



CORRECTIONS
CAREERS

DACUM Survey Report

Portugal

CCJ4C

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IPS_Innovative Prison Systems



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Introductory Note

Due to the ongoing pandemic situation related to COVID-19 and, consequently, the restrictions imposed to mitigate it, the Portuguese prisons are closed. Therefore, it was not possible to implement the DACUM workshop. At the same time, organising an online DACUM workshop was also unviable since prisons do not have access to the internet, and consequently, correctional staff could not attend. Moreover, there was also the obstacle in finding a suitable time frame, considering the workload held by the prison system professionals and the fact that correctional officers and chief of guards' work in shifts.

For these reasons, IPS was compelled to adopt an alternative strategy, particularly building a DACUM survey, which was later disseminated via email to Portuguese prison system professionals.

Survey Dissemination

The survey was built and developed on *google forms*. It was disseminated via email on the 2nd of November 2021 to 53 Portuguese prison system professionals who previously participated in workshops/events promoted by IPS and have authorised to receive emails with information about activities carried out by IPS.

The survey had open access until the 26th of November (three weeks and three days), reaching 17 participants.

Participants

To ensure a broad overview of training contents, needs and challenges in daily work, the survey was sent to collaborators with different positions within the prison system (correctional officers, chief of guards, probation officers, prison educators, and psychologists).

In particular, 13 of the respondents are correctional officers; two are chief of guards; one is a prison educator; and one is a psychologist.

Ten of the participants are male, and seven are female. The total average age is 42,76 years, and the standard deviation is 5,125.

Concerning the academic background, eight of the respondents completed high school; five hold a bachelor degree or equivalent; two have a master degree or equivalent; and two have completed higher secondary education.

The survey

The survey comprised a first section with the **Informed Consent** that included:

- A summary of the CCJ4C project and the applicability of the investigation.
- A statement that participating in the survey is voluntary and confidential.
- The email addresses of the IPS researchers in case of doubts/questions.
- The estimated time to complete the survey (around seven minutes).

The second section refers to **Sociodemographic Data**. Three multiple-choice questions concern gender, position held in the prison system, and academic background. One open question regards to age.

The third section includes seven open-ended questions regarding **Current Tasks and Duties**. The questions included are as follow:

- Describe the duties you perform on a typical working day.
- Which are the tasks you perform most frequently?
- Is there any sequence in the performance of your duties? Please indicate which one.
- How important is the performance of these tasks to your work?
- If you had to rank the tasks you do in order of importance, what would be the order? (from least important to most important).
- What are the risks of performing your duties incorrectly?
- Do the tasks vary according to the level of experience?

The fourth section regards **Competencies** and comprises four open-ended questions:

- Which competencies do you consider necessary to perform the previously described tasks correctly? (e.g. leadership, proactivity, self-confidence...).
- What do you consider necessary to develop these competencies and improve performance?
- What training areas do you consider essential to carry out the tasks successfully?
- What other knowledge do you apply in the performance of your duties? (e.g. self-control; stress management; crisis intervention...).

The fifth and last section aims to comprehend the anticipation of the professionals regarding **Future Performance/Risks** and include five open-end questions:

- What do you consider the main challenges/risks that the prison system faces?
- How do you think that new challenges may impact your professional life?
- What changes do you believe there might be (e.g. in the way you work) to meet these challenges?
- How do you imagine your role in the future (e.g. tasks and duties)?

- What are the tasks you believe there will be no changes?

The survey ends with a final topic appreciating the participation on the questionnaire and emphasising the importance of that contribution. Moreover, the original version of the survey can be found in the annexes.

Results

On the topic **Current Tasks and Duties**, it gets clear that all the respondents recognise the importance and value of their roles and demonstrate awareness regarding the risks of poor misconduct. These findings appear to indicate a willingness to perform efficiently and avoid weak performance.

Job position	Tasks	Risks of Poor Performance	Importance perceived of the tasks and duties
Correctional Officers	Surveillance, security, control, problem-solving, inmate support, ensuring order and discipline	Jeopardising the physical integrity of the inmates and staff, inmates' escapes, and emotional and psychological damages	Very important and indispensable to the prison. In fact, it is considered by all the respondents that if their tasks are not performed effectively, the prison functioning is compromised.
Chief of Guards	Head the services of surveillance and security, discipline and prison order of the prison establishment.	Failures in human resources management and security failures	
Prison Educator	Preparation of assessments and reports, face-to-face service to inmates, updating the list of visitors and telephone contacts, scheduling in-person and video-visit visits, drawing up visitor's cards, and facilitating inmates' program	The inmate would be prejudiced in the completion of his sentence.	
Psychologist	Psychological assessment and intervention, psychosocial support, and follow-up	Emotional and/or psychological damages	

Moreover, the correctional officers and chief of guards consider that all their duties and tasks are performed similarly in terms of frequency, with particular emphasis on security and surveillance. The educator noted that the tasks performed with more regularity are assessments and reports. Finally, the psychologist states that psychosocial support is the most frequent task daily.

The professionals who stated that their role requires a sequence of tasks are the correctional officers and the chief of guards, who claim that these tasks are the ones inherent to the prison routines.

When asked to classify their tasks in order of importance, the vast majority declared they were equally important and impossible to rank. Still, some highlighted surveillance, security, and order guaranteeing as the most critical tasks.

Surprisingly, the responses were divided when questioned if the duties varied according to the experience level. Some have no doubts considering that, in fact, they do, and "can even vary according to the level of individual training". And others believe the tasks only vary if the position held is different (e.g. Correctional officer vs educator).

On the topic **Competencies**, the indicators obtained on the previous topic regarding the willingness to improve and learn are emphasised since almost all the respondents identified training and coaching as crucial to performing the tasks efficiently. On this topic, we can also find the skills/competencies that these professionals believe are critical to their job position.

The competencies that the respondents highlighted as necessary to perform their tasks are as follow:



In line with this, the respondents also identified other skills/competencies they apply when performing their duties, which were particularly mentioned:



In fact, what is most recognised as necessary to develop and improve these competencies is **training, coaching, and tutoring**.

Regarding **Future Performance/Risks**, the findings are as follow:

Job position	Perceived main challenges faced by the prison system	Impacts of these challenges	Possible changes that might arise	Role in the future
Correctional Officers	System's inefficiency (lack of resources, lack of motivation of the staff, prison overcrowding, deterioration of facilities). Lack of ethics among staff. Lack of skills among the staff. Lack of discipline among the inmates.	Distress. Frustration. Lack of hope. Personal annulment. Irrecoverable inmates.	More comprehensive and continuous training. Support and staff motivation. Fair salary. Hiring more correctional officers.	More limitations and obstacles
Chief of Guards				
Prison Educator	Technological innovation	Personal effort to develop more effective and efficient work	Less bureaucracy, fewer monthly, half-yearly, quarterly reports	Less bureaucracy
Psychologist	Rigid system and a lot of bureaucracy	-	Flexibilisation of responses	Very similar to the current

Annexe: DACUM Survey (original version)



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CCJ4C - European Career Counselling Guidelines for Staff Working in Criminal Correctional Justice System

Consentimento Informado

Este estudo está a ser desenvolvido no âmbito do projeto CCJ4C - European Career Counselling Guidelines for Staff Working in Criminal Correctional Justice System, financiado pela União Europeia, pelo programa Erasmus +, estando a decorrer simultaneamente em 9 países. Este projeto centra-se na promoção da orientação profissional no sistema de justiça, através do desenvolvimento de uma plataforma formativa, tanto para funcionários e administrações, como para propostas de políticas. Neste sentido, este questionário procura compreender o tipo de funções que são desempenhadas pelos vários intervenientes (guardas prisionais, técnicos de reeducação, técnicos de reinserção social...), bem como as competências que lhes permitem desempenhar as suas funções. As investigadoras responsáveis Ângela Fernandes (angela.fernandes@prisonsystems.eu) e Inês de Castro (ines.castro@prisonsystems.eu) encontram-se ao dispor para quaisquer esclarecimentos ou dúvidas. A sua colaboração no preenchimento deste questionário irá contribuir para melhorar a capacitação/ criação de ações de formação. A sua participação neste questionário é voluntária e não antevê quaisquer riscos. Mais informamos que todos os dados serão tratados de acordo com a legislação em vigor, sendo a sua análise puramente para fins estatísticos, e estando por isso salvaguardadas todas as questões de confidencialidade e anonimato. O tempo médio previsto de resposta é de 7 minutos. *

☐

Declaro que compreendi as informações que me foram prestadas e que tive a oportunidade de colocar perguntas, aceitando participar no estudo

Anterior

Seguinte

Limpar formulário



Dados Sociodemográficos

Idade (anos) *

A sua resposta

Sexo *

- ☐ Feminino
- ☐ Masculino
- ☐ Outro

Função Exercida *

- ☐ Guarda Prisional
- ☐ Chefe de Guarda
- ☐ Técnico de Reeducação
- ☐ Técnico de Reinserção Social
- ☐ Outra: _____

Formação Académica *

- ☐ Ensino primário (duração típica: 6anos)/6 anos
- ☐ Ensino secundário inferior (duração típica: 3anos)/9 anos
- ☐ Ensino secundário (duração típica: 3 anos)/12 anos
- ☐ Ensino pós-secundário não superior (por exemplo, ensino profissional)
- ☐ Ensino superior de curta duração (duração mínima de 2 anos)
- ☐ Licenciatura ou equivalente (3-4 anos de estudos a tempo inteiro)
- ☐ Mestrado ou equivalente
- ☐ Doutoramento ou equivalente

Anterior

Seguinte

Limpar formulário



Funções e Responsabilidades Atuais

Descreva as funções que desempenha num dia normal de trabalho *

A sua resposta

Quais são as funções que desempenha com mais frequência? *

A sua resposta

Existe alguma sequência no desempenhar das suas funções? Por favor, indique qual. *

A sua resposta

Quão importante é a realização dessas funções para o seu trabalho? *

A sua resposta

Se tivesse de ordenar as funções que desempenha por ordem de importância, qual seria a ordem? (da menos importante para a mais importante) *

A sua resposta

Quais são os riscos de desempenhadar incorretamente as suas funções? *

A sua resposta

As funções exercidas variam consoante o nível de experiência? *

A sua resposta

Anterior

Seguinte

Limpar formulário



Competências

Que competências considera necessárias para desempenhar corretamente as funções mencionadas? (ex. liderança, proatividade, autoconfiança...) *

A sua resposta

O que considera necessário para desenvolver essas competências e melhorar o seu desempenho? *

A sua resposta

Que áreas de formação considera importantes para desempenhar as funções? *

A sua resposta

Que outros conhecimentos aplica no desempenhar das suas funções? (ex. autocontrolo; gestão do stress; intervenção na crise...) *

A sua resposta

Anterior

Seguinte

Limpar formulário



Desempenho Futuro

Quais considera serem os principais desafios que o sistema prisional enfrenta? *

A sua resposta

Qual considera ser o impacto destes novos desafios na sua vida profissional? *

A sua resposta

Que alterações acredita que possam existir (ex. na forma como trabalha) para responder a estes desafios? *

A sua resposta

Como imagina o seu papel no futuro (ex. funções e deveres)? *

A sua resposta

Quais são as funções em que acredita que não haverá alterações? *

A sua resposta

Anterior

Seguinte

Limpar formulário



Obrigado pela sua participação!

Agradecemos o seu contributo, sendo este uma mais-valia para que possamos desenvolver ações de formação. Estamos ao seu dispor para qualquer questão, através dos seguintes contatos: Ângela Fernandes (angela.fernandes@prisonsystems.eu) e Inês de Castro (ines.castro@prisonsystems.eu).

[Anterior](#)

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