

# Lifelong learning for all: A prisoner's right to education

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## 1. UIL event: A prisoner's right to education

As part of UNESCO's 'Say no to discrimination in education' campaign and in the context of the 60-year anniversary of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education – the first international legally binding instrument covering the right to education – the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) will host a webinar on **Thursday, 21 January 2021** from 14:30 to 16:00 (CET).

Entitled 'A prisoner's right to education', the online event will be an opportunity to address important questions concerning the future of prison education and the important role of lifelong learning in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – in particular, SDG 4 (inclusive and equitable quality education) and SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies). It will also allow for an examination of the current state of prison education policies and their results.

## 2. Context

Last month, 14 December 2020, marked 60 years since the UNESCO General Conference adopted the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. This Convention highlights UNESCO Member States' obligation to ensure free and compulsory education, promotes equality of educational opportunity, and prohibits any form of discrimination. Despite six decades having passed since the adoption of the Convention, however, the right to education and lifelong learning is still not a reality for millions of people worldwide. UNESCO therefore launched a global campaign in 2020, 'Say no to discrimination in education', in order to highlight the need for continued advocacy for the right to education and the necessity to ratify the Convention.

As part of this effort, UIL will host a webinar, 'A prisoner's right to education', offering a perspective on lifelong learning as a human right and, consequently, the right of those who are incarcerated in prisons and detention centres. The event will be an opportunity to discuss the different conventions on prison education that are already in place; stress the importance of access to education and training for people who are incarcerated; and highlight the disconnect that takes place in the field, as access to quality education in prison remains subject to many obstacles. Speakers will address challenges and provide examples of best practice in ensuring the implementation of the fundamental right to education in prison.

## 3. Background: The UIL 'Education in Prison' project

Approximately 11 million people are incarcerated in penal institutions worldwide, which equals an average imprisonment rate of 145 prisoners per 100,000 of the world population. These numbers are constantly growing. With prisons frequently overcrowded, many penal institutions around the world are at crisis point, unable to provide such services as education according to international standards. Education, however, is a fundamental human right, of which prisoners should not be deprived. Enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and positioned at the heart of

UNESCO's mission, the right to education implies a right to lifelong learning. This includes providing access to quality education from the first day of incarceration to and beyond the day of release.

There are pockets of effective education provision in prisons; however, while experiences from different countries can offer guidance on how to promote prison education, there is a lack of systematically collected and analysed evidence on the effectiveness of educational practice in prisons. UIL has therefore launched an initiative on prison education, the aim of which is to improve current policies and practices in the area of prison education and to stimulate and promote professional exchange on prison education between policy-makers, researchers and practitioners in all regions of the world.

As part of the project, UIL has developed a comprehensive literature review on the subject of education in prison. The upcoming webinar will provide an opportunity to highlight research findings related to prisoners' right to education and discuss these with the broader education community and lifelong learning partners.

#### 4. Provisional agenda and registration

Date and time: **Thursday, 21 January 2021, 14:30 to 16:00 (CET)**

Register in advance for this webinar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_kMGW4vwvRogSesITmCGwaQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kMGW4vwvRogSesITmCGwaQ)

Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the webinar.

Time	Item
14:30	<i>Welcoming moderator remarks</i> Marie Macauley Programme Specialist, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
14:35	<i>Opening address</i> Mr David Atchoarena Director, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
14:40	<i>UIL research findings – A review of the literature</i> Ms Fanny Salane Lecturer in Education Sciences, University of Paris Ouest Nanterre - La Défense “Crisis, Schools, Sensitive Grounds team”, CREF  Dr Cormac Behan Lecturer in Criminology, School of Languages, Law and Social Sciences, Technological University Dublin
14:55	<i>Experiences from Thailand</i> Mr. Nathee Chisawang Deputy Executive-Director, Thailand Institute of Justice

<b>15:05</b>	<i>Experiences from Norway</i> Mr. Kjetil Stavø Hovigø County Governor of Vestland, Department of Education and Guardianship
<b>15:15</b>	<i>Experiences from the Africa region</i> Mr. Matteo Cassini Community Development Manager, Justice Defenders
<b>15:25</b>	Ms. Marcela Gutiérrez Quevedo Chairholder, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights, Violence, Public Policies and Governance, Universidad Externado de Colombia (Colombia)
<b>15:35</b>	<i>Q&amp;A</i>  <i>Closing remarks</i> David Atchoarena, Director, UIL