

DIGICOR

Digitalisation in Corrections
Recidivism Reduction

e-Learning and access to online resources

Scenario Description



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DIGICOR Digital Scenarios

Recognising the marked resistance of European penitentiary services towards technological modernisation, the Digital Scenarios seek to directly influence senior officers and those responsible for the operational management of penitentiary settings by aggregating and disseminating innovative and evidence-based practices in the field of digital readiness in prisons.

Raising these stakeholders' awareness regarding the benefits of well-implemented digital solutions in the prison setting, namely in what concerns inmate rehabilitation, will contribute to enhancing the prison services openness towards modernisation.

Scenarios to be developed:

Inmate communications

- Scenario 1: Telephony
- Scenario 2: Videocall and video visitation
- Scenario 3: Secure e-mail/text messages/digital letters

Education and e-learning

- Scenario 4: e-learning and access to online resources

Digital self-service solutions

- Scenario 5: implementing integrated digital self-service solutions

Training and treatment using Virtual and Augmented reality

- Scenario 6: Inmate's treatment and training using VR
- Scenario 7: Officers training using VR and AR

Videoconference with courts

- Scenario 8: Implementing videoconference systems with courts

Telemedicine

- Scenario 9: Implementing telemedicine

Offender and Case Management Systems

- Scenario 10: Implementing offender and case management systems

Electronic monitoring in prisons and probation

- Scenario 11: Implementing an EM project (RFID and GPS)
- Scenario 12: Implementing an EM project (mobile phone)
- Scenario 13: Implementing an inmate monitoring system in a correctional environment

Smart Prisons and digital transformation in corrections

- Scenario 14: Implementing a "Smart Prison initiative"

Artificial Intelligence in corrections

- Scenario 15: Using AI and xAI in prisons and probation

DIGICOR Digital Scenario Form

Scenario #: 4 e-Learning and access to online resources

Problem/problems that it aims to solve:

Research has consistently shown that access to e-learning and online resources can reduce recidivism, reduce tension in the prison, allow the inmate to gain access to valuable education, improve literacy, break down the digital divide and foster digital inclusion.

Description of the solution:

e-Learning and access to online resources in prisons can be solved in several ways:

- In the classroom via computers, laptops and/or other smart devices often as part of a blended learning solution.
- In the cells as part of a digital solution for example Tablets, Laptops, Smart TVs, Set-top boxes etc.

Expected benefits:

For the organisation and staff:

- Reduces tensions between inmates and staff.
- Where in cell digital solutions are provided they reduce the staff's need to accompany and monitor inmates while outside the cell in classrooms.
- Where in cell digital solutions are provided they allow teachers to specify additional study material which can be accessed and studied in the inmates cell.
- Staff are freed up to do more high-value duties.

For the inmates:

- Positively affects the behaviours of inmates and significantly contributes to social reinsertion and reduction in recidivism.
- Allows the inmate to get access to education in a way not otherwise possible.
- Where in cell digital solutions are provided allows the inmates to study at a time convenient to them.
- Reduces the digital divide and fosters digital inclusion.
- Allows the inmate to gain valuable skills which can assist them with life inside and outside prison.

Evidence of effectiveness:

Authors acknowledge the benefits associated with implementing ICT in correctional education, such as the improvement of literacy (Moreira, Montero, and Machado 2017b) and digital literacy (Taugerbeck et al. 2019), which are crucial for life after release. Moreover, e-learning in prison can help reduce the digital divide (Knight and Hadlington 2018; Prison Learning Alliance 2020) and fosters digital inclusion (Vryonides 2020). The acquisition of new skills (Prison Learning Alliance 2020),

especially professional know-how (Moreira, Montero, and Machado 2017a), is mentioned. Beyond personal development, access to ICT-mediated learning can help people to strengthen relationships with people inside and outside prison, providing detainees with a sense of purpose (Prison Learning Alliance 2020). The same study associates learning in prison with a lower risk of reoffending (*idem*; also in Pitikoe 2019). Using ICT in prisons is part of a larger framework of "digital rehabilitation" (Reisdorf and Rikard 2018; Monteiro, Barros and Leite 2015) aimed at using technology as part of the re-entry process by supporting communication with family, learning, and entertainment.

Key phases of the implementation:

Phases of implementation will vary depending on the extent of the project undertaken. The list below outlines some of the key phases for a successful implementation.

- Extensive market soundings are undertaken to ensure best-of-breed solutions.
- Consideration is given to having a Proof of Concept and/or Pilot Phase to ensure that the requirements are fully understood and agreed upon.
- Funding for the project will be dependent on the option chosen for example:
 - Will the provider develop an end-to-end solution.
 - Will the jurisdiction provide part of the solution for example the infrastructure and equipment?
- A comprehensive tender process is undertaken once the requirements are agreed upon.
- Buy in is obtained from Senior Management, Staff and Staff representatives through extensive engagement.
- Communication to ensure the benefits are understood by management, staff and inmates.
- A change management exercise is undertaken and local champions of change are put in place.
- The project is carefully planned and managed from start to finish.
- Clear and agreed objectives are outlined so it is understood what success means.
- Post project reviews are undertaken.

Key success factors:

It is recommended that before undertaking any project of this type that it is understood what helps to ensure a successful project.

- Clear and clearly articulated project goals.
- A comprehensive and detailed Project plan.
- Early definition of deliverable quality criteria.
- Active senior management support with a shared vision throughout the project's life.
- A fully representative Project board in place from the start of the Project.

- Carefully planned Project implementation.
- Concise, consistent, complete, and unambiguous business and technical requirements.
- Realistic cost estimates and Project schedules.
- Early risk analysis and ongoing risk management.
- A clearly defined business process change management implementation plan.
- Proactive Project issue resolution.
- Stakeholder involvement throughout the Project life cycle.
- Defined and consistently executed Project management to minimize scope increases.
- A skilled Project Manager experienced in the execution of project management best practices.
- Execution of a formal Project development methodology.
- An experienced implementation team(s).

Key risk factors:

Key risks to note are:

- No proof of concept and/or Pilot Phase to ensure that the requirements are fully understood and agreed upon.
- Depending on the option chosen the funding requirements for the project are not agreed upon or understood.
- No clear understanding of the market options available that potentially lead to a poorly tendered solution.
- Lack of buy-in from Senior Management, Staff and Staff representatives.
- No change management and/or local champions of change.
- Systems are not properly secured leading to abuse by inmates.
- Lack of proper project planning.
- Insufficient engagement to ensure the benefits are understood by management, staff and inmates.
- No clear and agreed objectives for the project.

Jurisdictions in which it has been implemented:

Many countries in Europe have implemented some form of e-Learning solution for inmates in their prisons. In the past number of years, Sweden, Finland, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, the United Kingdom, Ireland, France and Portugal have all implemented some form of e-Learning.

Specific Regulations to consider

These will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction it is therefore recommended that an exercise to consider the specific regulations in your jurisdiction is undertaken as part of the pre-project planning phase.

Estimated implementation period:

This will vary depending on the extent and complexities of the project undertaken. It is recommended that a detailed project plan is developed and agreed upon in conjunction with the selected service provider.

Estimated cost

This will vary depending on the option chosen. It is recommended that detailed market soundings are undertaken in advance of tender commencement to gain an understanding of potential solutions that best suit the requirements of the jurisdiction. The tender process itself will also serve to ensure the most economic and advantageous solution is obtained.

Useful resources:

<https://www.ibi.tu-berlin.de/projekte/259-e-learning-im-strafvollzug>
<https://projectbleep.eu/>
<https://prisonsystems.eu/projects/triangle/>
<https://prisonerlearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Digital-Divide-Lessons-from-prisons-abroad.pdf>

Main suppliers:

There are several suppliers in the market. The following list serves to give examples of some of the service providers. It is recommended that jurisdictions carry out detailed market soundings in advance of project commencement to gain an understanding of the market suppliers in their area.

- Novus
- Virtual Campus
- E-Lis
- Nucleos
- Coracle
- Corrections Learning Academy
- Innovative Prison Systems
- L and G International



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