Canada.

The Chair Team: Could you tell us about your recent work in Uganda and how it compares to the Canadian context?

Rosemary Ricciardelli: Absolutely. In Uganda, I was teaching prison staff how to conduct research through a program called MicroResearch. It's a two-week workshop where participants learn research methods and develop proposals on issues they identify as most pressing. What struck me most is how different the prison systems are.

In Uganda, despite poor material conditions like food and sleep, there is a strong focus on rehabilitation, and purpose through learning skills. Prisoners have real roles—carpentry, tailoring, making shoes and uniforms, even running schools and soccer leagues. Whatever you did on the outside, you do on the inside. People have purpose when it's not just a risk needs assessment at admission. It's who are you? Where do you come from? What do you do? And what can you contribute to our society? Purpose gives hope. One prison had 14 soccer teams managed entirely by prisoners. They also run primary, secondary, and even university-level programs inside the walls.

In Canada, conditions are better physically, but opportunities for meaningful engagement have declined. Programs like sports or vocational training have been cut over time. Honestly, if I had to choose, I'd rather be incarcerated in Uganda because of the opportunities for growth and contribution. As I often say, "You can do a lot with very little—that's the spirit of MicroResearch."

Portrait of a Researcher

Rosemary Ricciardelli



Marc-André Lacelle: Why do you think establishing programs in Canada seems so complex compared to Uganda?

R.R.: That's a great question. I often ask myself the same thing: Why does it have to be so hard? In Canada, we spend so much time and money planning and organizing. In Uganda, they just do it. We have to hear them and listen and learn.

Programs there are simple and practical—basket weaving, carpentry, agriculture, sports, education from primary to university level—all managed internally by prisoners. They even have leadership structures for schools and sports leagues. Everything is integrated into daily life.

We could learn from that practicality. You don't need massive budgets; you need passion, drive, and a willingness to act. Small projects can make a huge impact. As I often say, "We waste so much money planning. Why don't we do."

M-A. L.: What role does education play in rehabilitation, and what challenges do you see?

R.R.: Education is fundamental. How can we expect change if we don't give people the tools to change? Everyone can learn, but not everyone learns the same way. Teachers need to adapt to different learning styles and trauma histories.

Many incarcerated individuals have had negative experiences with schooling, so we need to show them that education can be different. Trauma is real, but it shouldn't be an excuse to stop growing. "If we blame it, we're always holding ourselves back".

Another challenge is continuity—many stop their education after release because of stigma. And accessibility is a huge issue, especially for Indigenous communities. Why don't we have full universities in places like Nunavut or the Northwest Territories? If we want empowerment and prevention, education must be accessible where people live. Scholarships are great, but if people have to leave their communities, it's not truly accessible.

M-A. L.: When you talk to correctional officers about their own needs, what do you hear?

R.R. : Interestingly, when I ask officers about their wellness, they immediately talk about

Portrait of a Researcher

Rosemary Ricciardelli

prisoners' needs. It's beautiful but also telling—they say no one cares about them, yet they don't let the conversation be about themselves.

They know that programming helps everyone. Watching people sit idle and suffer is hard. Occupied prisoners mean less stress, less violence, and a safer environment. Officers often ask for more communication and de-escalation training. Their role is security first, while program officers focus on rehabilitation.

But overall, they want programming because it makes their job easier and the environment more humane. "Nobody wants to watch human suffering," I tell people. When prisoners have purpose, everyone benefits.

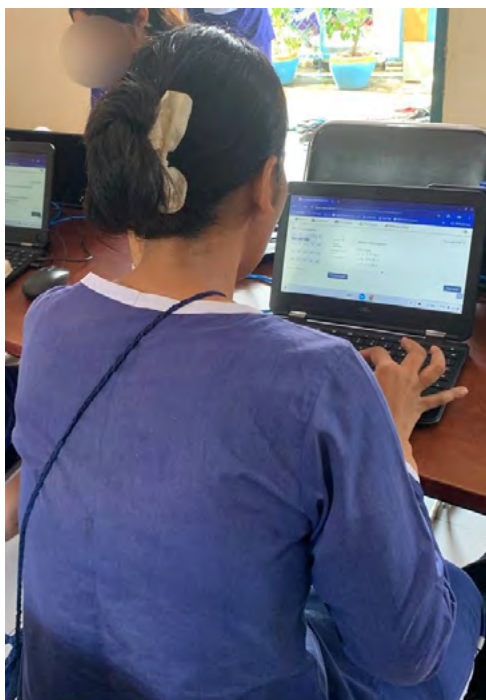


Dr. Ricciardelli's insights remind us that rehabilitation is not just about resources—it's also about creativity, simplicity, and purpose. Whether in Uganda or Canada, education and meaningful engagement are key to reducing recidivism and improving well-being for both prisoners and staff.

Dr. Rosemary Ricciardelli is Professor (PhD) in the School of Maritime Studies and Research Chair in Safety, Security, and Wellness, at Memorial University's Fisheries and Marine Institute. The winner of the 2023 International Corrections and Prison Association's Research Excellence Award and the Canadian Sociological Association's Angus Reid Applied Researcher Award, Ricciardelli was also elected to the Royal Society of Canada and is a fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. Her research centers on evolving understandings of gender, vulnerabilities, risk, and experiences and issues within different facets of the criminal justice system and among mariners. As a sex and gender researcher, her interests lay in the social health, identity construction, and lived experiences of individuals. She leads a longitudinal study on the mental health and well-being experiences of correctional officers employed by Correctional Services Canada.

Education & Raising Awareness

Portrait of a Learner - Portraits of learners — Educational pathways in prisons by KHEN Pania, Phnom Penh (Cambodia)



Questionnaire proposed by the UNESCO Chair in Applied Research for Education in Prison.

Comments collected in November 2025 at Correctional Center 2 by Béatrice Montariol, consultant for Sipar

As part of the pilot project transforming prison libraries into Multimedia Learning Centers in Cambodia, the NGO Sipar collaborates with the General Directorate of Prisons (Ministry of the Interior), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia, and UNESCO in seven prisons since July 2023. In this context, we met Ms. KHEN Pania*, one of the 20 inmate learners currently at Correctional Center 2, the women's detention center located on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, the country's capital.

**The name has been changed for confidentiality reasons.*

Béatrice Montariol : Can you briefly introduce yourself?

Khen Pania: My name is KHEN Pania, I am 34 years old. I've been in detention at CC2 for 18 months and I have seven months left to serve.

BM: What motivated your decision to enroll in classes during your stay in prison?

KP: I wanted to resume my studies at the secondary level because I dropped out of school a long time ago and left middle school in 9th grade without taking the diploma exam.

BM: Can you tell me a little about your life before prison?

KP: I have been married since I was 17. I have two children, a 14-year-old son and a 10-year-old daughter. They live with their father in the province. Before being incarcerated, I ran a small grocery store, and before that, I sold beer in a casino in Phnom Penh. My husband visits me every two months, but my children come less often because they are in school.

BM: How was your relationship with school before incarceration?

KP: I really enjoyed attending primary and then middle school. I was an average but serious student. However, I had to leave school during 9th grade because my parents are rice farmers and needed my help, then I got married at a very young age. Of course, I would have liked to continue and pass my exams, but I preferred to help my parents.

Education & Raising Awareness

BM: What kind of program are you following in prison, and what level does it correspond to?

KP: I've been enrolled for a month in the Basic Education Equivalency Program (Beep), which is a secondary-level catch-up program developed by the Cambodian Ministry of Education with the support of UNESCO.

BM: How long does this program last, and how are classes organized on a daily basis?

KP: It will take me between three and four months to complete this equivalency program. I study every morning from 7:30 AM to 10:00 AM, five days a week. It's self-learning through a laptop connected to a platform available on a server, since we don't have access to the internet in prison. We study part-time so that a second group can study in the afternoon because there are only eight computers.

BM: What aspects of this program are the most helpful or interesting?

KP: There are several subjects that I have never studied before, such as topics about society. It's very motivating to discover and learn new things.

BM: What are the most difficult aspects?

KP: It's not always easy to learn on my own. But luckily, my teacher helps me and explains what I don't understand.

BM: Who is your tutor that you call "My Teacher"?

KP: She's an inmate like all of us, but she is also the librarian and tutor. She has a good level of education, a good teaching method, and she speaks very good English.

BM: How does participating in educational activities affect your daily life in prison?

KP: Since I started this study program, I don't think too much about my situation in detention. I'm in a better mood and much more motivated to study and make progress.

BM: Has this learning had an effect on your relationships with others?

KP: Not especially with other inmates, but with my tutor, yes. She is like my teacher, and I trust her.

BM: Does studying impact your self-confidence, motivation, or the way you think about your life's path?

KP: Of course. I have a goal in prison: to complete my studies and pass the exam. Plus, it's preparing me for my life after prison, since I will be released in a few months. I've gained more confidence in myself.

BM: After release, do you have the desire or possibility to continue your studies or training?

KP: My priority is to reunite with my husband and children in my home province. Later, I might consider taking a beautician course, a field that interests me. But first, I need to find a job to help my husband and children, so they can continue their education as far as possible.

BM: What are the main obstacles or, on the contrary, the factors that encourage perseverance?

Education & Raising Awareness

KP: What helps me persist is that, outside, I never finished middle school, and it wasn't possible to resume my studies because I was too busy with work and my family. In prison, I have time, the opportunity, and especially a quality program that allows me to earn a certificate. That motivates me to keep going!

BM: How will the skills or knowledge acquired in prison contribute to your reintegration, whether academically, professionally, or personally?

KP: The Beep program gives me knowledge in math, Khmer, basic digital skills, and other subjects, as well as an official certificate issued by the Ministry of Education, which will help me find a job. However, I haven't yet completed the social skills modules for reintegration preparation. These are scheduled to start a few weeks before my release.

BM: Does this educational journey influence the way you perceive yourself or project yourself into the future?

KP: Since I started studying, I'm enriching my knowledge, and above all, I'm thinking more positively about my future.

BM: Based on your experience, what should be improved in the educational offerings in prisons?

KP: I think it would help a lot if the tutor was more available. It can be discouraging sometimes when I don't understand something and I'm alone in front of the computer. So, we need more tutoring hours to support our learning.

BM: What kind of support would be most helpful to encourage participation in studies and make the programs more suited to the needs of incarcerated individuals?

KP: We, the students in the Beep program, can promote it to other inmates, encouraging them to enroll by sharing our experiences. We're well equipped with computers, the server, notebooks, and the tutor on-site. But as I've already mentioned, we need more tutor intervention. Also, it would be helpful to have secondary-level textbooks available so we can study more, especially by bringing them back in our cells.

Research & Practices Overview

ARTICLES

→ **Le « bon » détenu au « bon » endroit : Gestion spatiale de la détention et racialisation de l'ordre carcéral**

In France, social science research on prisons has only very recently begun to take into account the production of racial categorizations. This article analyzes how prison staff group inmates according to their place of residence, revealing implicit processes of racialization embedded in the territorialization of prison space. Based on an ethnographic study conducted in prison, the article shows that the grouping of inmates from working-class neighborhoods reflects racialized disqualification. Flexible management of assignments by staff creates practices of “balancing” between groups, which maintain order in the prison. These dynamics closely link territorialization and racialization to the daily functioning of the prison.

Veaudor, M. (2025). Le « bon » détenu au « bon » endroit : Gestion spatiale de la détention et racialisation de l'ordre carcéral. *Politix*, 146 (2), 219-243. DOI : [10.3917/pox.146.0219](https://doi.org/10.3917/pox.146.0219)

→ **Correctional Education and Reintegration: A Qualitative Study of Young Ex-Offenders in Cape Flats**

Based on qualitative analysis of interviews conducted with 20 young “ex-offenders” from the Cape Flats area near Cape Town, South Africa, Chauke reports that education programs, particularly those focusing on mental health and life skills development, improve learners’ well-being and sense of competence. Chauke also emphasizes that organizations responsible for educational initiatives in prisons should build and maintain symbiotic relationships with outside organizations working to develop youth skills, to ensure continuity in supporting young people in the process of social and community reintegration.

Chauke, T. A. (2025). Correctional Education and Reintegration : A Qualitative Study of Young Ex-Offenders in Cape Flats. *Youth*, 5(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/youth5020049>

→ **From prisons to programming: Fostering self-efficacy via virtual web design curricula in prisons and jails. In *Proceedings of the ACM*.**

This article presents the “Brave Behind Bars” program, a 12-week accredited web design course taught virtually and synchronously in five correctional facilities in the United States. Participants—both men and women—learn the basics of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, and design websites on social issues of their choice. The authors conducted surveys of participating students, combining closed-ended and open-ended questions, and then performed thematic and quantitative analyses of their responses. The results reveal a significant improvement in learners’ sense of self-efficacy. The study highlights the main pedagogical choices and needs identified by participants and makes several recommendations for designing computer science education programs that can strengthen both self-efficacy and digital literacy in prison settings.

Nisser, M., Gaetz, M., Fishberg, A., Soicher, R. N., Faruqi, F., & Long, J. (2024). From prisons to programming: Fostering self-efficacy via virtual web design curricula in prisons and jails. In *Proceedings of the ACM*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642717>

Research & Practices Overview

→ Research on education in prisons: a scoping review, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*

This scoping review maps 353 peer-reviewed articles published between 2013 and 2023 on education in prisons, revealing a stable but limited field of research (approximately 35 articles per year), dominated by English-language qualitative studies concentrated in North America (53%) and Europe (28%), with a notable representation of female contributors and researchers and eight main themes addressed: subjects taught (humanities, arts, literacy), effects and outcomes (reduction in recidivism, employability, citizenship, discipline), perspectives of inmates and teachers, specific programs (Inside-Out, parenting), national policies, barriers and needs (resources, literacy, mental health, learning disabilities), and the use of offline digital tools (ICT—information and communication technologies). The findings highlight two recurring characteristics: the need to justify education in prison by its utilitarian benefits (rehabilitation, reintegration) and its restorative role in promoting self-esteem, social skills, and personal transformation. The article also highlights issues in the field such as “Anglo-centrism,” the lack of a specific educational focus, and the geographical and linguistic underrepresentation of several countries. Recommendations for future research include broadening the geographical and linguistic scope, moving beyond the utilitarian view of reducing recidivism in favor of a view of education as a human right and a lever for social justice, and exploring in depth effective teaching practices in the prison context, which the article describes as a “black box.”

J. Berglund, C. Bjursell & M. Hugo (2025) Research on education in prisons: a scoping review, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 44:4, 436-449, DOI: [10.1080/02601370.2025.2465740](https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2025.2465740)

→ Écritures et usages de la littérature en espace carcéral

Over the past decade, interest in literature and artistic practices in prisons has grown significantly, both in Latin America and in other parts of the world. This development stems in particular from legislative reforms and public policies that have promoted access to culture and education for prisoners. Numerous initiatives have emerged, including writing workshops, libraries, reading circles, literacy programs, vocational training, and various cultural productions focused on the spoken word. Supported by institutions, universities, artistic collectives, and social organizations, these projects have given rise to a wealth of publications—books, journals, events, and research—that now deserve to be studied through renewed critical approaches. Through the journal *Artelogie*, dedicated to the theme “Writing and the uses of literature in prisons,” readers can access various articles and reflections on the subject.

2025. Écritures et usages de la littérature en espace carcéral. (n° 23). *Artelogie*. Association ESCAL. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/14znf>

Research & Practices Overview

REPORTS

→ **Global prison population and trends; a focus on rehabilitative environments**

In 2023, the global prison population reached 11.7 million people, a slight increase despite the pandemic. One-third of prisoners were in pretrial detention, and overcrowding remained particularly acute in Africa and the Americas. The UN's Prison Matters 2025 report, based on data collected between 2013 and 2023 as part of the United Nations' annual survey of criminal justice systems, also highlights worrying rates of violent deaths in prison, reflecting concerning conditions of detention.

The report thus emphasizes the importance of so-called "rehabilitative" prison environments, where a positive atmosphere and quality interactions promote the prospect of a life without recidivism. It highlights the key role of prison staff and the effectiveness of social reintegration programs, as well as the need for support before and after release. The report concludes that these "rehabilitative" environments must be integrated into national strategies with regular monitoring, as demonstrated by experiences in Namibia and Australia, in order to transform prisons into places of true rehabilitation.

UNODC. (2025). Prison Matters 2025 : Global prison population and trends; a focus on rehabilitative environments (p. 69). UNODC. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/prison/Prison_brief_2025.pdf

→ **Principles for Education in Prison - EPEA**

In this document, EPEA reaffirms its position by reiterating that education in prison is a universal right that is essential for the empowerment and reintegration of incarcerated individuals. EPEA thus formulates a series of key recommendations for recognizing education in prison as a universal right: access for all, integration and recognition equivalent to those of work, personalized provision according to needs, continuity at all stages of detention, inclusion of digital skills, the presence of trained teachers, adequate resources, and a clear objective of reducing recidivism and promoting social reintegration.

This vision and these recommendations aim to make education in prison a major lever for the prevention of recidivism, respect for human rights, and the empowerment of prisoners, so that they can once again become active and responsible members of society.

European Prison Education Association. (2025). Principles for Education in Prison (Version 5, June 2025). From <https://epea.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/01-250620-Principles-for-Education-in-Prison-V5.pdf>

Research & Practices Overview

→ Inflation carcérale, durcir les peines, remplir les prisons

The *Cahier d'études pénitentiaires et criminologiques* (No. 65, August 2024) analyzes the mechanisms of prison inflation in France. As of January 1, 2024, the prison population reached nearly 76,000 inmates, a historically high level marked by chronic overcrowding due to the gap between available space and the number of inmates. The study is based on longitudinal demographic analysis, statistical and historical data from the prison administration, and takes into account the impact of political, economic, and social factors on prison inflows and length of detention. In conclusion, prison inflation is mainly the result of a gradual increase in the average length of detention rather than an increase in the number of new inmates. Historical events, economic conditions, and criminal justice policies strongly influence this dynamic. Despite various regulatory measures (parole, alternatives to incarceration), the phenomenon persists with an upward trend in the short and medium term.

Ministère de la Justice, Direction de l'administration pénitentiaire. (2024). Inflation carcérale, durcir les peines, remplir les prisons. *Cahiers d'études pénitentiaires et criminologiques*, n°65. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2024-08/Cahiers_etudes_penitentiaires_et_criminologiques_n65.pdf



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