

Parents in Action – Roda
Zagreb, May 20th 2016

ma#me



About the Project ma#me

- Funded by European Union - ESF
- Implementation 2/2014. – 2/2016.
- Partners: Dolphin - the Center for Support and Development of Civil Society and Croatian Employment Service, Regional Office Požega
- Associates: Ministry of Justice Prison System Directorate and Ombudsperson for Children
- Beneficiaries: female prisoners, mothers of underaged children currently serving sentences at the Požega Penitentiary





Labour Market Inclusion

- 29 female prisoners educated about possibilities of employment after serving prison sentence
- Individual counseling in finances for 13 female prisoners
- Produced a Handbook on conducting workshops on topic of possibilities of labour market inclusion for prisoners

Parental Competence

- Educational workshops for 13 employees (Dječja posla)
- Handbook “Child of a Prisoner as a Motive for Changing Practice”
- Creative Workshops with parents and children during a visit (Dolphin Centre)
- Co-financing visits (25 – 120 EUR)





Over 50% of mothers

do **NOT receive*** visits from their children while they are in prison.

31% of mothers

do not want their children to visit them in prison

In **13% of cases**

children do not even know their mothers are serving a prison sentence

25% of women

spend time with their children only on the days they are allowed outside prison.

*In prisons in the Republic of Croatia, children can visit their incarcerated parents once a week and on holidays. Children under 14 years of age visit their parents accompanied by another adult who is a family member or guardian. For the child, the visit is first and foremost important so that they can be sure that their parent is alive and well. While visiting their parent in prison, the child satisfies its need for closeness and contact with his/her parent, as well as the need for love and respect.

Reading Program for Parents and Children

- **Mothers** in Požega Penitentiary
- **Fathers** in Lepoglava, Glin and Požega Penitentiaries
- Plan: Prison in Zagreb
- Partner: **The Croatian Reading Association**
- Insured 300 books and CD's



Stories of Former Prisoners

"In any normal families dads go to prison, not moms."

*„As they went home, she said to her father:
"Oh, this mom's hotel is ugly. More and more it
resembles the prison." “*

“I'll always remember his first birthday. The whole day I kept him in my arms, hugged, kissed and wept. I know he did not comprehend, but as if he understood that we were separating.”





Photographs: Marina
Paulenka



REŠETKE NISU
PREPREKE

barsarenotbarri





















Sustainability

- Analysis and research
- Raising public awareness and activating the community
- Inclusion of other civil society organizations
- Building the capacities of institutions in the prison system
- Innovative entrepreneurial solutions
- Quality in work and results

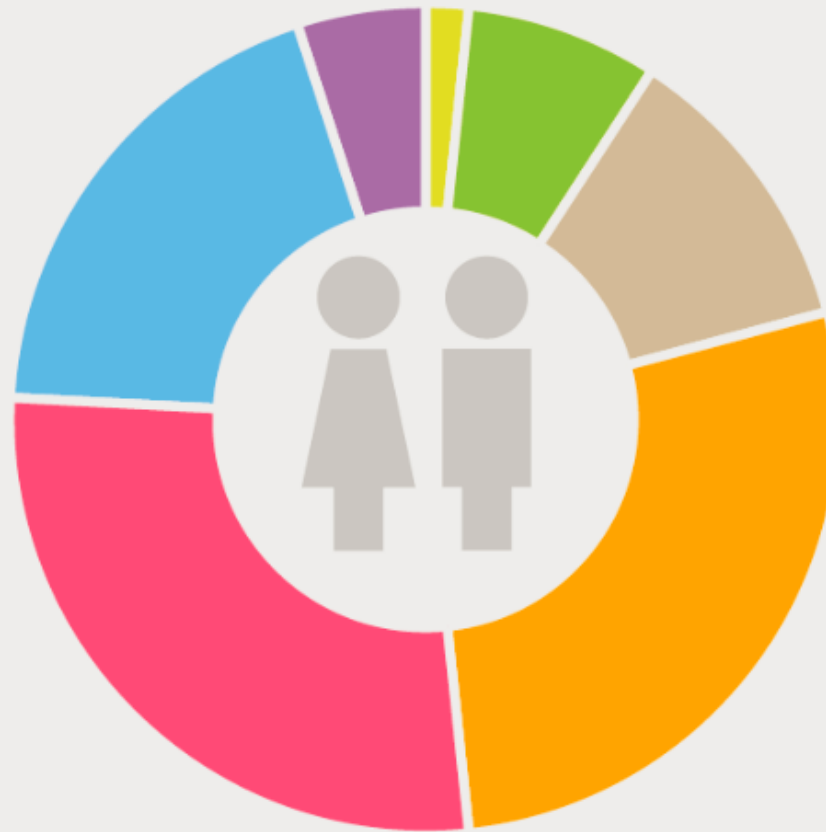


Analysis and Research

- Awards for student research papers - 5 students
- Analysis:
 - Contacts of children and mother prisoners
 - Mothers in prison – between prescribed and actual rights



AGE STRUCTURE underage children with incarcerated mothers



- **< 1 y** 2 (2%)
- **1-3 y** 9 (7%)
- **3-7 y** 14 (12%)
- **7-11 y** 33 (27%)
- **11-15 y** 33 (28%)
- **15-18 y** 23 (19%)
- **no answer** 6 (5%)



36%

of mothers stated that their children **changed their place of residence** once their mothers left to serve their prison sentence.



46%

state that their children moved to live with their father, grandparents or other family members

54%

stated that their children moved to live with foster parents or in a children's home

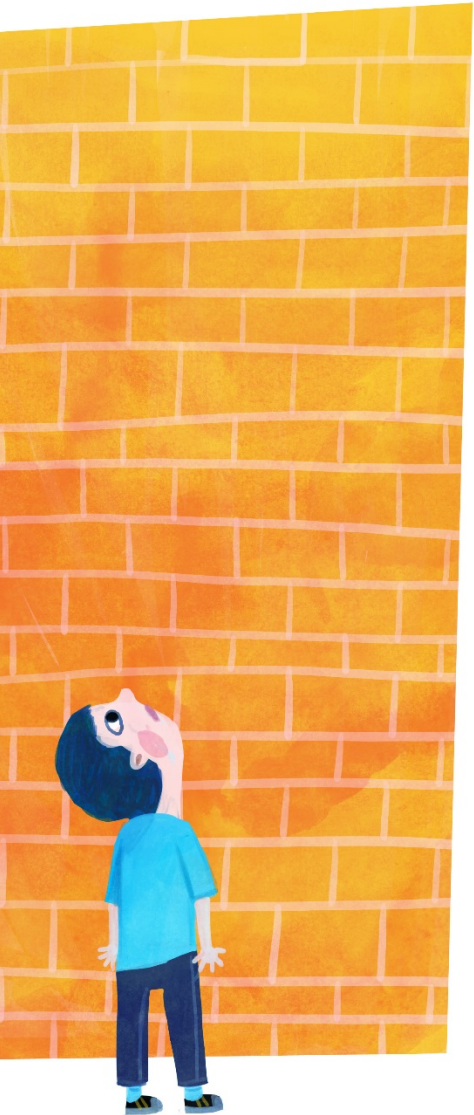
200 kilometres

In 2014 over 50% of children whose mothers were serving a sentence at the Požega Prison were living **over 200 kilometres away from the prison**. For this reason children visit their mothers only rarely, and some have not seen their mothers at all during her prison sentence.



Between regulations and actual rights

- lack of systematic (scientific) data
- Croatian compliance with EU legal regulations and introduction of positive innovations in purpose of an improved system in protection of parents-prisoners and children's rights - yet still vagueness, inconsistency and problems with implementation
- intensive work of the prison system and the Ombudsperson in protecting and promoting the rights of parents-prisoners and their children BUT still a slow system, lack of resources and unfulfilled co-operation with other systems / institutions / civil sector reduces the speed and efficiency of implementation of prescribed rights





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