

Administrative issues concerning the development of the System of Romanian. Prison Education - Tîrgu Ocna National Training School for Prison Agents

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***Abstract:** The priority and assumed mission of the school is to respond to the specific needs of training and professional education of the individual who has chosen to pursue a career in the Criminal Executive field as well as the operational, development and professionalization needs of the prison institutions of the system. The purpose of the National Training School for Prison Agents is to develop an education system that meets the real work and development needs of skills and professional competence of the staff of the Romanian prison system that follows a preparation process within the institution. Also the school has as a priority the professionalization of personnel within the prison system by raising the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of training activity within it and achieving the peak performance, in accordance with the standards of management excellence.*

***Keywords:** education; prison system; performance.*

Introduction

During its short but controversial history, beginning with the 1997 - year of establishment, "The school from Tg. Ocna" tried to meet the needs of the prison system in the field of training and improvement of personnel of penitentiaries.

Since July 2001, in the same location, it was reestablished the Minors Rehabilitation Center that functioned for nine years, in common premises with the school, situation generated and sustained through a bold and innovative project, but whose opportunity, efficiency and results is not known to have ever been established.

The school is a public institution of national interest, with legal personality, subordinated to the A.N.P, part of the public institutions of defense, public order and national security of the State and has as its main activity the initial formation of the prison agents.

Beginning with the year 2011, the school started the legal procedures for accreditation as an educational institution by the Ministry of National Education, which is in the course of completion, given the fact that after the external evaluation procedure of the school, carried out by experts of ARACIP, it was issued the Decree No. 3 of 13.03.2013, through which the school becomes a “post-secondary” institution, “military” profile, "prison officer " specialization, daily education, part of the national system of education.

The moment the institution obtained accreditation can be considered one of the highlights of the existence of this institution, because, as the current legislation provides, this moment represents its birth certificate.

Although the first impression towards the concept of "school" can lead to an educational institution, as defined in simple, the reality is that this institution, in structure as well as in functioning and heritage, represents a "body" much more complex and interesting, reality proved by the following [1]:

- a. surface area of about 6 ha;
- b. the large number of buildings (with a great built-up area);
- c. a "school" pavilion, with:
 - 11 classrooms;
 - 3 lecture rooms;
 - council rooms;
 - information/documentation Centre;
 - Library with reading room;
 - 2 custodial buildings for students;
 - food unit / its own kitchen;
 - dining room;
- d. performance hall/exhibits/presentations;
- e. Conference room;
- f. gym;
- g. football field with synthetic grass/jogging track;
- h. two mini-soccer pitches with lawn;
- i. clay court for mini-football/basketball/handball/hockey;
- j. polygon training/simulator;
- k. Parks/Recreation areas;
- l. it's own hotel with 8 rooms;
- m. auto sector;
- n. dining hall for the staff;
- o. protocol room;
- p. agro-zootechnical sector (size of about 6 ha);

1. Presenting the issue

Contemporary society is in an accelerated process of change. And, even more than ever, the structure changes touch all the components of social and economic life, but also the mentalities, social practices, human behaviors.

We cannot say with certainty that, formally, the task of assuming, promoting and sustaining change in concepts and human mentalities falls primarily under the responsibility of the educational institutions, which supports the education, training and preparation of young people, but we can say with certainty that such institutions are meant to create a favorable environment so that these vectors of change could develop healthily and build a fair system of moral, civic and ideological values, favoring change. We are left only to acknowledge the reality that we have brave young enthusiasts in which we need to have confidence that they will be able to carry out what its predecessors had started, would have desired to start or have failed to lead to the end.

The prison system, like most public administration systems have started, a long time ago, this irreversible mechanism of change, modernization, reform and, therefore, is, more or less, tributary to the same instincts and prejudices. But, more than ever, Romanian prison system is encouraged to be more open towards society, European horizons and visions, towards change.

Achieving and maintaining a high standard in the training and preparation of personnel is possible only in conditions of orientation towards performance of the educational activity, through the continuous improvement of teaching methods and outcomes, an efficient management, a financial policy appropriate to the rational use of the resources allocated and attracting new resources, by committing to a participatory and responsible attitude on the part of all personnel, as well as through the direct involvement of the Central Administration and staff of the prison system in general [2].

Ensuring order and public security is an essential requirement of internal stability, which guarantees the adequate conditions for building a state of law. National interest in the line of public order and safety, is aimed at keeping Romania's status as a stable area and safety factor in the area of geographical proximity, by strengthening the authority of the State and its institutions, efficiently fighting corruption and crime, restructuring and modernizing the system of public order and security, in which the Ministry of Justice, in addition to the other relevant ministries, should become an institution capable to exercise in full the functions of ensuring public order and safety of citizens, as well as carrying out all obligations assumed on the national, European and international levels, essential conditions for achieving success in fulfilling the objective of final and irrevocable integration into European structures. In a common European space for every citizen there must be a security environment in which freedom, security and justice, should be fully guaranteed. More than ever, at the level of the public order system a strategic educational culture needs to be crystallized. It should be based on the in-depth knowledge of the realities in Romania and the major trends detached from the global evolution of crime threats. However, for this, it is necessary to design a new architecture of institutions of public order and security, which, through the implementation, maintenance and improvement of a quality management system based on compliance with the requirements of international quality standards, allows the use of the entire institutional capabilities, promoting standards and operational procedures as well as prioritization of efforts in law enforcement, ensuring at the same time performance of institutional improvements and increasing the satisfaction of citizens and society in general. The implementation and improvement of the quality management system in institutions in the field of public security and order, as the main direction of action for the achievement of institutional management to improve the quality of public services, are priority objectives of the Government Programs of in the field of public order and safety of citizens, of the strategy of the prison system in the period 2013-2016 as well as the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Justice for the same period. Also the dimension of quality insurance in the institutions of public order and security also gains European values, taking into account the need to increase mutual trust between the authorities and services in the Member States, as well as between the decision factors who must provide the basis for an effective and efficient cooperation in this area [3].

The National Training School for Prison Agents has this potential, this availability and, moreover, has the assumed responsibility for trying to reach the modern standards of performance and educational and professional quality.

2. Solutions to resolve the problem

In light of these guiding principles, the school has developed a management project that will be put into practice as a continuation of the strategies of modernization and efficiency of the institution, initiated and conducted at its level in the period 2009-2012 and which corresponds to the modern European and national standards in the field of prison staff.

So, during the past four years of activity, the school has initiated and carried out objectives that have ensured a constant evolution of the institution, consisting of [4]:

a. The territorial reorganization of the school through the separation of assets and activities towards the Rehabilitation Center, which created the opportunity for starting some important projects of development and modernization of the school;

b. Since 2010, the number of students doubled from 100 to 200 seats, while creating optimal conditions for accommodation and schooling of pupils;

c. Projects of the methodology for organizing and conducting the competition for admission and graduation exam, regulations through which it was created a modern, fair and transparent legal framework, regarding the two defining elements concerning the work of the school have been promoted;

d. In the year 2011 the procedure of accreditation of the school by the Ministry of national education has begun, and the procedure was successfully completed at the begging of the year 2013;

e. Starting in 2011 the structure of the school year has been changed; it was switched to a modern educational system, thus, currently students' schooling is carried out on the structure of three specialty modules;

f. It has been initiated and finalized the legal procedure for the change of the name "prison warden", existent in the Classification of occupations in Romania, with the name "prison agent" [5];

g. In 2010 two major overhauls goals for the institution and for the modernization of the schooling process, respectively, for the "School" Pavilion and "Pavilion B- pupils' accommodation" were initiated. The objectives are in the execution phase;

h. Numerous partnerships with institutions in the country and abroad have been initiated and implemented.

Plus the administrative value that resides in the management project, applied at the level of the school covers the following areas of action:

a. The promotion of the new state of school organization, adapted to the specifics of the activity;

b. Completion of the accreditation process of the institution by the Ministry of National Education and the implementation of the measures necessary for the maintenance of the school's activity to the accreditation standards [6];

c. Design/promotion of strategies concerning the approval and implementation of a new structure of the training process of prison agents, through which to pass from schooling lasting one year to the schooling lasting one year and six months;

- d. Modernization of the material base and arranging the spaces intended for schooling, by continuing the renovation objectives, current repairs and other arrangements;
- e. Monitoring, efficiency and reducing consumption / expenditure;
- f. Accessing European funds for the professional training of the school staff, developing partnerships and upgrading the material basis of the school;
- g. The development of vocational training of its staff (particularly teaching staff);
- h. Cultivating the institution's image and the development of foreign relations;

Therefore, we will now present the main guidelines, proposals, actions and measures that the National Training School for Prison agents applies in order to improve the management of the institution in order to ensure a constant institutional development.

In accordance with the Prison System Strategy 2013-2016 and the Action plan of A.N.P. for the year 2013, as well as the Management plan for the development and modernization of the school for the period 2011-2014 with the no. D₃ 16709/SNTOBC/30.03.2011, approved by the General Director of the A.N.P, considering the specifics of the activities conducted within the institution, the school has established the following strategic objectives and targets:

Strategic objective I: Efficient institutional management

The fact that the school is an institution that by its nature involves a very high consumption of financial resources and with very low possibilities of self-financing or raising of extra-budgetary funds, may represent an almost insurmountable obstacle.

However, experience has proven that through a responsible and interested management this institution can operate at acceptable parameters, using efficiently and judiciously the funds allocated, exploiting opportunities for obtaining income from collateral school activities and through the establishment of measures to reduce costs. This strategic objective has the following specific objectives:

- a. Development/implement of annual plans of activities and measures to ensure the continuity of projects, as well as the proper functioning of the institution;
- b. The appropriate and effective management of human and financial resources;
- c. The initiation of legislative proposals regarding the amendment of the legal framework governing the school activity;
- d. Ensuring, developing and improving internal organizational communication;

Strategic objective II: Modern and efficient instructive educational process for the training of prison agents

Improving the teaching quality is part of the quality management of the educational process, focused on increasing the ability to fulfill the beneficiaries' requirements (students/trainees and prison system). This involves a process of improvement of the activities and processes related to the quality of teaching, having as a tool a more effective control of quality, and as a result, reduction of variation [7].

We are aware that excessive focus on the instructive-educational schooling process, which is almost military, can become harmful to students if it is not covered at an acceptable level

of interest with the extra-didactic component, in order to ensure the optimal recreational conditions and constructive and socio-educational possibilities to occupy their free time, to identify and exploit their creative abilities. This strategic objective has the following specific objectives:

- a. Modernization and efficiency of the teaching process;
- b. Development of students' interest for their own preparation;
- c. The control and evaluation of the instructive-educative process;
- d. Management of extra-didactic activities;

Strategic objectives III: Promotion and enhancement of the image and external relations of the institution

On a medium term the strategy for modernization and development of the school, will be based on the need for knowledge and comparison of different models of organization and development of recruitment activities, selection, training, and staff perfection for the prison system in similar schools in Europe.

A policy of cooperation and openness of the institution's image by attracting the interest of media towards the school activities (special events/actions) will be promoted. This strategic objective has the following specific objectives:

- a. Ensuring institutional transparency and development of public relations;
- b. Promotion in the media of the activities carried out by the S.N.P.A.P;
- c. Developing cooperation and external relations;

Strategic objective IV: Modernization and development of the institution's infrastructure, with the following specific objectives:

- a. Achieving the objective "Modernization of the sludge trap and waste water treatment plant" SNPAP Tg. Ocna headquarters for connection to sewerage network of the city";
- b. Rehabilitation, through current repairs, of the objectives "Laundry" and "Administrative control Pavilion";
- c. Making the investment "Rehabilitation of drinking water supply and heating of the school buildings";
- d. Modernization of the gym;
- e. Achievement of objective "Arrangement of shooting range with arms";
- f. Finalizing the objective concerning the capital repairs "Pavilion B – pupils' accommodation";
- g. Modernizing the objective "School Pavilion";

Conclusion

We consider that the preparation of future specialists in the field of criminal execution law is an essential and necessary step for the elaboration and execution of the project implementing the quality management system in the National Prison Administration in Romania. Only through a rigorous training and improvement in the specific area of the prison system, the future specialists designated, where appropriate, representative of quality management, quality

manager, in charge of the process, member in the working teams, etc. can ensure the success of the project implementing the quality management system. It is also essential to maintain and further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this system, which is vital for ensuring the growth of trust of all customers and parties interested in the prison system. The main purpose of implementing the quality management system, based on the international A.N.P. standards must be represented by total quality, so that, through a participatory management, the A.N.P. activity to be headed towards excellence. In these circumstances, compliance with the standard SR EN ISO 9001:2008 should not be seen as an ultimate goal in itself. Once the A.N.P. in general, and S.N.P.A.P. in particular, has reached a level of quality that enables them to consistently offer the customers, interested parties and the community satisfying and quality services, we need to look beyond compliance and towards performance. It is, however, necessary to take into consideration the use of standard SR EN ISO 9004:2010 as well as other models of excellence, in order to improve the sector and global effectiveness and efficiency. In our conception, the consistent performance of these premises by the prison system and by all the state's institutions is an objective necessity for the continuous improvement of the institutional performance of quality management system based on implemented international standards, systems, whose performances certainly form the basis of sustainable and modern development of a truly State of law in Romania, strong, balanced and harmonious. The ultimate effect is clearly the sustainable and continuous improvement on all levels of the quality of life for the citizens of Romania, at the level of the European standards [8].

Success in the development of the Romanian prison education system towards achieving total quality and excellence is determined, for the most part, strong and active will and involvement of the management at the highest level, of the general director and leadership of A.N.P., as a whole, for the understanding, application and improvement of the quality management in this institution. At the same time, an important factor is the training, education and consistent involvement of all the staff of A.N.P., on the implemented fundamental principles of the quality management system [9].

In conclusion, we may state that, at the present time, the National Training School for Prison Agents from Tîrgu Ocna ensures the daily post-secondary courses, with the duration of a school year, for the professional qualification of young people as "prison agents", level 3, in accordance with the provisions of the Law of national education no. 1/2011 essentially contributing to the development of the prison education system.

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