Distance education for citizens detained abroad

Evaluation of the FORINER pilot projects

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Colophon

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Chapter 1: About the FORINER project

"Taking into account the large percentage and rapid increase of foreign national prisoners in many countries worldwide and their specific requirements [...], there is a need for prison authorities to develop policies and strategies that ensure that the social reintegration of this vulnerable group is facilitated in an effective and sustainable manner"
(Atabay, 2009, p92).

"As well as legal reasons for education and training in prison, there are humanistic reasons. All members of society should receive education because of its own intrinsic value. It develops the whole person, provides experience of mastering skills and projects a person's dignity"
(Westrheim & Manger, 2014, p7).

1. The right of foreign national prisoners to education

International law considers education as a human right. Most of the international legal instruments are not legally binding - rather, they have an advisory nature (Gröning, 2014). Both the European convention on human rights [ECHR] (Council of Europe, 1950) and the United Nation's International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ICESCR] (United Nations, 1966) emphasise that everyone has the right to education. Several international legislations also articulate that prisoners have the right to have access to education, even though they are being punished and imprisoned. The United Nations and the Council of Europe developed legislation concerning the rights of prisoners. For example:

United Nations

- Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners (1955)

    This guideline strives for an international consensus on minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners. The various countries each provide further elaboration of these rules. The standard minimum rules determine that each country has to make sure that their prisoners get a decent education. As much as possible, the offer has to resemble the external offer (United Nations, 1955).

Council of Europe

- Recommendation R(89)12 on education in prison (1989)

  The R(89)12 consists of recommendations to the European member states about the educational offer in prison. The recommendation is based on two assumptions: on the one hand the importance of the normalisation principle (i.e. prison life should be as close as possible to life outside), on the other hand the importance of establishing, improving or safeguarding the connection between prisoners and life outside (Council of Europe, 1989).

- European prison rules (2006)

  The European prison rules are European basic principles about the treatment of prisoners. They argue in particular that the prison regime for all prisoners should focus on reintegration. This is accomplished by education, labour and training from providers outside prison, bringing in their offer on an equal quality standard (Council of Europe, 2006).

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)12 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States concerning foreign prisoners (2012)

  This recommendation aims to ensure that educational and vocational training is as effective as possible for foreign prisoners. Prison authorities need to take into account the needs and aspirations of the individual prisoner, which may include working towards qualifications that are recognized and can be continued in the country in which they are likely to reside after release (Council of Europe, 2012).

Research has demonstrated that education during imprisonment is a way to retain a sense of agency in the controlled prison environment as prisoners still can make some choices on how to spend their time (Behan, 2014). It also decreases recidivism (Kim & Clark, 2013), increases the odds of finding a job after release (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013), and increases dynamic security [1](Costelloe & Langelid, 2011). In addition, taking part in educational courses makes prison life less dehumanising (Stern, 2013), enhances normalisation of prison life (Costelloe, Langelid, & Wilson, 2012), and allows prisoners to build social and human capital (Behan, 2014). Prisoners can obtain achievements that are generic in nature (e.g. the ability to understand and give written or oral instructions), but also skill-specific achievements (e.g. learning welding or computer skills) (Gaes, 2008). In other words, offering educational courses during imprisonment provides an opportunity to transform prisoners' lives (Behan, 2014; Stern, 2013).

2. The educational opportunities of foreign national prisoners

Although education is a right - for foreign national prisoners as well as those incarcerated within their country of origin – research has revealed that in practice this right is far from being met. Foreign national prisoners have less educational opportunities compared to national prisoners

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[1] Dynamic security is 'a prison management concept, giving prominence to staff-prisoners relations and communication rather than the 'static security' of locks, walls and scanners' (Garces, Martin & Darke, 2013, p27).

(Brosens & De Donder, 2016; Westrheim & Manger, 2014). To give an example, tables 1 and 2 present some numbers of the desk research conducted by our FORINER consortium in 2016. We asked respondents (mainly educational professionals and prison managers) to indicate the educational courses they provide for prisoners in general, and to say which courses are taken by foreign national prisoners. If educational opportunities are available, the results are mostly language courses to learn the language of the country in which they are detained. 53.3% of the prisons involved in our research offered such language courses (Brosens & De Donder, 2016). These language courses enable foreign national prisoners to deal with language problems during detention as well as to communicate with prison staff and their fellow prisoners (Ugelvik, 2015). Generally, lower levels of education are offered inside prison. This is not only the case for foreign nationals, but also for national prisoners (Brosens & De Donder, 2016).

Table 1. The provided levels of education for national and foreign EU national prisoners (Brosens & De Donder, 2016)

Level of education	National prisoners (%)	Foreign EU national prisoners (%)
Primary education (to provide students with fundamental skills such as reading, writing and mathematics)	78.9	47.8
Lower secondary education (pupils enter this level typically between the ages of 11 and 13)	60	41.1
Upper secondary education (to complete secondary education, pupils enter typically between the ages of 14 and 16)	64.4	33.3
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (preparing for labour market entry)	56.7	32.2
Short-cycle tertiary education (higher professional education)	21.1	14.4
Bachelors or equivalent level	11.1	6.7
Masters or equivalent level	7.8	3.3

Table 2. Other educational courses provided to national and foreign EU national prisoners (Brosens & De Donder, 2016)

Other educational courses	National prisoners (%)	Foreign EU national prisoners (%)
Psychosocial courses (e.g. drugs, life skills, parenting, bullying)	71.1	47.8
Academic courses (e.g. maths, sciences, physical education, history, ICT)	58.9	35.6
Language courses to learn the language of the country in which the prisoner is detained	60	53.3
Other language courses	54.4	36.7
Vocational education (e.g. plumbing, bricklaying, plastering, carpentry)	52.2	34.4
Employability (e.g. interview techniques, job applications, CVs)	47.8	27.8

Professionals experience different organisational and structural barriers in organising education for the population of foreign national prisoners. The main barriers are a lack of resources as they do not have any or only a limited amount of educational materials, and that the financial resources to provide education are too limited. Language barriers also prevent professionals to organise education for foreign national prisoners as many of the foreigners do not sufficiently speak the native language of the country in which they are detained (Brosens & De Donder, 2016).

In addition, IT is also an important component of the FORINER project. The desk research revealed that if e-learning or limited Internet is available inside prison, it is most of the time only available outside of the individual cell. The main barriers to IT implementation within prison are the fact that respondents consider it as a threat to the safety of the prison, society and prison officers. Furthermore, the impression that the public opinion is against offering IT facilities to prisoners has itself been experienced as a barrier (Brosens & De Donder, 2016).

3. Building a European network to provide distance education to foreign national prisoners

The FORINER consortium believes that a European-wide network and knowledge base is necessary to ensure that foreign national prisoners can effectively practice their right to education. In October 2016, a conference was organised to bring together stakeholders from across Europe that were interested in developing one or more pilot project(s). The aim of these pilot projects was to test how education can be organised for foreign national prisoners, given that this is provided by their home country, in their own language, but received in the country in which they are detained. Participants of 12 different European countries attended this conference. The conference was organised using a participative approach in which participants were able to rapidly exchange information, ideas and initiate start-up joint pilot projects.

4. Realisation of pilot projects

The European FORINER project has designed and tested several solutions to offer distance education to foreign national prisoners. In total, 15 pilot projects from all over Europe have been developed and tested between January and July 2017. These pilots were designed to examine how educational courses for foreign national prisoners can be organised, given that they are provided by their home country and received in the country in which they are detained.

This report summarises the results of the mixed-method evaluation of these pilot projects. The process that all students underwent are monitored by starting- and ending-questionnaires (quantitative evaluation). Five pilot projects have been selected to be investigated further to gain more insight into the experiences of those involved (qualitative evaluation).

Chapter 2: A general overview of the pilot projects

This chapter presents an overview of the 15 pilot projects that are realised in the framework of the FORINER project. Initially, the piloting phase of the FORINER project was January – June 2017. Despite the great enthusiasm of different European countries to exchange education across borders, the development of the pilot projects – and in particular of the digital one – was not easy. It required a lot of trial and error, and new local and cross border networks needed to be build. Due to this, we extended the piloting phase by one month – untill the end of July 2017. Table 3 provides more information about the 15 pilot projects, including the countries involved, the number of students, and if the project was non-digital or digital.

Table 3. Overview pilot projects

Pilot number	Sending country	Receiving country	Number of students	Digital/ non-digital
1	Lithuania	Belgium	11	Non-digital
2	Romania	Belgium	1	Non-digital
3	Lithuania	Norway	1	Non-digital
4	Romania	Norway	1	Non-digital
5	the Netherlands	Belgium	2	Non-digital
6	the Netherlands	Norway	1	Non-digital
7	the Netherlands	Belgium	3	Non-digital
8	Romania	Belgium	6	Non-digital
9	Romania	Belgium	1	Non-digital
10	the Netherlands	Belgium	2	Non-digital
11	the Netherlands	Malta	3	Non-digital
12	Romania	Norway	1	Non-digital
13	Germany	Belgium	1	Non-digital
14	Greece	Belgium	1	Non-digital
15	United Kingdom	Belgium	1	Digital

Note: Some pilot projects involve the same sending and receiving countries. This is the case when different educational providers and/or different prisons of one country are involved in several pilot projects.

In total, 36 foreign national subjects started a distance course from their home country. The number of students involved in each pilot project ranged between 1 and 11. One pilot project used digital materials. This implies that the other courses were paper-based and that course materials and homework assignments needed to be sent by post. Some non-digital pilot partners also e-mailed documents to a person working in the local prison who printed those documents and gave them to the student(s).

9 European countries were effectively involved in the development and realisation of the pilot projects (see figure 1). Countries could serve as 'sending countries', meaning that they provided distance education to one or more nationals detained in a foreign European country. 6 European countries have sent education to their nationals detained abroad: Germany, Greece, Lithuania,

Romania, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom (brown colour). Countries could also operate as 'receiving countries' implying that they got educational courses for foreign people detained within their correctional institutions. 3 countries took up this role during the piloting phase: Belgium, Malta, and Norway (blue colour).

Figure 1. Overview of the European countries involved in the pilot projects
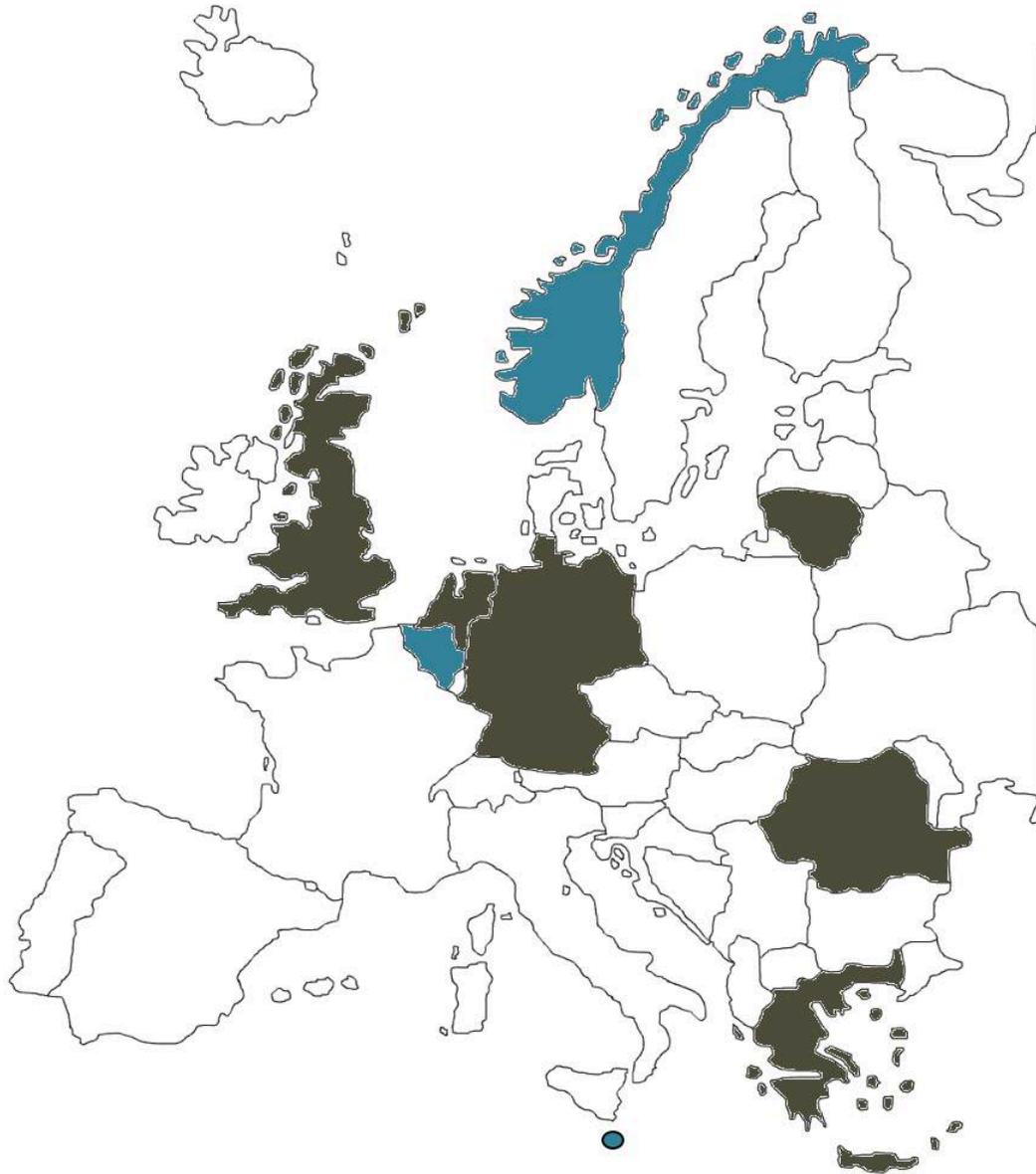
1. Different organisational models for distance education to foreign national prisoners

In order to provide foreign national prisoners from distance education that is offered by their home country, different models have been developed during the pilot projects. As already indicated by the Confederation of European Probation (CEP) in their good practice guide for developing services for European citizens detained abroad (n.d.), it is essential to make a liaison between the educational provider(s) or social workers in the home country, and the prison in which the student is detained.

During the conference in October 2016, it became clear that different possibilities exist to make this liaison and 4 different models were put into practice during the pilot projects (see figures 2 to 5).

Model 1 implies that an educational provider within the sending country directly gets in contact with a prison in the receiving country. The educational provider and a contact person in the prison directly communicate with each other, without an intermediary person or organisation.

Figure 2. Model 1
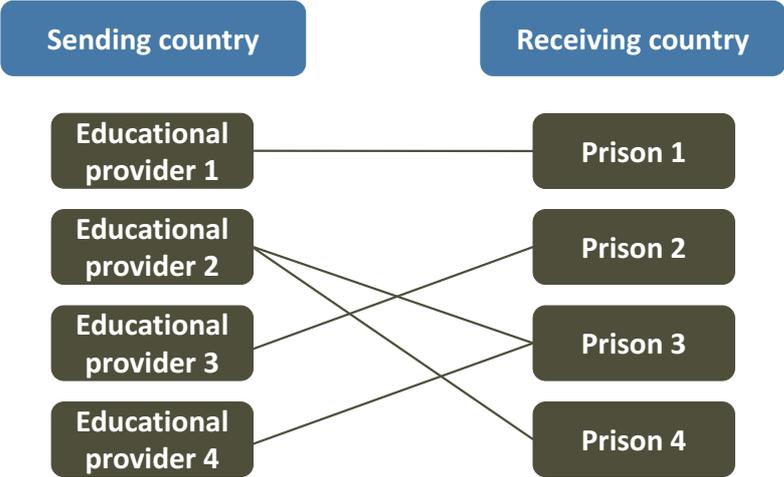
During the piloting phase, this model was tested several times. For instance, a cooperation between the Šiauliai adult school Lithuania (sending partner) and a the Sogdnal upper secondary school present within Vik prison in Norway (receiving partner) (pilot 3 in table 3, page 10). Another example is the cooperation between a volunteer of Romania (sending partner) and Kongsvinger prison in Norway (receiving partner) (pilot 4 in table 3, page 10).

Model 2 differs as there is a coordinating sender. Implementing this model implies that one coordinator in the sending country has an overview of the educational offer of the diverse educational providers within the country (e.g. educational offer of centre for basic skills education, secondary schools, higher education institutions, universities). This coordinating sender can be contacted by other European countries (also termed receiving country) when they have a prisoner from another country with an educational need in one of their correctional institutions. This coordinating sender is tasked to get in contact with the educational provider who can offer the appropriate educational course for that (potential) student in a prison in the receiving country.

Figure 3. Model 2
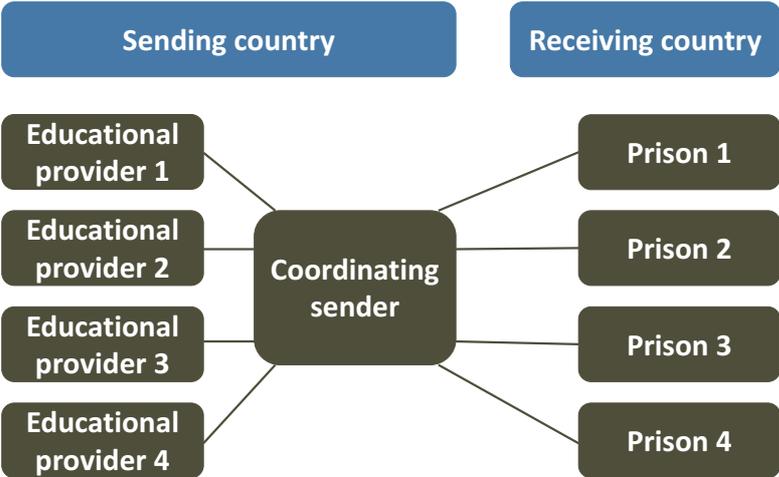
An example of this model is the pilot project between the Netherlands and Norway (pilot 6 in table 3, page 10). The sending partner was Education Behind Bars Abroad [also called EABT]. This was the only organisation who took up the role as coordinating sender during the pilots. EABT worked together with distance education providers in the Netherlands (e.g. National Business Academy, Open University) to offer education to their citizens detained abroad. A Dutch citizen imprisoned in Kongvinger prison in Norway received the education.

In **model 3** there is a coordinating receiver. The different prisons of a receiving country can inform this coordinating receiver when they have a foreign national person with a certain educational need. After this, the coordinating receiver gets directly in contact with an educational provider in the sending country.

Figure 4. Model 3
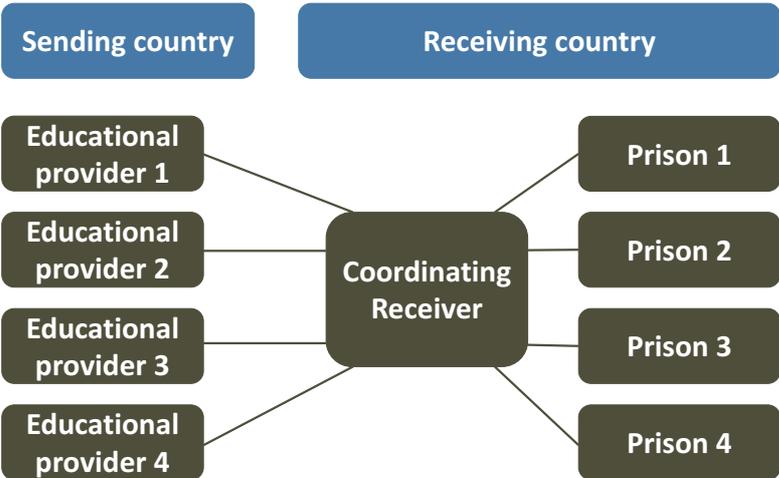
This model also has been tested during the piloting phase. The only coordinating receiver was 'Vlaams Ondersteuningscentrum voor Volwassenenonderwijs' (VOCVO) – a Belgian organisation. This organisation coordinates prison education in all prisons in Flanders and Brussels and has staff members in all prisons. They worked together with educational providers from different sending countries. For instance, CleverCareer – a private educational provider of Greece – sent education to a Greek student in one of the Belgian prisons (pilot 14 in table 3, page 10). In other examples, they also worked together with a volunteer of Romania (pilot 2 in table 3, page 10) and a school in Lithuania (pilot 1 in table 3, page 10).

Model 4 contains both a coordinating sender and a coordinating receiver. This implies that one organisation/person in the sending country has an overview of the offer of the diverse educational providers, and an organisation/ person in the receiving country has contact with all local prisons. This coordinating receiver can be informed by professionals working in these local prisons when a foreign national person has an educational need. The coordinating receiver gets in contact with the coordinating sender. This latter person/organisation will contact the educational provider with an appropriate educational offer for that particular student.

Figure 5. Model 4
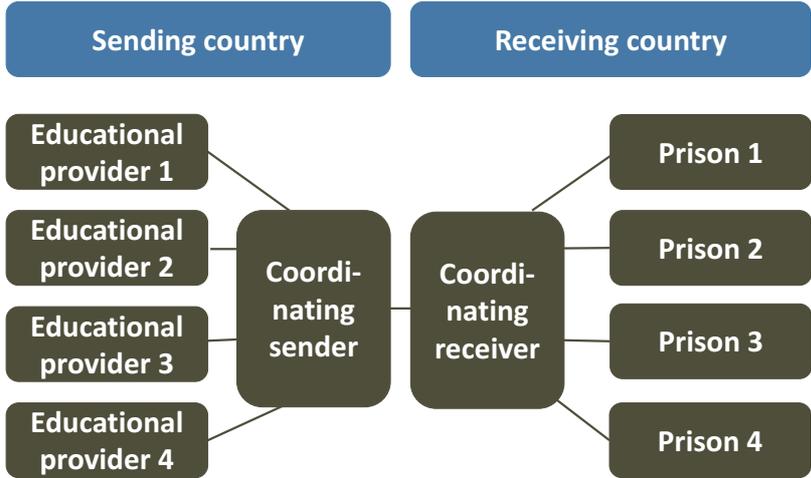
As already mentioned, only one coordinating sender (EABT – the Netherlands) and one coordinating receiver (VOCVO – Belgium) were involved in the pilot projects. They also worked together to offer education to Dutch citizens in various Belgian prisons (e.g. Beveren, Brussels, Merksplas – pilots 5, 7 and 10 in table 3, page 10).

2. New experience for most actors involved in the pilot projects

Providing education to nationals detained in another European country was something new for most of the sending partners. Only Education Behind Bars Abroad [EABT] of the Netherlands has a history of sending education to their nationals detained abroad since 2005. For most of the receiving partners it was a new experience. Only Belgium had worked together with EABT in the past to provide education to citizens of the Netherlands that were detained within one of their correctional institutions. It was thus a new experience for most of the professionals involved. Following a course of their home country while they were imprisoned in a foreign European country was also a new experience for the students involved in the pilot projects:

> "I'm very grateful for this opportunity to learn and to participate in this project." (Student)

The receiving partner working together with the Lithuanian students found the gratefulness of the students the biggest strength of the pilot project. She had the feeling the students appreciated the efforts the professionals did for them.

3. Profile of the students participating in the pilot projects

3.1. Individual characteristics

36 students started following an educational course offered by their home country while they were detained in a foreign European country. 31 of the students were male (86.1%), 5 female (13.9%). Their mean age was 32.3 years. The youngest student was 20 years old and the oldest one 68 years.

12 respondents were Lithuanian (33.3%), 11 Dutchman (30.6%), 10 Romanian (27.8%), and 1 British, 1 German and 1 Greek (each 2.8%). The nationality of the students did not always correspond to their country of birth. 12 students were born in Lithuania (33.3%), 10 in Romania (27.8%), 7 in the Netherlands (19.4%), and 1 in Aruba, Colombia, Curacao, Germany, Greece, Iraq and Uganda (each 2.8%).

Figure 6. Respondents' nationalities (N=36)

Each 2.8%

33.3%
27.8%
30.6%

- Lithuanian
- Dutchman
- Romanian
- British
- German
- Greek
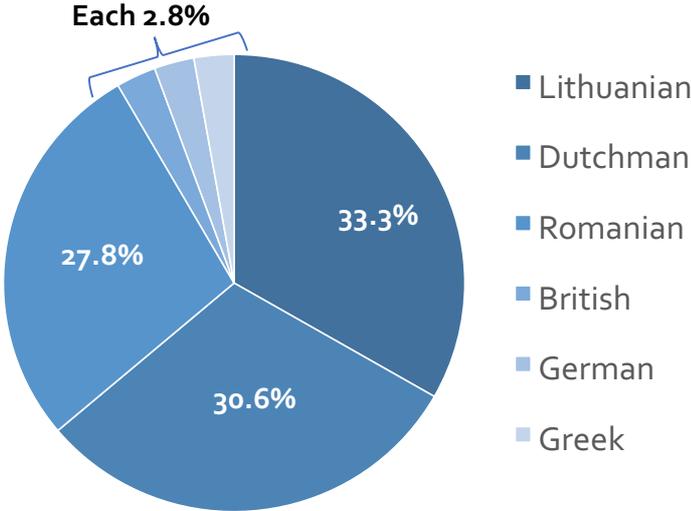
Figure 7. Respondents' countries of birth (N=36)

Each 2.8%

33.3%
19.4%
27.8%

- Lithuania
- Romania
- The Netherlands
- Aruba
- Colombia
- Curacao
- Germany
- Greece
- Iraq
- Uganda
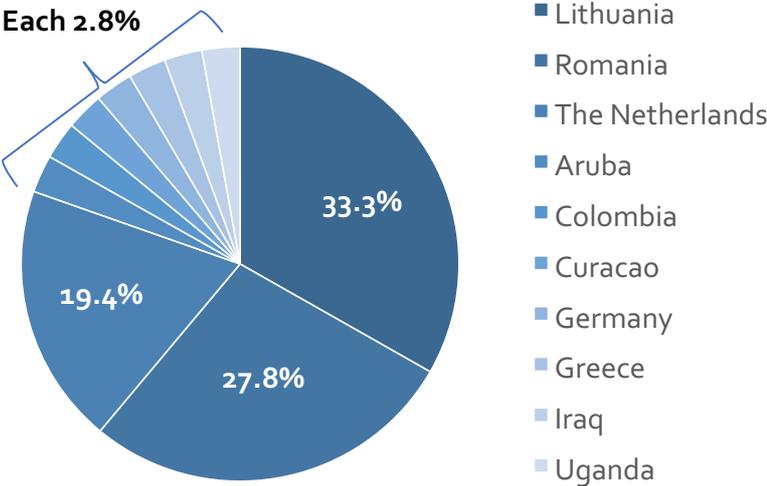
As the national education systems differ from country to country, we used the European Qualification Framework [EQF] to measure the educational level of the students. This tool helps to compare qualifications systems within Europe. There are 8 common European reference levels that relate to certain knowledge, skills and competences (European Commission, 2017; see table 4).

Table 4. Overview levels of the European Qualification Framework [2]

EQF level	Knowledge	Skills	Competence	Example
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context	Access level 3 (Scotland), adult learning certificate (Malta), entry level 1, 2 and 3 (England & Northern Ireland)
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy	Certificate for primary and lower secondary education (Norway), GCSEs Grades G – D (England & Northern Ireland)
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems	MCAST first diploma (Malta), vocational qualification certificate (Germany), GCSEs Grades A* – C (England & Northern Ireland)
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities	Certificate of upper secondary education (Norway), vocational qualification certificate (Germany)
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others	Diploma of higher education (Scotland), vocational diploma (Norway), advanced vocational qualification (Germany)
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in	Bachelor degrees

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[2] Attachment 1 provides an overview of how the levels of the EQF were translated and questioned in the different languages.

	principles	problems in a specialised field of work or study	unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups	
Level 7	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams	Master degrees
Level 8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research	Doctoral degrees

Figure 8 demonstrates that 5 respondents obtained level 1 of the European Qualification Framework (15.6%) and 3 students obtained level 2 (9.4%). 8 achieved level 3 (25%) and 5 level 4 (15.6%). Most respondents (N=11) obtained level 5 (34.4%). None of the respondents had achieved one of the higher levels of the European Qualification Framework (levels 6 to 8). The fact that most of the respondents obtained level 5 might be an indication that the 'higher' educated people are attracted by the FORINER project. Previous research has indicated that the educational level of prisoners is low (Behan, 2014; Ramakers, Wilsem, Nieuwbeerta, & Dirkzwager, 2015).

Figure 8. Respondents' obtained level of education (N=32)

Educational level

| | | | | | | | |
| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 6 | Level 7 | Level 8 |

15.6% 9.4% 25% 15.6% 34.4% 0% 0% 0%
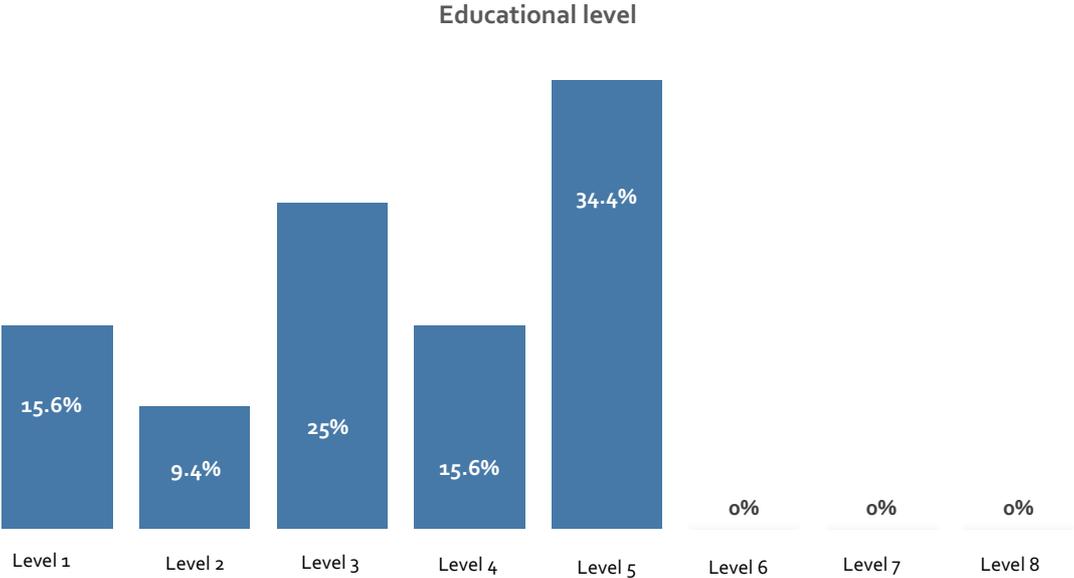
3.2.Prison-related characteristics

The majority of the respondents were convicted (N=18; 54.5%), while 42.4% - or 14 respondents - were awaiting trial. 1 person (3%) indicated that he did not know what his status was. 3 respondents did not fill in the question about their custody status.

Figure 9 indicates that students with various current sentence lengths participated in the pilot projects. 9 students were in prison for less than 6 months (25%). 13 students already were in prison for more than 6 months but less than 1 year (36.1%). The other 14 students had a current length of imprisonment of more than 1 year (almost 40%).

Figure 9. Respondents' current length of imprisonment (N=36)

Current lenght of imprisonment
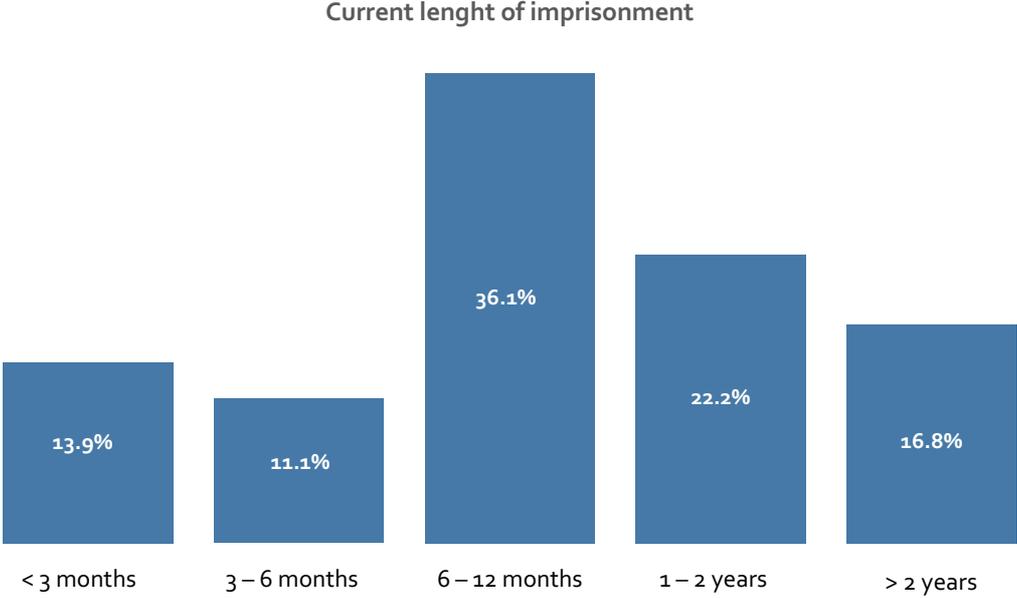
The majority of the students expected to be eligible for release from prison in less than 1 year: 9 students expected to be released from prison within less than 3 months (32.1%); 6 over more than 3 months but less than 6 months (21.4%); and 5 over more than 6 months but less than 1 year (17.9%). The other 8 respondents (28.6%) expected to be eligible for release over 1 year or more. 8 respondents did not fill in this question.

We also asked prisoners in which country they plan to stay after their release from prison. The majority (N=23; 63.9%) will voluntarily return to his/her home country. 6 students indicated that they wanted to stay in the country in which they were imprisoned at that moment (16.7%). 4 respondents wanted to move to another European country (13.9%). A small minority (N=3; 8.3%) mentioned that they will be forced to go back to their home country.

4. Which courses do foreign national students follow?

The students followed a variety of courses. For instance: bookkeeping; car engineering; history; language courses; management; mathematics; personal social development and the theoretical part of the licence.

As the piloting phase of the FORINER project was limited in time and the length of each course was very different, the majority of the students were still studying (N=16; 66.7%) when the piloting phase ended. While some of the courses comprised several lessons with different homework tasks (e.g. management courses), others could be finished within one or a few days (e.g. reading and writing). 5 students finished their course and succeeded (20.8%). 3 students quit the course (12.5%), but unfortunately, we do not know why. 1 respondent did not fill in this question.

Figure 10. Number of students that finished the course of their home country (N=24)

- No, I am still working on it
- Yes, and I succeeded
- No, I quit
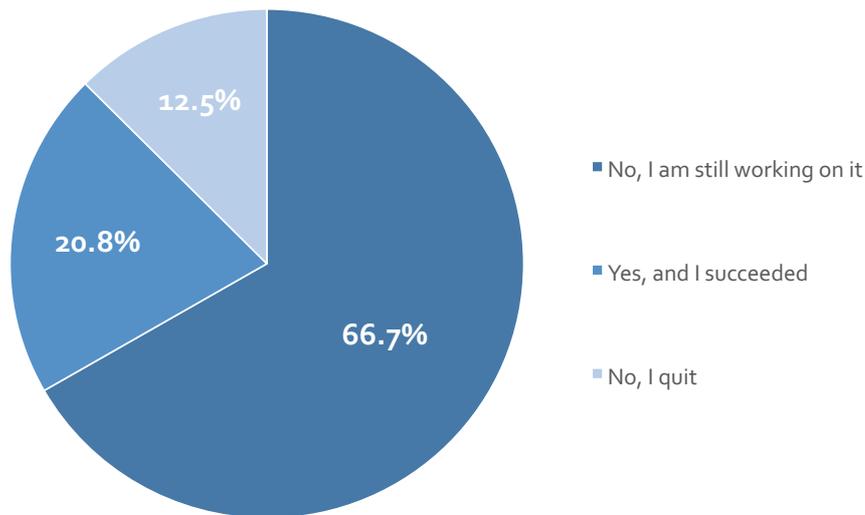
5. Diverse profiles among the sending partners

One similarity for all pilot projects was that the courses were offered in the native language of the sending partner. For the majority of the students, this was also their native language but not always[3]. Despite this similarity, the sending partners differed in profile and educational offer (see figure 11).

Figure 11. Profile of sending partners and their educational offer

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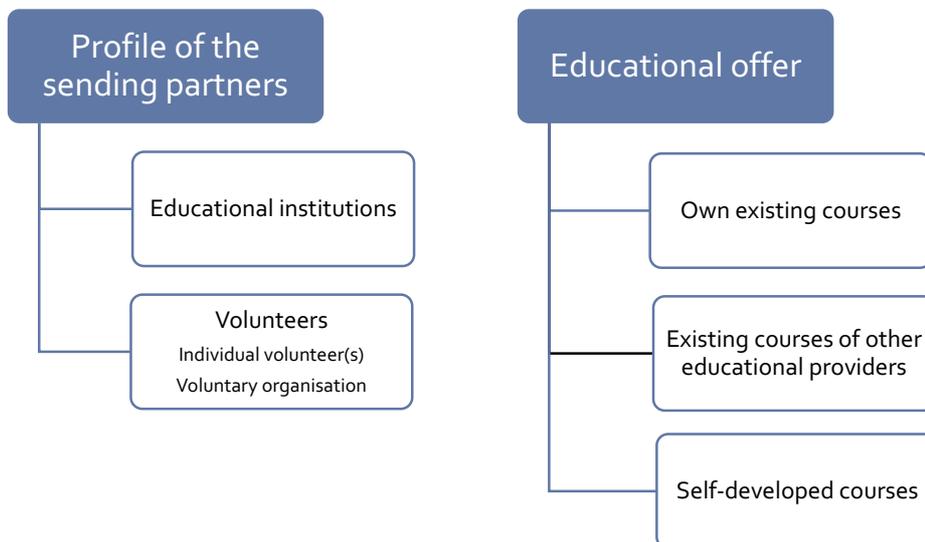
[3] For instance, the mother tongue of one of the students was Spanish, while she followed a course in Dutch. She followed the course in Dutch as she has a residence permit of the Netherlands. Sometimes, she could not understand words and then she figured out the meaning of the words by herself.

More information about the profile of the sending partners can be viewed below (see chapter 3). Two of the sending organisations involved in the in-depth evaluation of the pilots were educational institutions and both of them had previous experiences with prison education. They used existing courses to deliver educational materials to their nationals detained abroad. For example:

- Šiauliai adult school – Lithuania: The courses offered to the Lithuanian students detained abroad were English, history, mathematics, and physics.
- Weston College - United Kingdom: A small version of the Virtual Campus (their secured web-based learning environment) was made available in a Belgian prison. The courses were meant to increase students' reading and writing skills, and there was also a course about Microsoft Word.

The other two sending partners were volunteer organisations. First, EABT (the Netherlands) works together with distance educational providers (e.g. National Business Academy, Open University) to provide education to the students. Students in the pilot projects followed for instance diverse levels of management, bookkeeping, and popular car technology maintenance. Secondly, the Romanian partner was also a volunteer, but did not belong to an organisation. She has been involved in the FORINER project in her spare time. The Romanian partner developed the course 'personal social development' especially for the FORINER project:

> "The receiving partner contacted me, saying that they had a Romanian student who might be interested in my course 'personal development'. Therefore, I started working on developing the lessons for this student. [...] I developed 5 lessons." (Sending partner)

6. Diverse profiles among the receiving partners

As already mentioned before, 3 countries took up a role as receiving partner: Belgium, Malta and Norway. Similar to the profile of the sending partners, the profile of the receiving partners differed (see figure 12).

Figure 12. Profile of the receiving partners

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Profile of the receiving│
                    │         partners         │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                │
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │ Education departments    │
                    │    within prisons        │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                         │              │
              ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
              │Responsibility │    │Responsibility │
              │  of Justice   │    │of educational │
              │               │    │    sector     │
              └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘
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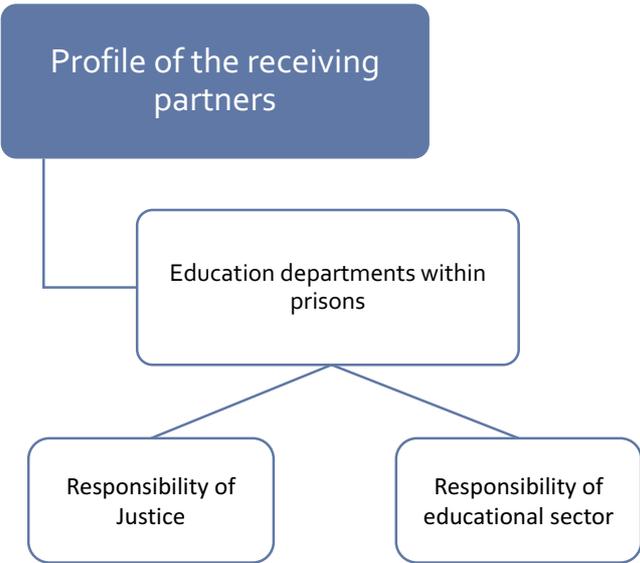
All the receiving partners had previous experiences with prison education, but it was organised in different manners. In some countries, it is the responsibility of the Justice Department to offer prison education. This was also the case in Malta. In other European countries, the import model has been introduced, which implies that education in prison should be the equivalent of the education that is available in the community. Belgium and Norway used this import model. However, Belgium and Norway differed. The Northern part of Belgium (Flanders) has one organisation (VOCVO) which coordinates prison education. In every prison in Flanders there is a staff member of VOCVO who is responsible for coordinating the educational offer and organisation thereof in that prison. As Belgium was involved in various pilot projects, different staff members of VOCVO were involved in the FORINER project. In Norway, prisons also work together with schools in the community, but they all cooperate with a different school. The educational coordinator is employed by that particular school. For instance, Kongsvinger Prison worked together with Skarnes vgs, while the VIK prison worked together with the Sogndal upper secondary school.

Summary: 'a general overview of the pilot projects'

- **15 pilot projects** were realised throughout Europe between January and July 2017.
- **9 countries were involved**: 6 sent education to their nationals detained abroad, and 3 received education for (a) foreign national person(s) imprisoned within their own correctional institutions.
- **4 different organisation models** to provide education to foreign national students detained in another European country were tested throughout the piloting phase.
- **14 non-digital and 1 digital pilot project.**
- **36 people** detained in a foreign European country started a distance course from their home country.
  - Due to this small sample size of students, the results of the evaluation should be carefully interpreted.
  - High educational level (compared to previous research among the prison population): mostly level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework, no one has obtained levels 6, 7 or 8 (i.e. the higher educational levels).
  - 18 non-convicted and 14 convicted prisoners took part. 1 person was not aware of their status, and 3 people did not provide an answer to this question.
  - 61% had been in prison less than 1 year.
  - The majority expected to be eligible for release within less than 1 year.
  - The majority will go back to their home country; 63.9% voluntary and 8.3% expect to be forced.
- **Diverse profile of sending partners**
  - Some had previous experience with prison education, others not.
  - Some used already existing courses, while others developed courses specific for the FORINER project.
- **Diverse profile of receiving partners**
  - Educational departments under responsibility of Justice.
  - Educational institutions from the community.

Chapter 3: Mixed-method evaluation

1. Quantitative evaluation of the pilot projects: starting and ending questionnaires

The process that students underwent were monitored using starting and ending questionnaires. When a foreign national prisoner started an educational course, he/she was invited to fill in a starting questionnaire, and another when the course had been completed, before release from prison or at the end of the piloting phase. Some of the students kept studying after the piloting phase. Some students also decided to stop or pause the course during the piloting phase. These students were also invited to fill in the ending questionnaire.

The aim of this quantitative evaluation was to provide an answer to the following research questions:

1) What motivates students to follow a distance course of their home country, in their own language?
2) How satisfied are students with the support they received?
3) What are the results for the students of participating in the pilot projects (e.g. perspectives on reintegration, effects on their academic self-efficacy, their quality of life, having control over life, general satisfaction with the course)?

1.1. Process of administering the questionnaires

The process of administering the questionnaires consisted of different steps:

1) The partners of the FORINER consortium composed the starting and ending questionnaires. The starting questionnaire contained 18 questions, the ending questionnaire 12. More information about the topics explored in the questionnaires can be found in '1.2. Subjects explored in the questionnaires' (page 24).
2) When a student started following an educational course from their home country, the questionnaires were first translated into student's first language. At the end of the project, the questionnaires were translated into 6 languages: Albanian[4], Dutch, English, Greek, Lithuanian, and Romanian.
3) The starting questionnaire and an informed consent were sent by e-mail to the receiving partner of the pilot project. By signing the informed consent, the students declared they were informed about the FORINER project, the goals of the research, they gave the permission to use their personal details anonymously, and they completely voluntarily participated in the research. The receiving partner invited the student(s) to fill in the questionnaire and the informed consent. All students who started an educational course of their home country filled in the starting questionnaire and the informed consent (N=36). All documents are stored by the principal researcher.
4) When the course was coming to an end, the researcher contacted the receiving partner again with the request to hand over the ending questionnaire to the student(s). We received 25 ending questionnaires (= a response rate of 69.4%). The other 11 students were not able to fill in this ending questionnaire as they were suddenly released from prison, transferred to

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[4] The Albanian questionnaires were not used by one of the students. This translation was made as in lieu of a pilot project between an Albanian educational provider and a Belgian prison. This pilot project was never initiated.

another prison, or they stopped with the course (for instance due to psychological problems) and were not able to fill in the questionnaire.

Figure 13. Number of starting and ending questionnaires

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┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│    36 starting questionnaires    │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │
              │        ╭─────────────────────────────────────╮
              │        │ Drop out: Released from prison,      │
              │        │ transferred to another prison,       │
              ▼        │ exited the course                    │
              │        ╰─────────────────────────────────────╯
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│     25 ending questionnaires     │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
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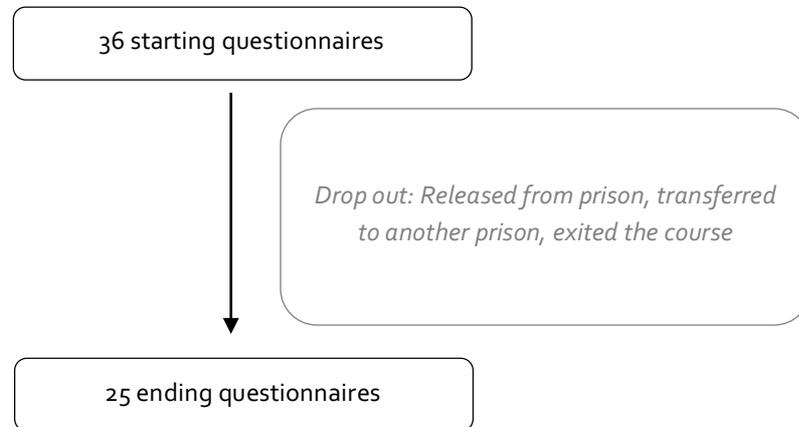
1.2. Subjects explored in the starting and ending questionnaires

The starting questionnaire consisted of 5 parts:

1) *Some general questions about the student:* e.g. date of birth, nationality, country of birth, level of education, actual time in prison.

2) *Prisoners' academic self-efficacy*: To measure this, we used the academic self-efficacy scale designed for prisoners by the Bergen Cognition and Learning Group (Norway - Roth, Asbjornsen, & Manger, 2016[5]). This scale covered 16 different tasks in reading, writing, mathematics, ICT, and self-regulated learning. For each task, prisoners were asked to rate their level of perceived capability to complete the proposed task on an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 10 (highly certain I can). Five subscales were made: reading self-efficacy (α T0= .897, T1= .842), writing self-efficacy (α T0= .803, T1= .641), mathematics self-efficacy (α T0= .762, T1= .849), ICT self-efficacy (α T0= .920, T1= .921), and self-efficacy in self-regulated learning (α T0= .839, T1= .679).

3) *Motivation to start following the course of their home country:* 20 different motives for participating in education were shown and each respondent was asked to indicate which motives applied to their own situation. They could rate the importance of each motive on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not important) to 4 (very important). The motives included in the questionnaire are partly based on the research of Manger and colleagues (2010) and Brosens and colleagues (2013) , supplemented with some additional motives.

4) *Quality of life:* The EUROHIS-QOL 8 item index has been used (da Rocha, Power, Bushnell, & Fleck, 2012). For each aspect of quality of life, respondents were asked to indicate how they felt about the statements on a 5-point Likert scale.

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[5] In consultation with these researchers, we decided to include the academic self-efficacy scale with 16 instead of 40 items.

5) *General sense of having control over their own life (mastery):* The Pearlin & Schooler scale (1978) has been used to measure prisoners' general sense of having control over their own life. The scale consisted of 7 items and respondents were asked to rank these items using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

The ending questionnaire consisted of 6 parts:
1) Questions about the name of the *course* and if they finished it or not.
2) *Prisoners' academic self-efficacy*. Idem as in the starting questionnaire.
3) *Satisfaction with the course*. 15 different items to measure students' satisfaction with various aspects of the course are shown. The students could rate the items using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).
4) *Quality of life*. Idem as in the starting questionnaire.
5) *General sense of having control over their own life (mastery)*. Idem as in the starting questionnaire.
6) *Reintegration perspective.* Respondents are shown 11 items about the relevance of the course for their reintegration into society. They were asked to rate the items using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

Both in the starting and ending questionnaire, the following question has been included at the end: "If there is something else you would like to say, please note down". We will also describe these answers in the results section[6]. All data were analysed using SPSS 24.0. Due to the low number of students involved in the pilot project (N=36 at T0 and N=25 at T1), the results should be carefully interpreted.

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[6] In case language barriers were experienced in translating these answers, official translators were consulted.

2. Qualitative evaluation of the pilot projects: interviews

2.1. Selection of the pilot projects

5 pilot projects have been selected to be involved in the qualitative evaluation of the pilots. Both the sending partners, receiving partners and students involved were interviewed about their experiences with the project. This does not mean that these are 'the best' pilot projects. In order to be involved in this qualitative evaluation, the FORINER consortium agreed to aim for heterogeneity based upon 5 selection criteria:

1) Digital/ non-digital pilot projects;
2) The different models to make a liaison between the sending and receiving country (these models are presented on pages 11 to 13);
3) Supporting the student: sending organisation/ receiving organisation/ peer-to-peer coaching;
4) Accused/ convicted prisoners;
5) Region: Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Europe.

The main objective of this qualitative evaluation was to provide insight into the processes of developing and implementing the pilot projects. It aims to provide an answer to the following research questions:

1) What motivates students to follow a distance course of their home country, in their own language? What motivates professionals to become involved in one or more pilot projects?
2) How is the process of developing and implementing the pilot projects experienced?
3) To what extent were the students, sending and receiving partners supported? Who provided this support?

Table 5 provides an overview of the pilot projects that are involved in the qualitative evaluation and the selection criteria. The selection criteria made us able to choose different sorts of pilot projects for the qualitative evaluation and to gain insight into the experiences of those involved.

Table 5. Overview pilot projects included in the qualitative evaluation and the selection criteria

Pilot number	Sending country	Receiving country	Number of prisoners	(Non-) digital	Model	Support	Accused/ convicted	European region
1	Lithuania	Belgium	11	Non-digital	3	Sending, receiving partner and peer-to-peer	Accused	East – West
4	Romania	Norway	1	Non-digital	1	Sending and receiving partner	Convicted	East – North
5	the Netherlands	Belgium	2	Non-digital	4	Sending and receiving partner	Convicted	West – West
11	the Netherlands	Malta	3	Non-digital	2	Sending and receiving partner	Accused	West - South
15	United Kingdom	Belgium	1	Digital	3	Sending and receiving partner	Convicted	West – West

2.2. Methods

16 interviews have been conducted to gain insight into the experiences of the sending partners, receiving partners, and foreign national students involved in the pilot projects (see table 6). Some interviews took place face-to-face, while others have been done by Skype or telephone. The interviews took place in Dutch or English, and lasted between 23 and 52 minutes.

Table 6. Overview of the respondents of the qualitative interviews

Pilot project	Sending partner	Receiving partner	Foreign national students
Lithuania – Belgium	1	1	/
Romania – Norway	1	1	1
the Netherlands – Belgium	1	1	1
the Netherlands – Malta	1	1	2
United Kingdom - Belgium	2*	1	1

*Note: *= Digital partner and educational provider*

A slightly different topic list has been used during the interviews with professionals (i.e. sending and receiving partners) and foreign national students. Similar topics discussed with both groups were (1) some general questions about the course, (2) informing, inscribing and selection of the student(s), (3) the method of education and the provided/ received support, (4) motives to take part, (5) cost, and (6) strengths and weaknesses of the pilot project. Professionals also answered questions about the different partners involved in the pilot project, their roles and the communication between them.

All interviews were tape-recorded with the approval of the respondents. Afterwards, they were transcribed verbatim. The MaxQDA software package has been used to analyse the manuscripts using thematic content analyses.

Chapter 4: Results

> "I just think it is a fantastic project. [...] I do see a massive potential in it and I still think things can be further improved. Give it more time and more contacts. I do see potential." (Sending partner)

In this chapter, we present the results of the mixed-method evaluation of the pilot projects. Figure 14 provides a general overview of the results, which will be presented in 4 major parts:

1) Motives of students, sending and receiving partners to get involved in a pilot project
2) Process of the course: from start to finish
3) Support provided/ received
4) Results and added value of the FORINER project

Figure 14. Overview of the results of the mixed-method evaluation of the pilot projects

Support
Actors, types and satisfaction

Motives to get involved
Students, sending & receiving partners

Process of the course: from start to finish
Communication, investments, assessing quality and level of the course, certified courses, digital aspects

Results and added value
Reintegration, self-efficacy skills, quality of life, having control over life
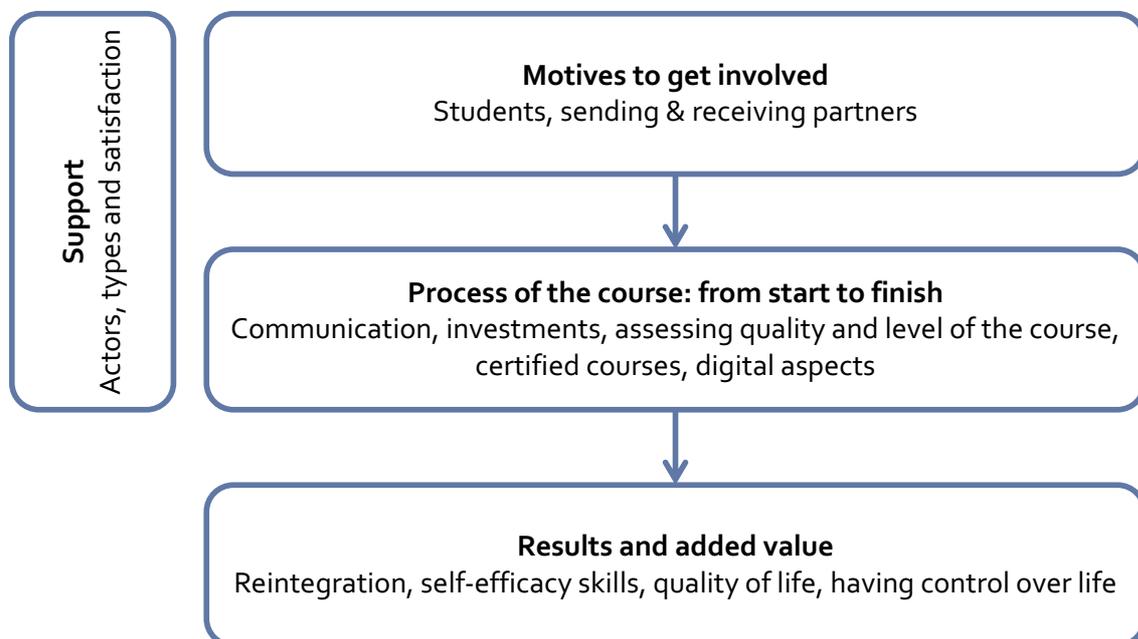
1. Motives of students, sending and receiving partners to start

Figure 15. Situating motives to get involved within the framework of the study
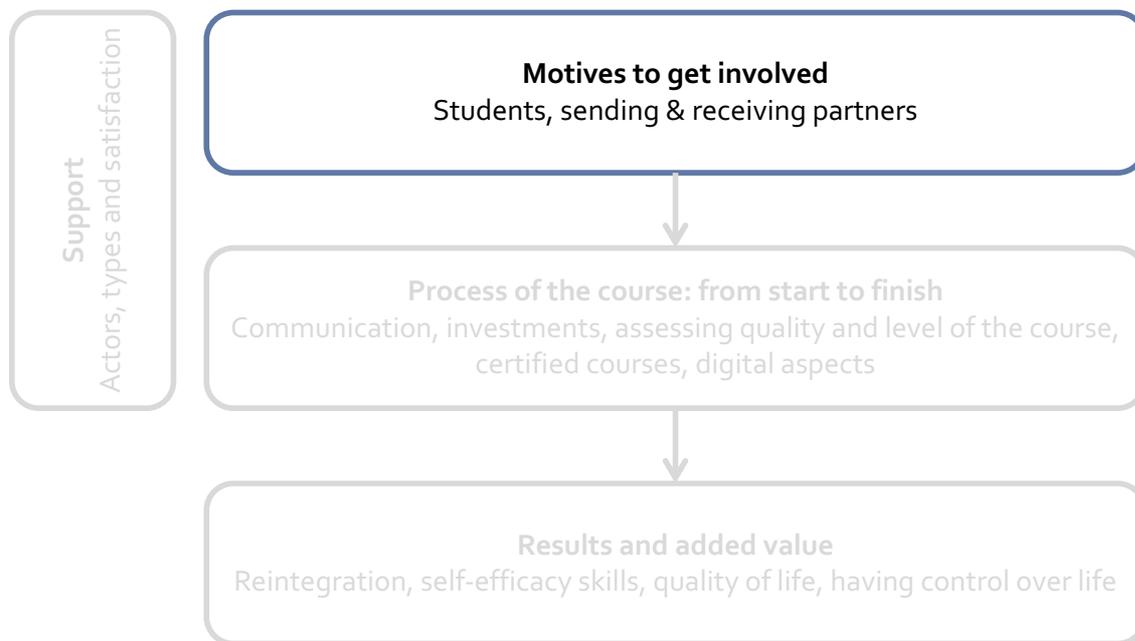
1.1. What motivated students to follow a distance course of their home country?

> "Thank you for offering me this programme. It will help me to spend my time in prison useful. It will help me to refresh long forgotten knowledge. It will help me to forget the hard reality. I am very grateful for this opportunity." (Student)

All students filled in the starting questionnaire (N=36). One question concerned their motives to participate in a pilot project. Table 7 provides an overview of the importance of each motive. Students could indicate if a motive was (totally) not important or (very) important. The table presents the percentage of the students that indicated that the motives were important or very important. The different motives are grouped into categories based on previous research (Halimi, Brosens, De Donder, & Engels, 2017; Manger et al., 2010), supplemented by some additional motives and categories.

Motives related to acquiring knowledge and skills were the most frequently indicated. All students wanted to learn about an interesting or relevant subject, 94.3% wanted to satisfy their desire to learn, and 91.7% wanted to spend their time doing something sensible and useful. In general, these were the 3 most important motives of the students.

Another important category were motives related to prepare for life upon release. 88.9% indicated that following the course would make it easier to get a job after release. Also, 85.7% of the students indicated that they wanted to improve their self-esteem.

A third motivational category is "reasons unique to the prison context". The most important reasons within this category were making serving time easier (88.6%) and feeling like a regular person

instead of a prisoner during studying (85.3%).

Fourthly, prisoners could also indicate social motives to participate in the pilot project. To help their family better was the most important reason within this category (75%). Lastly, the fact that the educational course came from their home country was a motive for 60% of the students.

Table 7. Overview of prisoners' motives to participate in the FORINER-courses

MOTIVES	(Very) important	N
To acquire knowledge and skills		
To learn about an interesting or relevant subject	100%	35
To satisfy my desire to learn	94.3%	33
To spend time doing something sensible and useful	91.7%	33
To prepare for life upon release		
To make it easier to get a job after release from prison	88.9%	32
To improve self-esteem	85.7%	30
So that the course can be a bridge to more courses after release	80.6%	29
To be better able to cope with life after release	77.8%	28
It increases my chances of release	72.2%	26
To make it easier to avoid committing crimes after release	65.7%	23
Reasons unique to the prison context		
To make serving time easier	88.6%	31
To feel like a regular person instead of a prisoner during studying	85.3%	29
To make it easier to get a job in prison	54.3%	19
Because it is better than working in prison	45.7%	16
Social motives		
To help my family better	75%	27
In this way, I would like to reconcile with my family, friends, etc.	53%	18
To increase my chances on employment in prison in order to send money to my family members	41.7%	15
Because also friend/ fellow prisoners are learning	20%	7
Because I was encouraged by others	17.2%	6
To be part of a group within prison	13.9%	5
Distance course of the home country		
Because the course comes from my home country	60%	21

Note: All students filled in the question about the motives. A few students, however, did not indicate for all motives how important they were for them.

These motives were confirmed during the qualitative interviews. All students interviewed (N=5) were very motivated to follow a course from their home country. They did not want to waste their time, and do something that might help them in the future. With the words of one of the students:

> "I want to do something here. I don't want to waste my time. When I go back out, at least I have something that can help me in the future to start a new life. You have the chance to do something positive with your life. All people make mistakes, and from these mistakes you can

learn. I now have the chance to start something that is positive. When I go out it can help me to get a job." (Student)

Other motives mentioned by the students:
- A student followed the course to make his children proud and to show them that he does something good with his time in prison.
- Another student already started with a course about that topic on the outside, but she never finished the course. She considered her time in prison as an opportunity to finish this course.
- Somebody else wanted to learn more, he liked learning.

One of the students also experienced difficulties in continuing this course, in particular when he was attracted by series on television, or by his games. At the time of the interview, he had been studying for 6 months and he had learned to reserve a specific part of the day (1 or 2 hours in the afternoon) for the course. In the beginning, he experienced difficulties in studying as he was not used to it and he did not expect to obtain good results. He sometimes put his course into the closet so he did not see the course anymore. However, once he saw that he had achieved high scores it motivated him to keep on studying:

> "In the beginning, it was difficult. I was not good in studying. Also, continuing with the course was difficult. That was not my strength. It was all new. That was in the beginning, but now it goes smoother. [...] I am more motivated. And also, the results I received, I mean, I never expected that I would obtain such high numbers. [...] That keeps my motivation high." (Student)

Another student also indicated that getting good results motivated him to keep on studying. He wanted to challenge himself to get better scores, and he even became 'addicted to the course'. Besides, by studying time passed very fast.

One of the receiving partners also mentioned that it is important that a foreign national student can start with a course from their home country as soon as possible after he/she expressed having interest in following a course. There was one student who had to wait for several months and his motivation decreased:

> "There was one student who had to wait for his course and he was not so interested anymore. I tried to motivate him several times, but he literally told me: 'I had to wait so long to receive the course, you do not have to hurry me up. I will do it on my own tempo.'" (Receiving partner)

Despite the high motivation of the students we interviewed, professionals mentioned that not all students kept studying. Some of them stopped with following the course, or put it on hold due to psychological problems or when they got bad news. There was one student, for instance, who got the news that he needed to stay in prison for about 10 years, what he did not expect, and he decided the put the course on hold.

1.2. What motivated professionals to get involved in the FORINER pilot projects?

As well as students feeding back why they were motivated to follow a course, professionals also revealed the reasons why they decided to get involved in one or more pilot projects during the interviews. Most of the professionals mentioned that it was their task as educational professionals to provide education to prisoners. They also expressed that foreign national prisoners have the right to education:

> "My meaning is that each prisoner, if he is imprisoned in his own country or in a foreign country, must be able to follow education: 1) During his time in prison; 2) That is appropriate to his possibilities; 3) That is future-oriented." (Sending partner)

The different pilot partners involved in the digital pilot expressed another motivation. They considered the project as an opportunity to test digital aspects of providing distance education inside prisons. It was a chance to test a digital method of providing distance education to national people detained in a foreign European country. It was the first time these partners had the chance to do this. The professionals involved were motivated to set up a successful digital pilot.

Finally, one of the sending partners was not involved yet in prison education before the FORINER project but she wanted to do something for her countrymen detained abroad. She expressed an altruistic motivation:

> "It was my own personal decision to help people. To help my countrymen who are locked up in various prisons around Europe, and just let them know from far away that, even though they are locked up in, I don't know in what prison in Europe, there is someone at home who might be interested in their education." (Sending partner)

Summary 'motives of students, sending and receiving partners to start'

- **Students' motives**
  - The three most important motives foreign national students indicated in the starting questionnaire to start an educational course of their home country:
    - To learn about an interesting or relevant subject;
    - To satisfy the desire to learn;
    - To spend time doing something sensible and useful.
  - The qualitative interviews also revealed that students wanted to do something that can help them in the future and do not want to waste their time.
  - Students can experience difficulties in continuing their course (e.g. being attracted by other things), but getting good results can be an extra stimulus to continue.
  - Some students decided to stop their study or put it on hold due to, for instance, psychological problems or getting bad news about their sentence.
- **Motives of sending and receiving partners**
  - Recognition as a task of being an educational professional to provide education to all prisoners, including foreign national prisoners.
  - (Digital) opportunity to do something new and innovative.
  - Altruistic; doing something for their countrymen.

2. Process of the course: from start to finish

Figure 16. Situating the process of the pilot projects within the framework of the study
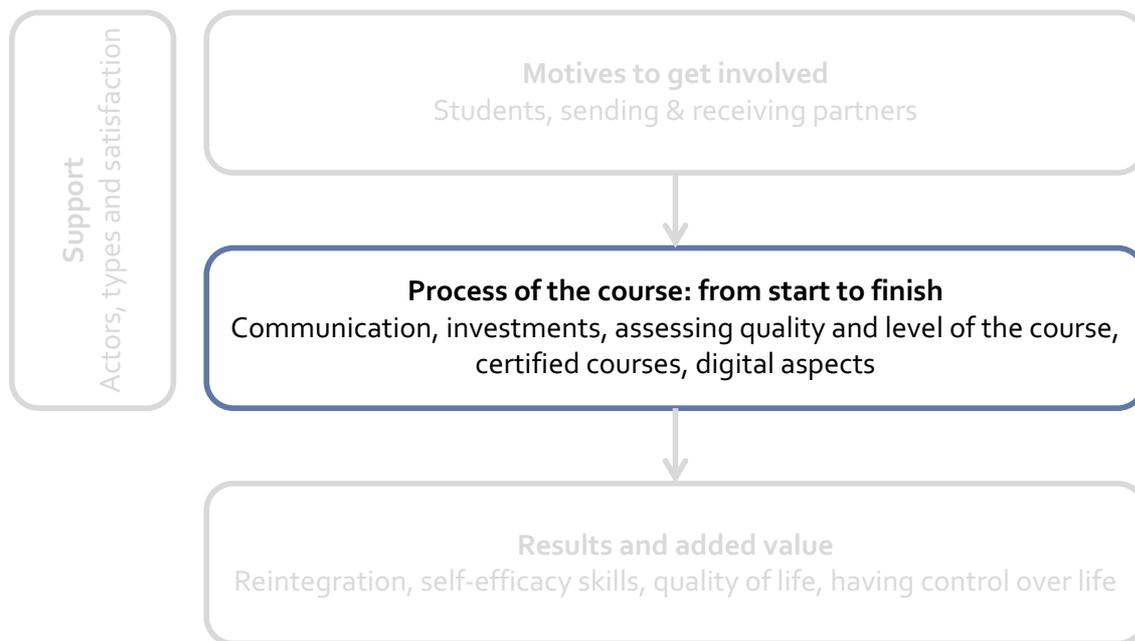
In this part of the results, we describe the processes of the different courses. It was a learning process for all partners involved. In what follows, we concentrate on diverse aspects of the process:

- Communication between professionals to develop and implement a pilot project
- Flows to communicate with the student(s)
- People's time investment
- Assessing quality and the level of the course(s)
- Providing certified courses
- Setting up a digital pilot

2.1. Communication between professionals to develop and implement a pilot project

As a first step, professionals out of 2 different European countries needed to find each other and decide that they wanted to work together to provide distance education. This search was facilitated by the FORINER consortium in 2 ways: 1) the search conference in October 2016 was an opportunity for different partners to get to know other interested parties, and 2) there was an online FORINER workspace where potential sending partners announced their educational offer using leaflets for staff (in English) and students (in the local language of the sending partner). Once people had each other's contact details, someone needed to take the initiative to start up a pilot project and feel that they are owner of the FORINER pilot. During the piloting phase, all receiving partners took the initiative to view the FORINER workspace and discover which educational partners provide and educational offer. If they could find a potential student with the nationality of that sending country, they presented the FORINER project to them. If a potential student mentioned he/she wanted to follow a course from their home country, the receiving partner got in contact with the sending partner. In this case, the initiative is taken by the receiving partner after the sending partner made

their educational offer visible on the FORINER workspace. The sending country can also take the initiative. For instance, EABT (sending partner out of the Netherlands) works together with the Dutch Embassies and the Foreign Liaison Office of the Dutch Probation Service to inform citizens of their country about the possibility to follow educational courses from the Netherlands. VOCVO (Belgium) also tried to take the initiative as sending partner, but without success. They cannot only function as receiving partner, but can also provide education to Belgian citizens detained abroad. During the piloting phase, they composed 4 different educational offers. One of the staff members of VOCVO invested a lot of time in finding Belgian citizens detained in other European countries, but came across various barriers. First of all, this staff member contacted Belgian Embassies, but – if they replied – they said they could not give more information about Belgians detained in other countries due to privacy reasons. The federal government also reacted negatively. After a while, this staff member tried to contact individual prisons all of Europe of which the contact details were easily traceable.

When 2 countries decided to work together, they needed to communicate about how they would set up their pilot project and arrange all the practicalities. They used the FORINER blueprint containing questions about the profile of the student(s), the course(s) they would offer, the level of the course, the learning materials they would use, a pre-assessment analysis, different types of support, certification, digital aspects, etc. Most of the time, the sending and receiving partners communicated by e-mail, in English (if they did not have the same native language) to fill in the template of a blueprint, arrange all the practicalities and follow up the daily running of the pilot. Both sending and receiving partners indicated that replying on e-mails within a few days was essential for a smooth communication and that staff changes made the communication more difficult. Some receiving partners also indicated that communication was more difficult when they asked about more content or more educational materials.

The communication between the sending and receiving partners differed from project to project. While in some pilot projects the contact persons remained the same throughout the life course of the pilot, in other pilot projects they changed over time. To visually demonstrate the possible evolutions in communication, we use the pilot projects where EABT (the Netherlands) was the sending partner and VOCVO (Belgium) the receiving partner. Figure 17 demonstrates that in first instance EABT communicated with the coordinator of VOCVO to present their educational offer. When it became clear which prisons would be involved in the FORINER pilot projects, EABT directly communicated with the staff members of VOCVO in the respective prisons (figure 18).

Figure 17. Initial communication between EABT and VOCVO
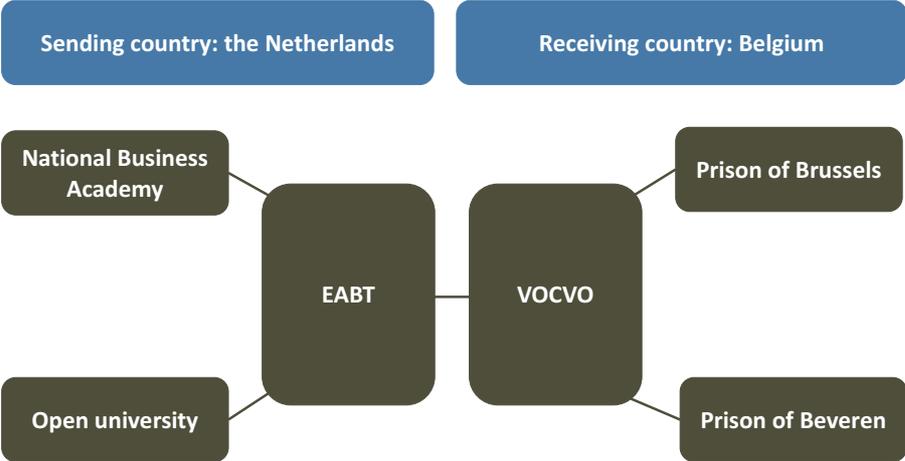
Figure 18. Communication between EABT and VOCVO in a later phase
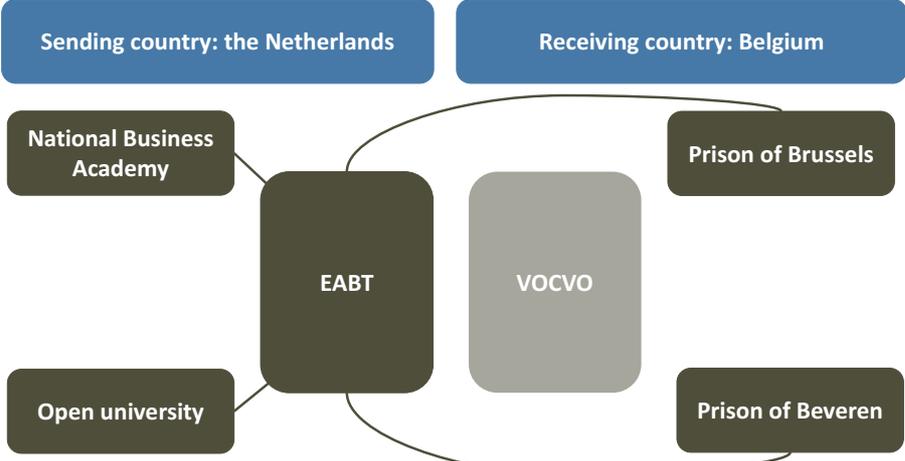
Another possibility would be that the coordinating sending partner is not involved anymore in the communication after a while, but that the educational provider is directly involved in the communication with the respective prison. This did not happen during the pilot projects, but it may be a possibility for future initiatives. Figure 19 visually demonstrates these communication lines.

Figure 19. Communication in a later phase without involvement of the coordinating sender and receiver
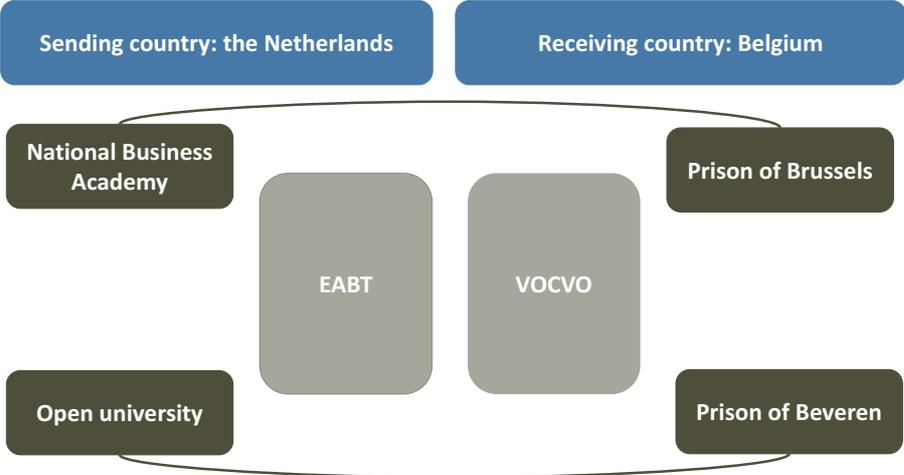
During the interviews, it was also mentioned that different partners all over Europe who send/ receive education for people detained in a foreign country can exchange experiences and learn from each other. Face-to-face meetings would be the best solution, according to this sending partner.

2.2. Different flows to communicate with the student(s)

Once the pilot project started, different communication flows are observed to communicate with the student(s) involved. These communication flows are displayed in figure 20 and can be divided into 4 parts: (1) finding potential student(s), (2) sending course materials and homework assignments to the student(s), (3) sending back the homework assignments to the sending partner, and (4) providing feedback to the student(s).

Figure 20. Communication flows
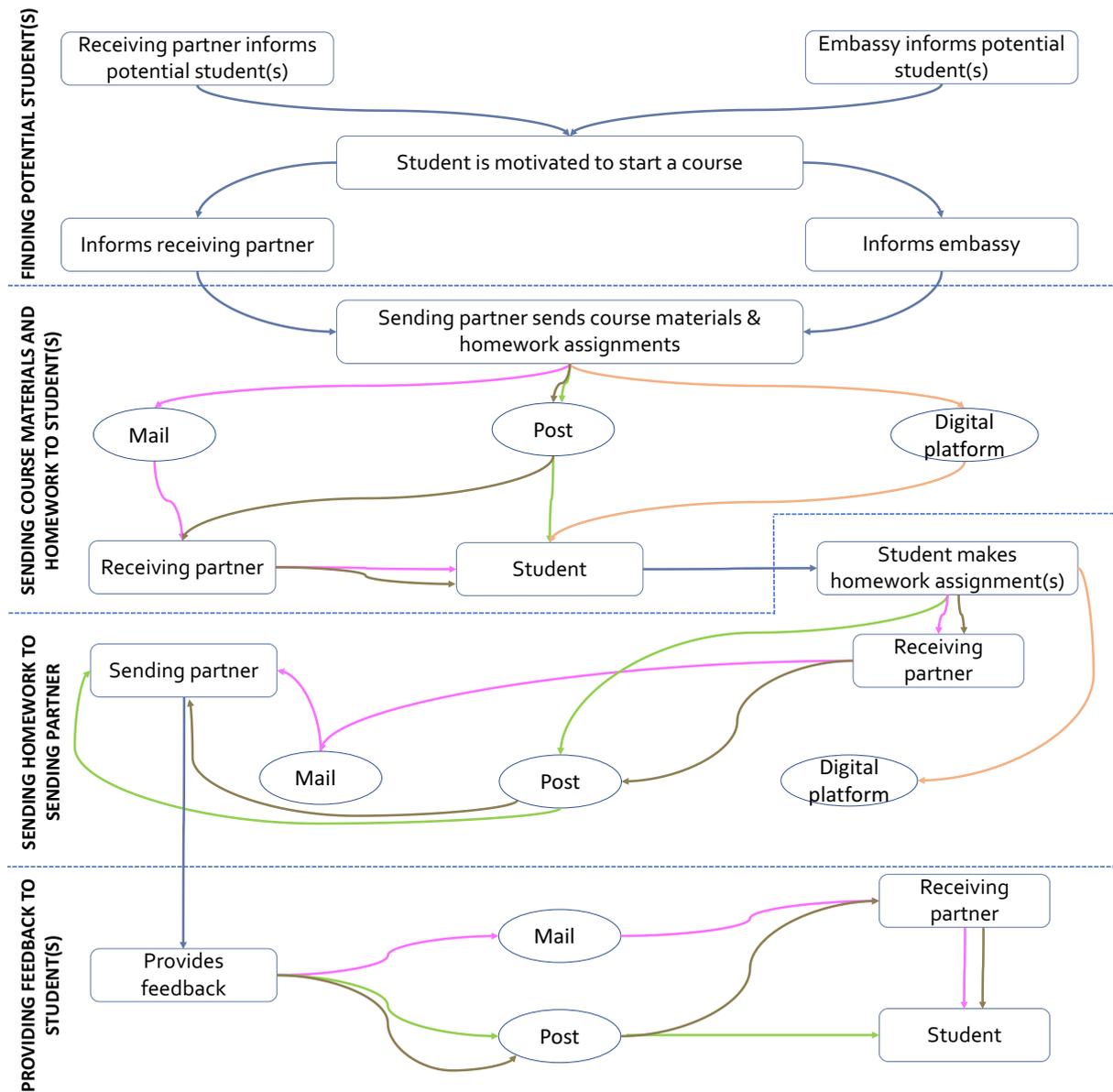
Communication flow part 1: finding potential students

An important task of the receiving partners was finding foreign national prisoners who were interested in following an educational course from their home country. Each receiving country had its own system to find foreign national prisons. In Belgium, for instance, the professionals used the 'SIDIS-Suite database'[7] to discover the nationalities of the prisoners. Once they had an overview of the nationalities, they started to inform these persons face-to-face about the possibility to follow a course from their home country:

> "In the programme SIDIS-Suite, we can search prisoners based on nationality. I have searched for all Lithuanian prisoners. Afterwards I approached them in person. I explained the project and gave them the leaflet. I said, if you are interested, fill in the reply strip and send it back to the educational department." (Receiving partner)

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[7] This centralised database contains personal information about all prisoners (e.g. nationality, date of birth, country of birth), but also about transfers, end date of the sentence, visitors, etc.

In Norway, the school counsellor sees all prisoners to inform them about the educational offer of the school and during that conversation the FORINER project was introduced. So, in most of the pilot projects, the receiving partner took the initiative to inform potential students face-to-face, whether or not in combination with a leaflet about the educational offer. The biggest advantages were that the whole project could be explained in-depth, and that the potential students could immediately ask questions. Despite the fact that having a face-to-face conversation with potential students took more time compared to only providing them a leaflet on cell, all receiving partners preferred the personal approach:

> "In the future, I will continue to approach them personally, despite the fact that this is time-consuming. You notice that they (potential students) are astonished, surprised, pleasantly surprised, about this educational offer. They expect to get information, so it is important to have a personal conversation in which they can ask all their questions. And also vice versa, that we can ask questions about their stay here." (Receiving partner)

One student also mentioned that he said to someone of the educational department that he would like to study. During this conversation, the person from the educational department provided more information about the FORINER project. Based on this, we can conclude that in most cases it was the task of the receiving partner to detect and inform potential students. However, EABT (sending partner out of the Netherlands) also worked together with the Dutch Embassies and the Foreign Liaison Office of the Dutch Probation Service to inform citizens of their country about the possibility to follow educational courses of their home country:

> "The Dutch Embassy here in Malta comes to visit me. And I tell them that I want to follow education here. They told me: 'okay we are going to check this for you, what the possibilities are, so that we can help you. If you are interested to do this, we will help you'. And from there, the procedure started." (Student)

Once a foreign national person decided to follow a distance education course, the receiving partner (or Dutch Embassy) contacted the sending partner with the request to send the educational materials and homework assignments to the student.

Communication flow part 2: Sending the course materials and homework assignments
Throughout the pilot projects, the sending partners used 4 different methods of sending the educational materials and homework assignments to their students detained in a foreign European country. The first manner (green arrows) was by post, directly to the student. The second manner (brown arrows) was by post to the receiving partner, who gave the materials to the student. Third (pink arrows) was that the sending partner sent the educational materials and homework assignments by e-mail to the receiving partner, who printed it out and handed it over to the student. A last possibility (orange arrows) was to make use of a digital platform on which students could login and had access to different courses.

Communication flow part 3: Sending the homework assignments back to the sending partner

Most of the students had complete homework assignments. How many homework assignment prisoners needed to make, depended from course to course. While the courses on the Virtual Campus (digital pilot), for instance, were able to be completed within one day, other courses were built out of several chapters and students needed several months to finish the course. Similar to sending the educational materials to the students, there were 4 different ways of sending the homework assignments back to the sending partner. First (green arrows), some foreign national students directly sent their assignments by post to the sending partner. Second (brown arrows), students provided their homework assignments face-to-face to the receiving partner, who sent it to the sending partner by post. Third (pink arrows), the receiving partners could scan the assignments and send it by e-mail to the sending partner. Lastly, when students made use of a digital platform, the assignments were automatically corrected (orange arrows).

The citation below demonstrates how it worked for one student:

> "I take one session, I read it 2, 3, 4 times. When I finish reading, I go look for the answers. I learn, I read all the questions that are asked, and then I go back. I go back and read again the same session and start to pick up the answers and mark the answers. Then I transfer it on a paper and check it 2, 3 times. When it is okay, I transfer it on the correction paper that I bring to him (the responsible professional), and he sends it back to my home country for me." (Student)

Some sending and receiving partners had a preference of sending the homework assignments by e-mail. In the case of the communication going directly between the sending partner and the student, there was a risk that the communication will be stopped when a student has been transferred to another prison or released from prison.

Communication flow part 4: Providing feedback to the student(s)

Once the sending partner received the homework assignment(s), they corrected it and provided feedback to the student. Figure 21 provides more details about who corrects the homework assignments and provides feedback to the student (refinement of the transition from part 3 to 4 in figure 20). Throughout the pilot projects, there were differences in the persons who corrected the homework assignments.

Figure 21. Correcting the homework assignments and sending feedback to the student
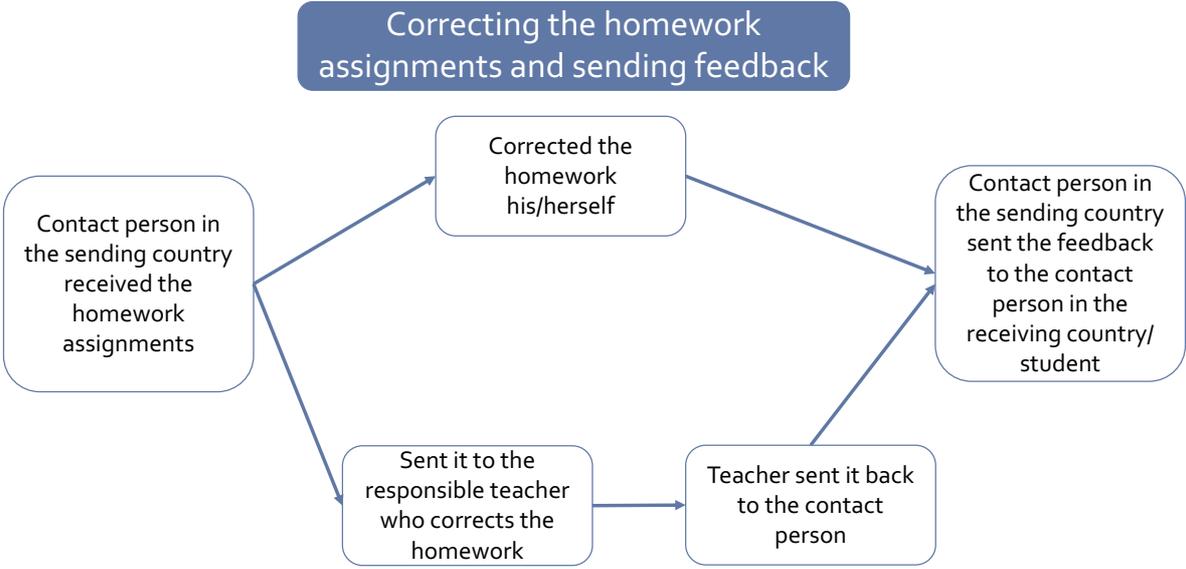
After the contact person in the sending country received the homework assignment(s), he/she corrected it him/herself (if he/she was the teacher of the course), or sent it to the responsible teacher. If more prisoners were involved in one pilot project, they could follow courses of different teachers, but not all the individual teachers directly communicated with the receiving partner or the student(s). The advantage of working with a contact person is that teachers whose English language skills are not so good could be involved in the project. In all pilot projects, it was always the contact person in the sending country who sent back the feedback on the homework tasks to the student – whether or not via a professional in the receiving country:

> "We had no contact with the National Business Academy (= the organisation who provided/supported the course). We always sent everything to EABT and the responsible there sent it to the teacher of the National Business Academy or the teacher of the course navigation licence." (Receiving partner)

Similar to the previous communication flows, the sending partner had different possibilities to provide feedback to the student. The first possibility was to send the feedback by post directly to the student (green arrows). Second, they could also send it by post to the receiving partner. The receiving partner had the task to hand it over to the student (brown arrows). A last possibility was to send the feedback by e-mail to the receiving partner. Afterwards, the receiving partner printed this out and gave it to the student (pink arrows).

2.3. The biggest investment was people's time

Allocating time to the pilot project was the biggest investment for all partners involved (paid or voluntary). Most of the time was spent to communicating with the other partner(s) involved in that particular pilot project. The other investments were slightly different for sending and receiving partners. In the future, it will be a challenge to find enough resources to let the project grow and become sustainable. The partners involved in the pilot projects were very enthusiastic staff

members and volunteers trying to make a difference for one or more foreign national persons imprisoned in a foreign European country, but many of them were operating alone without structural support from their organisation. One of the receiving partners mentioned that it is important that some partners/organisations get the official tasks to provide education to their citizens detained in another European country and that they feel supported by policy. Through this, education for citizens detained abroad can become an everyday routine.

Sending partners needed to provide course materials. Some of them used already existing courses of their own school which meant they did not have additional costs. In the case of course materials needing to be bought from a distance education provider, they needed to pay for these materials themselves. The sending organisation of the Netherlands (EABT), for instance, bought courses from other organisations. The cost varied for every course. Language courses were cheaper than other kinds of courses. Based on their experiences over many years, EABT says that the average price of a course is €350 per student. This cost was not a problem for them as they received funding from the Dutch Ministry of Justice. Lastly, in the case of the courses needing to be developed, time investments were made by the sending partner.

EABT also paid for the franked envelopes to enable the students able to send the homework assignments by post without incurring any costs for themselves. However, the homework assignments were not always sent by post. When the course materials and homework assignments were sent by e-mail to the receiving partner, they also needed to be printed. Receiving partners also spent time to motivate the students to keep on studying. In the words of one of the receiving partners:

> "We have not used any money other than we have used our working hours. [...] You work 5 minutes there and then 10 minutes there. You scan this paper. It is not so much work but it is not so easy to count because... When we go talk to him, motivate him, it takes some minutes. Sometimes it is only 5 minutes a day or something, sometimes 15 minutes." (Receiving partner)

All students could study for free, implying that they did not have to pay for the course materials and sending their homework assignments. There was one student who paid for the rent of a computer to complete his homework assignments.

2.4. Receiving partners found it difficult to assess the content, quality and level of the course(s)

Most of the receiving partners indicated that they did not have a good overview of the educational offer/the course(s). Most of the sending partners made a leaflet to inform foreign national prisoners about their educational offer – both in the language of the potential student(s) and English, but the information included was insufficient to get an overview of what the course would be. A possible solution mentioned by one of the receiving partners was that they would get an English translation of the table of content of the course. Based on this, they would be able to make a more accurate assessment of the course. The biggest challenge in assessing the quality of the course, was the language barrier. Most receiving partners did not understand the language of the course.

During the pilot projects, it also turned out that some courses were too easy and others too difficult. For instance, one of the receiving partners had the feeling that the first part of the course the student received was too difficult for him, while the second lesson was more appropriate. The sending partner of this pilot project indicated that she waited for the homework assignments of the students to develop the next part of the course. She found out that the educational level of the students was rather low and adapted the course more to the level of the students. In contrast, the student of the digital pilot project evaluated the courses he received as too easy. Due to the limited time span, there was no possibility to adapt the courses more to the level of the student. It was also recognised by the sending partner of the UK that not many high level academic resources were available on the small-scaled version of the Virtual Campus developed for the digital pilot project.

Besides the language and the flexibility of the sending partners to adapt the course to the level of the student, some receiving partners mentioned that it would be good to do an assessment to gain insight into the educational background, competences and needs of the students. There was only one sending partner (EABT of the Netherlands) who did an assessment analysis. When they got a request from a potential student, they first sent an information package before starting the course. This package included more information about the course, but also some questionnaires that needed to be filled in by the student. For instance, a test to gain insight into their language and mathematics level. A questionnaire to get more information about the student's background was also included (e.g. previous educational courses, work experiences). Based on the responses on these questionnaires, the volunteers of EABT assessed if the course the student asked for would be an appropriate course. If yes, they ordered the course from the educational provider. If not, they suggested another course to the student. After EABT ordered and received the course, they checked if all the educational materials were allowed within that prison in which the student was detained. Besides, they also paid attention to the privacy of the teacher and the student. The student, for instance, only got the name of the teacher but not his/her address. The teacher knew that the student was in prison and also got his/her name, but the teacher got no information about the reason why someone was in imprisoned. In other pilot projects, the privacy of the students and teachers was also protected.

None of the receiving partners we interviewed did an assessment analysis. One of the receiving partners mentioned that they did no needs analyses or assessment test due to the fact that the educational offer of the sending partner was rather limited. If they were to do a test, it may raise students' hopes of getting an appropriate course. Some of the receiving partners also found it difficult to know when the course would finish. For instance, one receiving partner mentioned:

> "The pilot has been a course in communication and we have one student. He started around the 20th of January (2017). And I am not sure if it is ended. He has done 5 lessons and I have not heard her (the sending partner) since the 5th lesson. So maybe I should contact her again and hear if there is more." (Receiving partner)

The same receiving partners also learned to relinquish control and trust the sending partner during the pilot project. This trust was also mentioned by one of the sending partners. In the beginning, the professionals working in the prison of Malta wanted to know everything about the course. They

asked if they could have an English version of the course (what was not possible). During the pilot project, the receiving partners in Malta learned to trust the sending partner.

2.5. It was not easy to provide certified courses

Throughout the interviews it became clear that providing certified courses was not easy (although some pilot projects succeeded in providing certificates). In most of the pilot projects, non-certified courses were offered. With the words of a sending partner:

> "How can you provide a certification for someone who has just taken 5 lessons? Okay, I could have made a certification but is would not have been valid for anyone. I mean, it would just be provided by me personally, not from an institution." (Sending partner)

If certifications were provided, some receiving partners questioned the value. With the words of a receiving partner:

> "There was one course and at the end, when he (the student) had done all the exercises, 'certificate' popped-up at the screen, 'you succeed the module'. It was with capital letters. 'Writing skills 1' was in capital letters. But it did not seem to be an official certificate. I asked this question to the sending partner. I am still waiting on their response." (Receiving partner)

The sending partner of the Netherlands tried to provide certificates for their courses. As they worked together with distance education providers, they could use their certificates. They were also able to organise exams if this was requested by the students. One of the students studying bookkeeping. When the student finishes this course, the sending partner will recommend this student to take the exam. Organising an exam did not happen during the piloting phase of the FORINER project, but EABT has done this in the past:

> "If all the homework assignments related to the course are made, and if the average score was more than 5,5/10, they can – on demand – receive a certificate. And what is more, for these courses (i.e. management courses), they can also make an official exam of the institution. He (the student) has to notice that to me, and he knows that he can make an exam in the prison. He was able to do that in the prison in which he was staying. And then we arrange that with the teacher of the prison. We would digitally send the examination paper to the teacher. The teacher organises the exam, knows exactly how much time the student may spend to the exam and under which conditions. Sometimes students can use their books, and sometimes not. If the exam is made, the teacher scans the responses and sends them to the institution. And when the result is positive, they get a diploma." (Sending partner)

Also in the framework of another pilot project (Lithuanian – Belgian prison), the receiving partner organised a test for the courses in mathematics and history.

For the future of the FORINER project, it is essential that appropriate educational courses are offered to foreign national students that are imprisoned within a foreign European country. According to one of the professionals involved, appropriate means that the course connects to the student's previous training and his/her possibilities, and that they can obtain a certificate or diploma that has value in the country in which the student will reintegrate after being released from prison.

2.6. Setting up a digital pilot was very challenging

The digital pilot project
Weston College, an educational provider in the South-West of England, provides education within their own correctional institutions. To support their education, they use the Virtual Campus, a secured web-based environment. For the FORINER project, a version of the Virtual Campus was made by MegaNexus (the developer of the Virtual Campus). In setting up this pilot project, various challenges were encountered. Those challenges can be grouped into (1) challenges related to setting up the technical aspects, and (2) challenges concerning the course materials and supporting the student.

Challenges related to technical aspects
A major challenge was to make the version of the Virtual Campus available on a computer in the prison of Bruges (Belgium) through which citizens of the UK detained within the prison of Bruges could study using the Virtual Campus. The prison authorities in the UK needed to give permission to install the version of the Virtual Campus in a prison in Belgium. After they gave permission, the prison authorities in Belgium then also needed to give their permission following testing the application to ensure that it adhered to Belgian IT security policy. After reviewing the use of the Virtual Campus on the Belgian prison service IT infrastructure the authorities decided to authorise a 'go' to the local IT service in the prison of Bruges to set up all the technical aspects. This local IT service needed to install cables, computers, and activate the network. It took a lot of time to arrange all these technical aspects. Getting the technical aspects ready was an additional task for them. The professionals involved in this pilot project started with the preparation phase in January 2017 and hoped to get started in March or April. Due to the fact that getting everything ready took more time than initially thought, they ultimately started at the beginning of July.

On the day that the student was intended to start with following a course, the local prison IT did not work. At that moment, the pilot partners realised that they were completely dependent on the technical aspects:

> "You are completely dependent on the digital aspects. The fact that the whole network was disturbed at the day of the start... You can do nothing. You are completely dependent. You cannot give anything on paper to the student. You cannot give the materials to him so that he can study. The project gets completely stuck. So, the digital aspects developed very slowly, it has had a huge cost and many staff members to arrange this. It is also very fragile. If something gets stuck, the whole system doesn't work anymore. That is an absolute weakness of the digital pilot." (Receiving partner)

Despite these difficulties, all pilot partners involved mentioned that this digital pilot project can grow in the future. The necessary permissions are already obtained and some of the technical difficulties are already tackled. The partners also thought about the possibility of implementing the version of the Virtual Campus in other prisons across Europe. Both the IT-partner and the receiving partner involved in the digital pilot project mentioned that it will be important to make a checklist of all the technical aspects that need to be ready in the prison before they can get access to the Virtual Campus. Also, the other way around, a checklist including all the security checks that need to be passed. It might be that these security checks differ between various types of prisons. These

standards of IT security will likely be replicated across different European nations and the processes and learnings from this pilot will allow future endeavours to be implemented easily.

In another Belgian prison, a classroom was set up to the technical standard to make the Virtual Campus available. This pilot project did not begin as the development of the version of the Virtual Campus took more time than initially thought and there was also a period of time where approval for the use of the Virtual Campus within Belgian Prisons. Further to this, due to having these dependencies alongside staffing issues when all the variables were in place the UK-student was already released from prison.

According the one of the developers of the version of the Virtual Campus, additional content options were selected for future use. However due to an agreement made this would have required an additional approval from the Belgian Prison authority as the Virtual Campus would have changed from the initial approval. This in turn resulted in a wider conversation about allowing access from prisons post-FORINER project to a version of the Virtual Campus.

Challenges concerning the course materials and supporting the student
Another challenge according to the professionals in the UK was making a selection of the courses, as most of the courses selected for use on this version of the Virtual Campus are designed to be taught by teachers. At the time of the pilot project, the student was not able to communicate with someone from Weston College (the educational provider in the UK). According the receiving partner, it would add value if the student could send in homework assignments through the digital system and directly communicate with a teacher. Due to the version of the Virtual Campus being used being a 'light' version the functionality allowing communications between students and their teachers has been removed. The developers choose to use this version of the Virtual Campus because of the big scale of this Virtual Campus application and all of the functionality it possesses and the training requirements for both the learners and those who are teaching/tutoring them.

Technical aspects within one of the non-digital pilot projects
Although only 1 out of 15 pilot projects was a digital pilot, however there was a the pilot project in which the prison of Beveren (Belgium) that had some technical aspects. First, in this prison every prisoner has 'PrisonCloud' on their cell. PrisonCloud is a secured IT platform to deliver prisoners several services as watching television, playing games, writing report notes, ordering products of the supermarket, etc. Prisoners also have the possibility to pay for the application 'Virtual desktop'. One of the students involved in a pilot project had this 'Virtual desktop.' He used this to complete his homework assignments. Afterwards, this homework needed to be printed and sent to EABT (the Netherlands). However, due to the fact that the printer on his wing was broken for a while, he experienced difficulties in sending the homework assignments. Normally, students can print documents by themselves, but in this case the local IT service needed to be contacted with the request to print out his homework. They did it, but it took more time to send the homework assignments.

Secondly, the initial aim of the pilot project in which the prison of Beveren was involved as the receiving partner, was to evolve to a digital pilot. Some of the students followed a course from the National Business Academy (the Netherlands), an institute that also offers courses in free society. This Academy has a digital learning platform and the intention was to make this platform available on PrisonCloud. The national IT service of Belgium checked this learning platform and decided that it was not secure enough to make this available for the students. Based on this experience, the sending partner of the Netherlands was quite disappointed and expressed doubt about the possibilities to provide digital distance education to citizens detained abroad:

> "It makes clear to me that even in Beveren - whereof the Belgian prison authorities are proud as they are in advance of digitalisation – it does not work. Then I think that in the rest of Europe, to make it happen in more countries, there is a long way to go. We should be happy if we can offer educational courses on paper in all European countries." (Sending partner)

When we asked students about the value of using the Internet during their study – if this would be possible – some students indicated that it would help them to search for clarifications of certain words, in particular for technical jargon. Wikipedia was mentioned as a possible website to search for clarifications.

(Further) digital solutions
Different partners indicated that the ideal situation would be that the sending and receiving partners can work together on a digital base. One sending partner was thinking of a European information point (a website). Another sending professional had the same idea and called it a database. This website/database can contain information about the educational offer(s) of diverse European countries and contact details. When a foreign national prisoner comes into a prison in a foreign European country, staff members of that prison can go to that online information point/ database and search if there is an appropriate educational offer available for this (potential) student. This website/database can also include information about the technical requirements for each study. Keeping this information point/database up-to-date will be essential.

Another digital possibility is to combine ICT and distance education. The development of a learning platform has been mentioned several times as a possible way to create educational opportunities for foreign national students. As stated by a professional in one of the receiving countries:

> "The best will be some kind of platform on the computer, on the Internet [...] where you can login and get the materials. Because of the security, maybe this will be the task of the teacher or the counsellor but together with the student. We also operate this way with university students for example, so it is possible. [...] The best solution will be that every country has its own area on this platform, where some countries can put many courses and other countries maybe not so many. [...] This platform cannot only be used for educational materials, but also as a way to communicate with partners in the other countries." (Receiving partner)

A first essential part of this learning platform is sharing educational content. In Norway, for instance, there is a platform that can be accessed by all secondary schools. This platform contains PDF-versions of school books and tasks that can be downloaded for free. A link to this platform can be put on the FORINER platform. Also, a link to the Virtual Campus (United Kingdom) can be included

in the platform. However, not all European countries have those platforms. A difficulty will be to see which educational materials can be made available through the FORINER learning platform. Many educational materials exist that are not digitalized and/or are not accessible without paying a fee.

A second part of the platform is providing the students access to the learning environment. The receiving partner in a prison in Belgium saw opportunities for their open learning centre. In this respective prison, students can come together in the open learning centre where they can follow their own course, on their own level and at their own tempo. If the learning platform of FORINER would be developed, it would be an opportunity to give students access to it in the open learning centre. Some other prisons throughout Europe also have educational centres or classrooms in which students have access to computers. Providing access is not only a matter of having a room available where the FORINER learning platform can be accessed. The user-friendliness of any interface will also be important. One student involved in a non-digital pilot project mentioned that he also had access to courses on the computer within the prison in which he was detained (these courses were not part of the FORINER project). This system, however, was not user-friendly- for example when he clicked on a button that the whole system closed. Based on his experience with this 'non-user-friendly system', he preferred to have course materials on paper.

A last part of the learning platform is facilitating communication between the different partners involved. One of the sending partners mentioned that the use of an online platform would make it easier to communicate with the students and support them during their study.

Most professionals acknowledged that digitalisation in prison across Europe on a whole is still in its infancy and that it will be a challenge to (further) develop these digital solutions. If a learning platform will be developed in the future, it will be of utmost importance to maintain this and keep it up-to-date.

Summary 'process of the pilot projects: from start to finish'

- **Communication between pilot partners to develop and implement a pilot project**
    - o 2 European countries needed to find each other. Possibilities:
        - ▪ FORINER conference in October 2016;
        - ▪ FORINER workspace including the educational offer(s) of potential sending partners.
    - o Initiative to set up a pilot project can be taken by
        - ▪ Sending partners
        - ▪ Receiving partners
    - o Pilot partners jointly filled in a blueprint of their pilot project.
    - o Pilot partners mostly communicated by e-mail, in English.
    - o Depending from pilot to pilot, the professionals involved in the communication changed over time.
- The **flows to communicate with students** can be divided into 4 parts:
    - o Finding potential students.
        - ▪ The task of receiving partners or Embassies.
    - o Sending course materials and homework assignments to the student(s).
        - ▪ Can be done by post, e-mail or digital platform, whether or not directly to the student.
    - o Sending homework assignments back to the sending partner.
        - ▪ Can be done by post, e-mail or digital platform, whether or not via a professional in the prison.
    - o Providing feedback to the student(s).
        - ▪ Can be done by post or e-mail, whether or not directly to the student.
- **Time was the biggest investment** for professionals involved

- **Assessing the quality and level of the course is difficult for the receiving partners**
  - Receiving partners experienced language barriers in assessing the course.
  - If it turned out the course was too difficult or easy for a student, it depended from the flexibility of the sending partner if the course could be adapted to the level of the student.
  - Only one sending partner did an assessment analysis to gain insight into the educational background, competences and needs of the potential student(s).
- **Providing certified courses was difficult**
  - Most of the sending partners provided non-certified courses.
  - Some of them tried to organise test or exams.
- **Technical aspects of the pilot projects**
  - Setting up the technical aspects of the only digital pilot was very challenging.
    - Permission of prison authorities needed to be obtained in both the sending and receiving country.
    - Installing cables, computers, activate network, etc. in the prison.
  - Technical aspects of a non-digital pilot.
    - Making homework on a computer and print this out.
    - Providing student(s) access to learning platforms demanded security checks.
  - (Further) developing digital solutions.
    - European information point/ database including information about the educational offer(s) of sending partners.
    - Development of the FORINER learning platform.

3. Support provided/ received

This part of the results is about providing/getting support (see figure 22). We first describe the different types of support provided to the students. We end with how satisfied students were about the support they received from different actors.

Figure 22. Situating support within the framework of the study
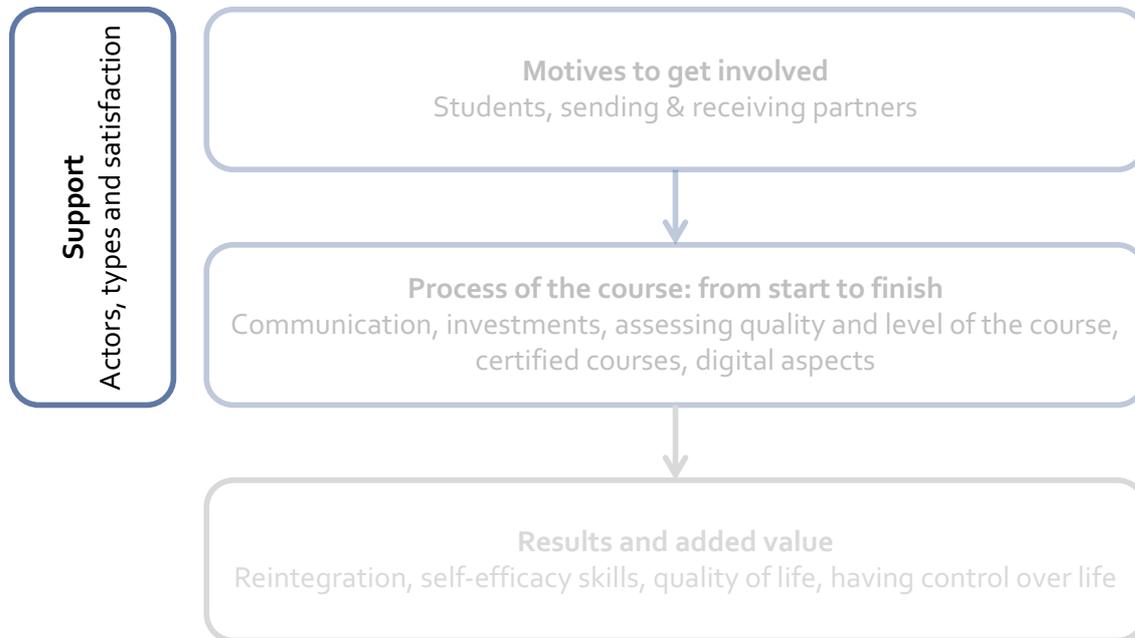
3.1. Support provided to the students varied greatly between the different pilot projects

During the qualitative interviews, we gained more insight into the support provided to the students. All students involved in the pilot projects individually studied in their cell, on their own time. Although one student indicated he was '*obliged to be the student and the professor at the same time*', students could rely for support from different areas: (1) support provided by the receiving partner, (2) support provided by the sending partner, (3) support of fellow prisoners, and (4) support of fellow students. Although the types and amount of support varied greatly between the different pilot projects, the respondents report 3 types of support: (1) content support, (2) instrumental support, and (3) motivational support (see figure 23). Content support implies providing support to understand the subjects of the course. Instrumental support entails having access to information, practical services and materials resources. Emotional support is about the possibility of care and personal value encouragement (Lindström & Rosvall, 2012).

Figure 23. Types of support provided by different actors
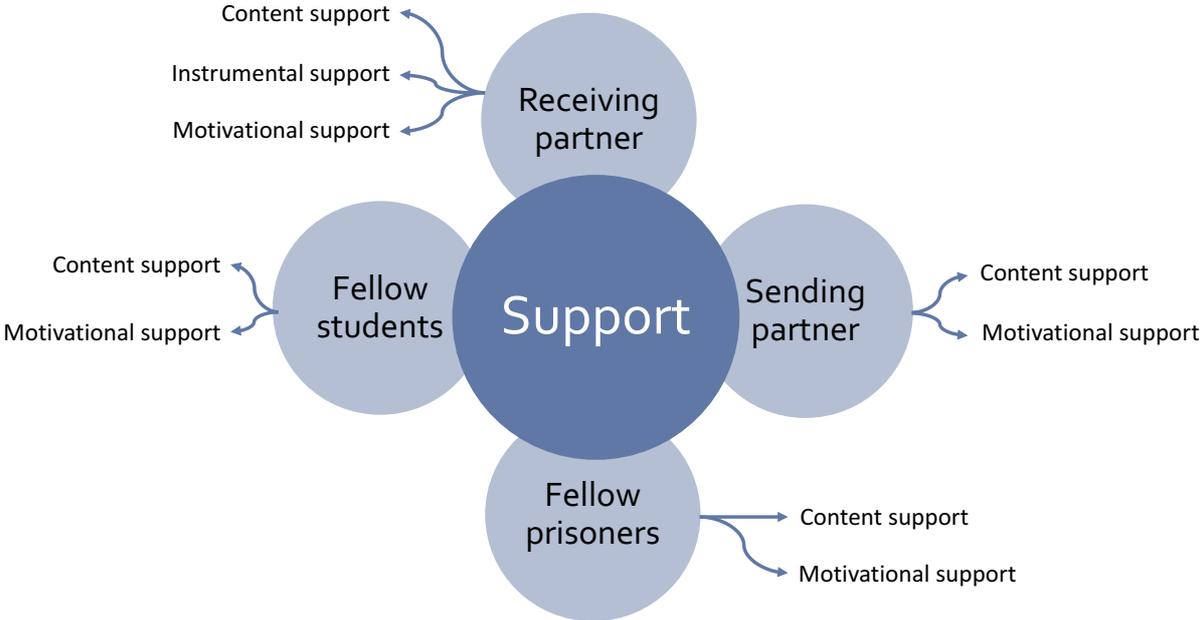
Support provided by the receiving partner

Based on the interviews with the students, it became clear that support provided by the receiving partner was of utmost importance. In particular, the educational professionals played a major role in supporting the student. Most of them had frequently contact with the students (some of them every 2 or 3 days, others (bi-)weekly). These educational professionals passed by the cells of the students and asked how their study was going, encouraged them to keep studying (motivational support), and asked if they could provide help. In the case of the receiving partner also helping with sending the homework assignments, they also asked if the student had finished a homework assignment so that they could help them in sending it to the sending partner (instrumental support). All sending partners recognised the importance of motivational support provided by the receiving partners. For instance:

> "I have regular contact with them (the receiving partner) if I don't receive homework assignments for a while. Then I ask if they want to pass by the prisoners. They do not have to provide support for the course itself in principle. The distance materials are sufficient. But it can be important to have someone on the spot who helps to keep the motivation high. Sometimes they (the students) are very depressed as they are sitting there and it still takes a lot of time before they will be released. They are working on their study that is oriented towards the future, but that can be far away. And then it is important that someone sometimes passes by and says: 'I heard that you have not send any homework assignments the last weeks, what are the reasons, is there something?'." (Sending partner)

In most of the pilot projects, the motivational and instrumental support was provided by someone from the educational department. In the prison of Malta, there was also a prison officer who supported the students. He was in charge of the day-to-day running of the FORINER project, but the educational professional kept contact with the sending partner. In none of the other pilot projects did prison officers have an official role.

> "He is not doing the course himself, but at least he is facilitating all the things for them (the students). [...] They (the students) tell him all the problems they got, and the officer visits them in their cells. He gives comments to them, motivates them, gives them feedback. So, it is working very well." (Receiving partner)

During the digital pilot, an educational provider was sitting next to the student to motivate him, but also to detect technical problems. Providing support on the content of the course was more difficult for the receiving partners. Some of them indicated that it was not their task to provide this kind of support, while others wanted to be able to do this and tried to realise this. The fact that the course materials and letters sent by the sending partners were in a foreign language, was experienced as the main barrier. In order to overcome this language barrier, the educational department of the prison of Malta asked for Dutch dictionaries to be sent by the Embassy, and they also used Google Translate when the students had questions. Other receiving partners also used Google Translate to gain insight into the materials sent by the sending partner. But even with these resources, it was not easy to provide content support. When they translated something, they had the feeling they lost the rest of the text, or did not get the correct words.

Within some prisons, the students also had the opportunity to go to the educational centre or school where they could ask questions to professionals (content support). Some of the students took this opportunity, while others preferred to study during their time in their cell. For instance, one student indicated that he could ask questions in the educational centre. In order to be able to ask questions within the educational centre, he requested to receive his course in English. Due to the fact that the idea of the FORINER project is that students can study in their native language, the student did not get a translation of his course. He thus first translated his question to English and afterwards he translated the answer to Dutch. He indicated this as 'a good way to have support'. However, not all students had this possibility, and if they could ask questions, they also experienced difficulties when the course included technical jargon. A possibility answer to this problem mentioned by the students was showing pictures in the course. Some courses within the digital pilot project included some interactive audio-visual materials to overcome this barrier.

Support provided by the sending partner
One student mentioned that it would be a solution (to overcome language barriers in asking questions) to be able to have telephone conversations with the teacher of their home country. A sending professional also had the idea to set up Skype conversations between the teacher and the student. In case of a digital pilot, it should also be possible that the student and teacher can send messages to each other. One student also proposed the idea that somebody from the Embassy or a teacher from their home country could come to prison to explain different aspects of the course. At the time of the interviews, no-one provided these kinds of support, but EABT (the sending organisation of the Netherlands) worked together with volunteers who visit Dutch citizens who are imprisoned in various European countries. These volunteers were not able to provide support about the content of the course, but they could motivate the students to keep on studying.

In general, the support the sending partners offered varied from the support provided by the professionals in the prison. If we asked the students if they had had directly contact with the educational provider of their home country, most of them said no. Only a minority communicated with them directly by post. When we asked how the FORINER project could become more sustainable, the receiving partners in particular thought about other ways to support the students, in order to provide more support on the content of the course. One of the receiving partners emphasised that a future challenge will be to facilitate direct communication between the student and the sending partner (e.g. by Skype, telephone). A receiving partner also mentioned the possibility of a native person coming to prison to visit the student(s) and provide support. Through this support model, students would engage more with the course and understand better the subject. This 'human support' is necessary as not all prisoners are ready for a distance learning course. For many of them it is a new experience.

During the pilot projects, the sending partners corrected the homework assignments, provided feedback, and tried to motivate students to keep studying. For instance, at the beginning of the study, EABT always sends a letter to the student with more information about the course, indicating that it is important to study every day for at least 45 minutes to an hour, that they suggest completing a homework assignment every 3 or 4 weeks, and they also inform students that they can ask questions. One student mentioned that he knew that he could ask questions, but it was a barrier for him as he was not used to asking for help.

Support by fellow prisoners and fellow students
Support provided by the receiving and sending partner were the most visible, but there are still some other groups that can provide support: fellow prisoners and fellow students. Their role was rather limited in the pilot projects, but there is still a lot of potential to grow. For instance, fellow prisoners were indicated as a source of support, and mostly as a kind of informal support. One student asked his 'friends' if they could provide an explanation for words he did not understand (content support):

> "Sometimes I ask people 'What does this mean? What does this mean?'. Some people help me. These people are friends." (Student)

Another student also informed some fellow prisoners about his course. The student said that they were surprised as they did not expect that he would start to study. But in the end, his fellow prisoners were enthusiastic about it (motivational support).

The receiving partner of the prison of Antwerp (Belgium) had the idea to set up a formal form of peer-to-peer support (support of fellow students). By doing this, the students could motivate each other to go through with the course (motivational support) and ask questions to each other about the content (content support). When the Lithuanian students received their courses, it seemed to be difficult to organize peer-to-peer support for it. Instead, the prison management was asked to put these students together in celsl and they agreed, but it took almost one month before all the students were put together in the cell with another Lithuanian student.

3.2. How satisfied are students from the support received?

The questionnaire the students filled in at the end of the pilot project measured students' satisfaction with the support they received. Table 8 presents the percentage of the students that agreed or totally agreed with the statements. We divided the statements into 2 categories: (1) satisfaction with the support from sending and receiving partners and (2) satisfaction with the support from fellow prisoners and prison officers.

Concerning the satisfaction with the support from sending and receiving partners, 81% thought the distance coach/teacher (i.e. sending partner) has expertise in the topic of the course, and 73.9% believed that the local teacher/coach (i.e. receiving partner) has expertise about the topic. 72.8% also agreed that the way of sending the homework to their home country works well. Almost 70% was satisfied with the feedback of their distance teacher/coach (i.e. sending partner). Only a minority said they were able to get in touch with their local teacher/coach when they needed help (30%).

Students scored also somewhat lower on the statements about satisfaction with the support of fellow prisoners and prison officers. This might be due to the fact that fellow prisoners and prison officers did not have an official role within most of the pilot projects. Almost 48% of the students agreed that their fellow prisoners approved of them taking classes, and 40% indicated that prison officers encouraged them to finish the course. Only a minority of the students could ask questions about the course to prison officers or fellow prisoners (respectively 35% and 29.2%).

Table 8. Students' satisfaction with support of the course

	(Totally) agree	N
Satisfaction with the support from sending and receiving partners		
My distance coach/ teacher (from my home country) has expertise in the topic of my course	81%	17
My local teacher/ coach (from my prison) has expertise in the topic of my course	73.9%	17
The way of sending my homework to my home country worked well	72.8%	16
I am satisfied with the feedback (the answers) of my distance coach/ teacher (from my home country)	69.5%	16
I am satisfied with the feedback (the answers) of my local teacher/ coach (from my prison)	63.6%	14
I was able to get in touch with my local teacher/ coach (from my prison) when I needed help	60.9%	14
I was able to get in touch with my distance coach/ teacher (from my home country) when I needed help	30%	6
Satisfaction with the support from fellow prisoners and prison officers		
My fellow prisoners approved of me taking classes	47.8%	11
Prison officers encouraged me to finish the course	40%	8
I could ask questions about the course to the prison officers	35%	7
I could ask questions about the course to my fellow prisoners	29.2%	7

Note: 25 students filled in the question about their satisfaction with several aspects of the course. Not all of them provided an answer on each sub-question.

Summary 'support provided/ received'

- **4 different types of actors can provide support:**
    - Receiving partner
    - Sending partner
    - Fellow prisoners
    - Fellow students

- **3 different types of support exist:**
    - Content support
    - Instrumental support
    - Motivational support

- **Satisfaction with the support received:**
    - More than 70% of the students believed that the local teacher/coach had expertise in the topic of the course, and agreed that the way of sending the homework to their home country works well. Almost 70% were satisfied with the feedback of their distance teacher/coach. Only a minority said they were able to get in touch with their local teacher/ coach when they needed help (30%).
    - Almost 48% of the students agreed that their fellow prisoners approved of them taking classes, and 40% indicated that prison officers encouraged them to finish the course. Only a minority of the students could ask questions about the course to prison officers or fellow prisoners (respectively 35% and 29.2%).

4. Results and added value of the FORINER pilot projects

During the mixed-method evaluation, we also investigated the results and added value for students following an educational course of their home country (see figure 24).

Figure 24. Situating results and added value within the framework of the study
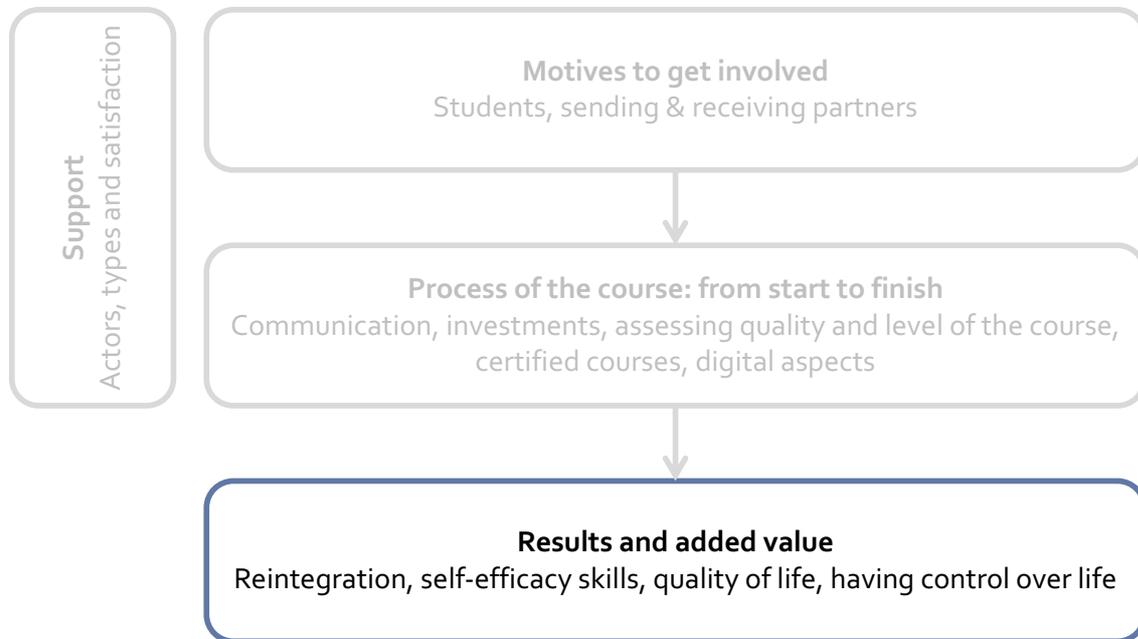
We did not directly ask the respondents about the results and added value of the pilot projects during the interviews, but some of them touched on it anyway. One student had the idea that many people considered prisoners as 'the dregs of society'. He appreciated that people thought about them and gave them the possibility to study. Due to the project, he considered education as something important in life:

> "I mean, it is very good what you are doing. I guess there are not a lot of people who want that prisoners study. We are seen as the dregs of society. Through this project, I get the feeling that you want to do something for us and that you want to help us, and let us see that studying is something positive. I see this through the project. [...] You give us the chance and let us see that we are able to study." (Student)

This student had the feeling he was not forgotten by everyone. Some professionals also mentioned this as an important aspect of the FORINER project: let students feel they are not forgotten and still part of society. One of the sending partners linked this to the damage that can be caused by imprisonment. Offering people the possibility to follow the education programmes of their home country could limit the damage that is caused by imprisonment. He recognised that education was one aspect of limiting the damage. Also maintaining relationships and contact with family and friends were important.

In general, students were satisfied with the course (see table 9). 84% of the foreign national students were (very) satisfied. 95.9% would recommend the course to other prisoners, and 80% would take another course in the same manner if they had the opportunity. The majority also agreed that the course served his/her needs (79.2%).

Table 9. Satisfaction with the distance course

	(Totally) agree	N
I would recommend this course to other prisoners	95.9%	23
I am very satisfied with this course	84%	21
If I had the opportunity to take another course in the same manner, I would gladly do so	80%	20
I feel that this course served my needs well	79.2%	19

Participating in the FORINER project also increased students' motivation to take part in other courses offered in the prison. For instance, some Lithuanian students imprisoned in a Belgian prison enrolled for the Dutch language course to learn the native language of the country in which they were imprisoned.

4.1. Students' perspective on reintegration

At the end of the pilot project, the students were asked to fill in the ending questionnaire. At the end, we left space where they could write additional messages for us. One of the students wrote:

> "I would like to follow more courses. I have learned a lot and I like to do it. It increases my chance to find work after release from prison and that is important for getting a better future and making a good start in my life and that of my children." (Student)

Concerning the general perspective on reintegration, 66.7% of the students thought that the course will contribute to having a better life after release from prison, and that it will be easier to avoid committing crimes. 31.8% indicated that following the course increased their chances for release. Students were also rather enthusiastic about their job opportunities. More than 66% indicated that following the course will make it easier to find a job after release from prison, and they also thought that this job will be a better and more pleasant job.

Students developed social skills due to the course. 66.7% indicated they can better arrange their daily living activities, and also more than half of the students mentioned that the course will improve the relationship with family and/or friends and they can control themselves more. 52.2% also learned to behave well in group.

The last questions focused on the country in which they want to stay after their release from prison. 69.6% mentioned that they intend to go back to their home country due to this course, while only a small minority (21.1%) indicated that this course has increased their chances to stay in the country in which they are in prison.
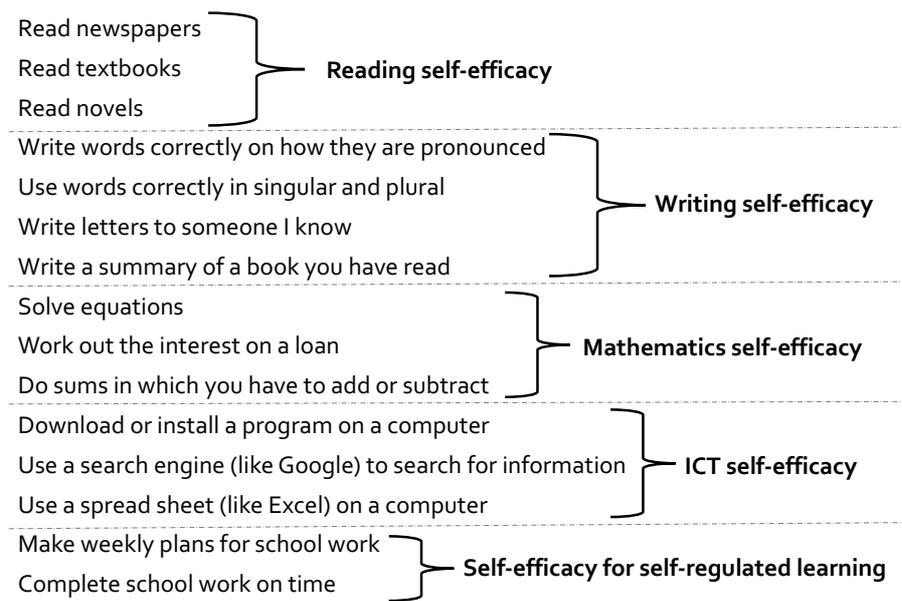
Table 10. Students' perspective on reintegration

	(Totally) agree	N
General perspective on reintegration		
Due to this course, I will have a better life after release from prison	66.7%	16
Due to this course, it will be easier to avoid committing crimes	66.7%	16
Following the course has increased my chances for release	31.8%	7
Job opportunities after release from prison		
Due to this course, I will be able to find a better and more pleasant job after my release from prison	66.7%	16
Due to this course, it will be easier to find a job after my release from prison	66.6%	16
Development of social skills		
Due to this course, I can better arrange my daily living activities (household, bills, raising children)	66.7%	16
Due to this course, the relationship with my family or friend will be improved	59.1%	13
Due to this course, I can control myself more	56.5%	13
The course has learned my how to behave well in a group	52.2%	12
Country after release from prison		
Due to this course, I intend to go back to my home country	69.6%	16
Due to this course, I have more chances to stay in the country where I am now	21.1%	4

Note: 25 students filled in the question about their perspective on reintegration. Not all of them provided an answer on each sub-question.

4.2. Evolution of students' academic self-efficacy

We have monitored the process that students underwent while following the educational course(s) from their home country. First of all, we have investigated the evolution of prisoners' academic self-efficacy, or in other words prisoners' beliefs concerning their ability to perform certain tasks in reading, writing, mathematics, ICT, and self-regulated learning (Roth et al., 2016). We asked prisoners to estimate their ability to perform 16 different tasks, both before students started following the course from their home country (T0) as at the end of the pilot project (T1). Afterwards, these tasks were grouped into reading, writing, mathematics, ICT self-efficacy, and efficacy for self-regulated learning (see figure 25).

Figure 25. Different components of academic self-efficacy

Read newspapers
Read textbooks   **Reading self-efficacy**
Read novels

Write words correctly on how they are pronounced
Use words correctly in singular and plural
Write letters to someone I know   **Writing self-efficacy**
Write a summary of a book you have read

Solve equations
Work out the interest on a loan   **Mathematics self-efficacy**
Do sums in which you have to add or subtract

Download or install a program on a computer
Use a search engine (like Google) to search for information   **ICT self-efficacy**
Use a spread sheet (like Excel) on a computer

Make weekly plans for school work   **Self-efficacy for self-regulated learning**
Complete school work on time

A paired t-test has been performed to compare the evolution of the students' academic self-efficacy over time. The results are presented in figure 26. Although all scores slightly increased over time, there were only significant improvements of academic self-efficacy in reading and writing. The average score of students for academic self-efficacy in reading was 7.6 at T0 and has increased to 8.7 at T1. The mean score for academic self-efficacy in writing increased from 7 at T0 to 7.7 at T1. There is also a tendency that students became better in mathematics. The average score at T0 was 6.9 and has increased to 7.5 at T1.

Figure 26. Students' evolution in academic self-efficacy (N=25)
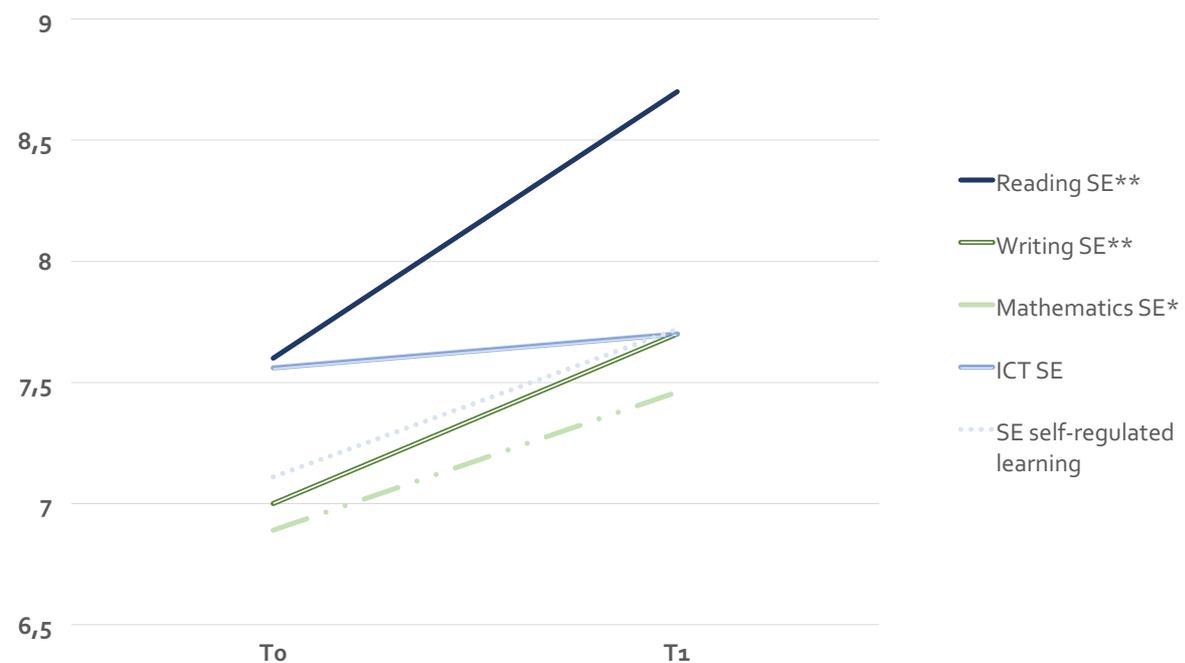
Note: ** p < .05, * p < .10

4.3. Evolution of students' quality of life

Several questions about their quality of life have been asked to the students, both when they started following the course (T0) and at the end of the pilot project (T1) (see table 11). Some exploratory, simple calculations demonstrated that 24% of the students were more satisfied with their personal relationships at the end of the pilot project. 20% of the students had a higher quality of life and were more satisfied with their health at the end of the pilot. Lastly, 12.5% of students were more satisfied with their ability to perform their daily living tasks at T1.

These results, however, need to be carefully considered. Many students also scored lower on different aspects of quality of life at T1. For instance, 28% of the students indicated that their quality of life decreased, and 20% had less energy for everyday life at T1. 16% were less satisfied with the conditions of their cell, and 12% with themselves.

Table 11. Evolution of students' quality of life between the start and the end of the course (N=25)

Items EUROHIS-QOL	Decreased	Remained the same	Increased
How would you rate your quality of life?	28%	52%	20%
How satisfied are you with your health?	4%	76%	20%
How much energy do you have for everyday life?	20%	76%	4%
How satisfied are you with your ability to perform your daily living tasks (e.g. your work, your housekeeping, small jobs)?	8.3%	79.2%	12.5%
How satisfied are you with yourself?	12%	80%	8%
How satisfied are you with your personal relationships?	4%	72%	24%
How satisfied are you with the conditions of your cell?	16%	76%	8%
Do you have enough money to meet your needs?	8%	84%	8%

4.4. Evolution of students' having control over life

We asked prisoners to indicate the extent to which they agreed with some statements about their sense of having control over their own life (also called 'mastery') before they started the course (T0), and at the end of the pilot project (T1). Table 12 provides the results of some exploratory, simple calculations. 20% of the students had the feeling that they are less pushed around in life at the end of the pilot project. Besides, 13% felt less helpless in dealing with problems in life, and was more secure of being able to solve their problems.

In contrast, for 24% of the students, their score on 'there is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life' increased. Besides, also 17.4% also indicated that they have more difficulties in solving their problems at the end of the pilot project.

Table 12. Evolution of students' feeling to have control over life between the start and the end of the course (N=25)

	Decreased	Remained the same	Increased
Negative items			
I have little control over the things that happen to me.	8%	80%	12%
There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have.	13%	69.4%	17.4%
There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life.	12%	64%	24%
I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems in life.	13%	78.3%	8.7%
Sometimes I feel that I'm being pushed around in life.	20%	76%	4%
Positive items			
What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me.	12%	84%	4%
I can do just about anything I really set my mind to do.	8%	84%	8%

4.5. Potential of the FORINER project

Throughout the interviews it became clear that the FORINER project has a lot of potential to grow in the future. For instance, with the words of a student:

> "This is a new procedure, a new start to build up good relationships with my home country. It helps to provide education to prisoners from the outside and to give them a chance to do something good. This is just the beginning. I am thinking, if we can keep going like this, more things can happen in the future, more doors can go open, more opportunities will come. [...] And in the future, I'm thinking, if we keep going like this, we will obtain a good result." (Student)

Different people we interviewed emphasised that there is a lot of potential to support to ongoing development of cooperation between European countries to offer distance education to foreign national prisoners.

Summary 'results and added value of the FORINER project'

- In general, students were **very satisfied with the course**.
- More than 60% of the students thought that the course has contributed to **a better life after release**, that they will be able to avoid committing crimes, find a better and more pleasant job, and better arrange their daily living activities.
- Significant **increase of self-efficacy in reading and writing** and to some extent also in mathematics.
- **Quality of life**: 24% of the students were more satisfied with their personal relationships at the end of the pilot project. Besides, 20% of the students had a higher quality of life and were more satisfied with their health.
- **Control over life** (mastery): 20% of the students had the feeling that they are being less pushed around in life at the end of the pilot project. Besides, 13% felt less helpless in dealing with problems in life, and were more secure in being able to solve their problems.
- There is, however, a **note of caution** in the results of quality of life and having control over life. Some students also experienced a lower quality of life and had less control over life at the end of the course.
- The FORINER project has a **lot of potential to grow in the future**.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and discussion

The council of Europe, the European Union and the United Nations have established legislation concerning the rights of prisoners. The Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning foreign prisoners (Council of Europe, 2012) explicitly emphasises the right foreign national prisoners have to education. Research has revealed that participating in education during imprisonment entails several benefits. For instance, people enrolled in educational courses during their time in prison tend to have lower recidivism rates (Kim & Clark, 2013; Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2012), and an increased chance of finding work after their release from prison (Davis et al., 2013). In addition, taking part in educational courses makes prison life less dehumanising (Stern, 2013), enhances normalisation of prison life (Costelloe et al., 2012), and allows prisoners to build social and human capital (Behan, 2014). Besides, prisoners can obtain achievements that are generic in nature (e.g. the ability to understand and give written or oral instructions), but also skill-specific achievements (e.g. learning welding or computer skills) (Gaes, 2008). In other words, offering educational courses during imprisonment provides an opportunity to transform prisoners' lives (Behan, 2014; Stern, 2013).

Despite these benefits, previous research of the FORINER consortium has demonstrated that foreign national prisoners detained in prisons across Europe have less educational possibilities than national prisoners (Brosens & De Donder, 2016). To enlarge the educational opportunities of foreign national prisoners, 15 pilot projects all over Europe have been developed and implemented between January and July 2017 in the framework of the European FORINER project. The aim of these pilot projects was to provide foreign national prisoners access to distance education that is offered by their home country, in their own language. This report presents the results of the mixed-method evaluation of these pilot projects. In this discussion, we present a short but integrated overview of the study results. Later, we will also discuss the challenges for future advancement, the limitations of the study and directions for future research.

1. Main results of the mixed-method evaluation

The mixed-method evaluation reveals the **motives of students, sending and receiving partners** to get involved in one or more pilot projects. Foreign national students are in particular motivated to acquire knowledge and skills by following a distance course of their home country. Also preparing for life upon release is important. This is in line with research about the motives of national prisoners to follow education during their incarceration period (Halimi et al., 2017; Manger et al., 2010). However, continuing the distance study is not always easy. Many students study in their cell, through which some of them get attracted by other things. Obtaining good results can be an extra stimulus to continue the study. Unfortunately, not all students finish their course. Being transferred to another prison, being released from prison, getting bad news about their sentence or experiencing psychological problems are some of the reasons why students stop their study or put it on hold.

Sending and receiving partners have diverse motives to provide distance education for foreign national prisoners. Some of them consider it their task as educational professionals to educate all

prisoners, including foreign national prisoners. They follow the International legislation that explicitly emphasizes the right foreign national prisoners have to education (e.g. Council of Europe, 2012). In addition, an altruistic motive implying that they want to do something for their countrymen detained abroad has been mentioned. The digital pilot partners consider the FORINER project also as a chance to test a digital method of providing distance education to foreign national prisoners. It has been acknowledged that distance learning and the use of ICT can create training resources and facilitate links with education and training provision in the home country of the students (Hawley, Murphy, & Souto-Otero, 2013). One of the achievements of the digital pilot was to enable a pan European connection from the Belgian IT system to the UK Virtual Campus system. This successfully allowed access to UK content from the Belgian prison systems; the next stages are therefore security and technical authorisation to further system and data integration across Europe.

In addition, the **process of the course, from start to finish**, has been evaluated. An important aspect herein is the communication between professionals to develop and implement a pilot project. First, 2 European countries need to find each other and decide they want to work together to offer distance courses to one or more foreign national prisoners. Both the receiving and sending partners can take the initiative to set up a cooperation, but based on the experiences of the FORINER pilot partners it seems easier for receiving partners. A condition for this is that receiving partners have an overview of the educational offer(s) of potential sending partners. A challenge for the future will be to develop an information point/database that contains information about the educational offer(s) of diverse European countries and their contact details, and make this known among people working in all prisons across Europe. For instance, when a foreign national prisoner comes into a prison in a foreign European country, staff members of that prison can go to that online information point/database and search if there is an appropriate educational offer available for this (potential) student. This website/database can also include information about the technical requirements for each study. If sending partners want to take the initiative to set up a cooperation with another European country to provide distance education to their nationals detained abroad, they need to have an overview of the prisons where their nationals are detained. Our research has revealed that Ministries and Embassies are not keen to provide this information. However, the cooperation between the organisation 'Education Behind Bars' in the Netherlands, the Dutch Embassies and the Foreign Liaison Office of the Dutch Probation Service clearly demonstrates that it is possible. Together they share the responsibility to offer education to their citizens detained abroad.

Once a cooperation between 2 partners has started, course materials and homework assignments need to be send to the student(s). Later, the homework assignments need to be sent back to the sending partner, and afterwards feedback must be provided to the student(s). This can all be done by post, e-mail, sometimes with support of a professional working in the prison where the student is detained. The Confederation of European Probation (CEP) already mentioned in their good practice guide for developing services for European citizens detained abroad (n.d.) that prisoners are rarely allowed to receive the course materials themselves. Also in the majority of the FORINER pilot projects, a professional of the prison has been involved as a go-between/intermediate person between the student and the sending partner. Besides post and e-mail, also a digital learning platform can be used to offer educational materials to students, send homework assignments and

provide feedback. Outside prison, more and more educational providers use ICT to communicate with students and turn in assignments (Eikeland et al., 2009). The evaluation of the pilot projects has shown that implementing digital learning platforms to offer distance education from the home country inside prison presents a number of challenges. A lack of internet access and other ICT resources within prison walls is very common (Barreiro-Gen & Novo-Corti, 2015; Farley, Murphy, & Bedford, 2012), which is a barrier to distance education (Farley et al., 2012; Pike, 2009). A future challenge will be to develop a FORINER learning platform, including – for instance – links to existing learning platforms in European countries. Once this platform has been developed, the ideal situation would be that all those studying whilst detained in a European prison have access to it.

Another aspect of the process of the course which we will address in this discussion is assessing the quality and level of the course. Only one sending partner has done an assessment analysis to gain insight into the educational background, competences and needs of the potential student(s). Due to this, this sending partner was able to give the student an appropriate course. For future cooperation, it is recommended that sending partners do an assessment analysis. During the piloting phase, it turned out that sometimes a course was too difficult or too easy for the student. The Confederation of European Probation (n.d.) emphasises that it is useful to seek information on the level of the course the student is interested in compared to their actual level of schooling. It is essential that students only access the level of study they are capable of achieving.

Another aspect investigated during the mixed-method evaluation is **supporting the student.** Once a student has begun with a study through distance learning, it is possible that he/she needs support and encouragement at certain times. The conditions in which they have to study are often difficult and they are confronted with enormous stress due to their situation (CEP, n.d.). The mixed-method evaluation of the pilot projects has indicated that - although the types and amount of support vary greatly between different pilot projects - students could rely on different aspects: (1) receiving partners, (2) sending partners, (3) fellow prisoners, and (4) fellow students. 3 different types of support are given: (1) content support, (2) instrumental support, and (3) motivational support. Content support implies providing support to understand the subjects of the course. Instrumental support entails having access to information, practical services and materials resources. Emotional support is about the possibility of care and personal value encouragement (Lindström & Rosvall, 2012). The FORINER consortium is convinced that all types of support and all aspects are very important to support the students in starting a distance course, but also in continuing and successfully ending it. Over all, throughout the evaluation, it became clear that it is necessary and very important to dedicate time to supporting the student.

Receiving partners have a major role in providing instrumental and emotional support due to the fact that they can have face-to-face contact with the student and arrange all the practical aspects of the study inside prison (e.g. getting the course materials inside prison, printing course materials, sending homework assignments to the sending partner, organising exams). Providing support on the content of the course is more difficult for the receiving partners, but our evaluation has shown that this is not impossible. The language of the course is the major barrier to provide content support, but some receiving partners are inventive and become able to help the students through external tools such as dictionaries or Google Translate. Sending partners can provide content and

motivational support. Our evaluation has, however, shown that the majority of sending partners experience difficulties with providing support due to the fact that many students do not have direct contact with the sending partner. A future challenge will be to facilitate the communication between them (e.g. through telephone conversations, Skype, even face-to-face conversations). Peer support can also be developed further as previous research has indicated that peer programmes are very effective. Related to education, peer education in relation to HIV prevention and risk reduction have been widely applied in prisons (Bagnall et al., 2005), but also reading programmes in which fluent readers take up a mentor role and coach other prisoners to read exist (Perrin & Blagden, 2016). In the case several students of one prison following a course from their home country, peer support can be implemented so that fellow prisoners can support each other in several ways (i.e. emotional and concerning content).

Lastly, the mixed-method evaluation also provides insight into the **results and added value of the FORINER project.** In this discussion, we mention some of them. In general, the students are very satisfied with the course and many of them would follow another course in the same manner if they had the opportunity to do so. More than 60% of the students thinks that the course has contributed to a better life after release, that they will be able to avoid committing crimes, find a better and more pleasant job, and better arrange their daily living activities. This might be linked to research about prison education that has demonstrated that people enrolled in educational courses during their time in prison tend to have lower recidivism rates (Kim & Clark, 2013; Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2012), and an increased chance of finding work after their release from prison (Davis et al., 2013). Furthermore, self-efficacy in reading and writing of the students increased over time, and to some extent also in mathematics. Besides the results for the individual students, the evaluation also makes clear that the FORINER project has a lot of potential to grow in the future and to support the ongoing development of cooperation between European countries to offer distance education to foreign national prisoners. In the next part of this discussion, we present the challenges related to this future advancement.

2. Challenges for future advancement

The FORINER consortium is convinced that the steps they took are important, but the pilot projects are still in the experimentation phase and need sustaining, and scaling up. There is a lot of potential to support the ongoing development of such projects on a wider scale and to transfer it to more European countries. More than 86,000 prisoners were detained in European prisons at the 1st of September 2015, among which 23% had nationality other than that of the country in which they are imprisoned (Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhardt, 2016), implying that there are many potential students. However, different (potential) pilot partners have tried to find their citizens in prisons abroad in which they may be detained and did not succeed. Various Ministries and Embassies were contacted, but due to privacy reasons or organisational barriers they were not able to provide an overview of the prisoners detained in their country. Creating possibilities for detecting, localizing and engaging citizens detained abroad remains a challenge for the future.

Despite the great interest and enthusiasm to work together with other European countries to exchange education across borders, the development of the pilot projects – and especially of the digital ones – was rather difficult. It required a lot of trial and error, and new local and cross-border networks needed to be built. One of the 15 pilot projects was a digital one, the 14 other pilots were paper-based, implying that all course materials and homework assignments usually needed to be sent by post. Sometimes, the materials are sent by e-mail by the sending partner to the receiving partner. In this case, the receiving partner needs to print all the materials they receive. Implementing ICT in distance education for foreign national prisoners is an important challenge for the future, as it can facilitate the cooperation between a prison in the foreign country and the educational provider in the home country (Hawley et al., 2013).

The partners involved in the pilot projects are very enthusiastic staff members/volunteers trying to make a difference for some foreign national prisoners, but many of them are operating alone and without structural support from their organisation. In order to make the FORINER project more sustainable, 'the spiral for social innovation' can be used (see figure 27) (Murray, Caulier-Crice, & Mulgan, 2010).

Figure 27. The spiral for social innovation (Murray et al., 2010)
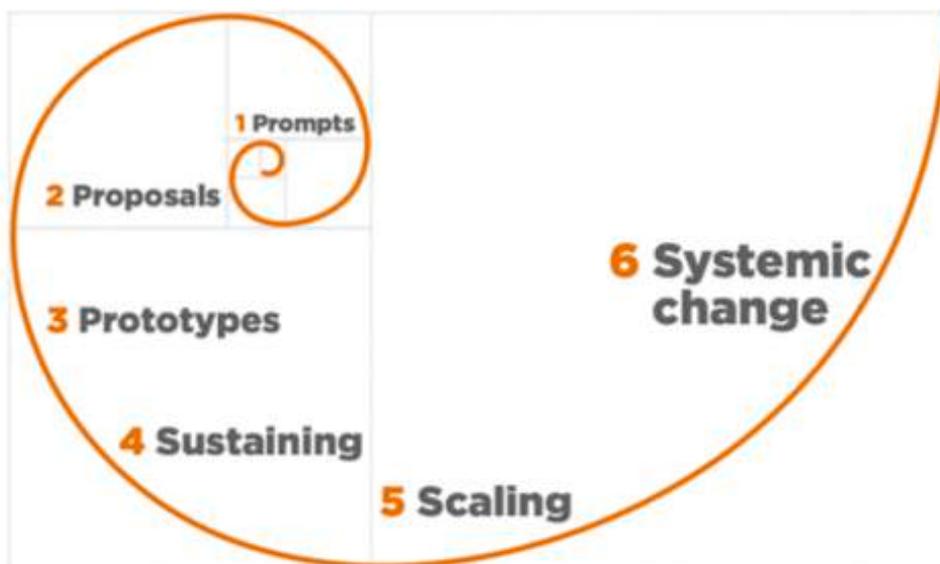
A social innovation process consists of 6 phases. During phase 1 (prompts, inspirations and diagnoses), the need for innovation arises. This stage involves diagnosing the problem and framing the right questions. After the phase of generating ideas and a project proposal (phase 2), the phase in which the project has been tested and executed follows (phase 3 – prototyping and pilots). The 4th phase is sustaining, meaning that the idea becomes everyday practice, including a long-term financial sustainability. The 5th phase is called scaling and diffusion, implying that the innovation grows and is spread further. When the innovative idea has been implemented and leads to systemic change, phase 6 of the spiral for social innovation has been reached (Murray et al., 2010). The FORINER project has moved to phase 3 of the spiral (prototyping and pilots), but still needs sustaining and scaling-up to reach systemic change.

To help countries and organisations to deliver distance education for foreign national prisoners - and to make the project more sustainable - the FORINER consortium has designed a model for the implementation of it. This model is applicable to the entire European region and contains several building blocks[8]:
- Sending and receiving partners: Tasks and responsibilities;
- EU cooperation and ownership on local, national and European level;
- Levels of communication.

3. Limitations of the study and directions for future research

The mixed-method evaluation is liable to some limitations. A first limitation relates to the small number of respondents of the quantitative part. Despite the great enthusiasm of different European countries to exchange education across borders, the development of the pilot projects was quite difficult. It required a lot of trial and error, and new local and cross-border networks needed to be build. Only 36 students started following a distance course of their home country during the piloting phase. All these students are included in the quantitative evaluation, but involving more students would allow us to use more advanced statistical analyses. In addition, also investigating the trials and errors in building up new local and cross border networks can be investigated. At this moment, it remains unclear why certain people/organisations succeed to set up a cooperation with another European country to provide distance education to foreign national prisoners, while others do not succeed or are impeded by certain organisational barriers.

Related to this, it would also be interesting to do a broader study about the willingness of adult educational providers to send education to national people who are detained abroad and support these students. Also, the willingness of prison managers, prison guards and professionals working for the educational departments inside prison to facilitate distance education for foreign national students might be an interesting path for future research.

Another limitation that needs to be considered is the fact that not all people involved in the pilot projects could be included in the in-depth qualitative evaluation. It might be that students, sending or receiving partners of other pilot projects have different experiences, meanings or feelings. Likewise, it would also be interesting to investigate whether or not pilot partners decide to keep the cooperation going and include other students after the FORINER project has ended. Also, when new partners get involved in providing distance education to foreign national students, it would be valuable to gain insight into their experiences.

Furthermore, some foreign national students also decided to stop their study or put the course on hold. Professionals working in the prison mentioned that this was due to being released from prison, transferred to another prison, psychological problems or getting bad news about their sentence. In the future, it would be recommended to ask the students themselves why they stop with their

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[8] The report including more information about the building blocks is available on www.foriner.com.

course or why they put the course on hold. In general, research about the reasons why prisoners consider ending formal education is rather scarce.

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Attachment 1: Questions used for the European Qualification framework

EFQ in Albania

Level 1	Arsim bazë
Level 2	Arsim i mesëm i ulët
Level 3	Arsim i mesëm i pjesshëm (përveç atij të ulët)
Level 4	Arsim i mesëm i plotë
Level 5	Arsim profesional pas arsimit të mesëm (Arsim i lartë profesional)
Level 6	Bachelor
Level 7	Master
Level 8	Doktoraturë

EFQ in Belgium

Level 1	Lager onderwijs
Level 2	1ste graad secundair onderwijs
Level 3	Gedeeltelijk secundair onderwijs (meer dan 1ste graad)
Level 4	Afgerond secundair onderwijs
Level 5	Beroepsgerichte opleiding na het secundair onderwijs (Hoger beroepsonderwijs)
Level 6	Bachelor
Level 7	Master
Level 8	Doctoraat

EQF in England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Level 1	First certificate/ GCSE grade D, E, F or G
Level 2	CSE grade 1/ GCSE grade A*, A, B or C/ Intermediate apprenticeship
Level 3	A level – grade A, B, C, D or E, access to higher education diploma, advanced apprenticeship
Level 4	Certificate of higher education, higher apprenticeship, higher national certificate
Level 5	Diploma of Higher education, foundation degree, higher national diploma
Level 6	Bachelor/graduate certificate
Level 7	Master
Level 8	Doctorate

EFQ in Greece

Level 1	Πρωτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση
Level 2	Γυμνάσιο
Level 3	Λύκειο
Level 4	Απολυτήριο λυκείου
Level 5	Επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση μετά το λύκειο (Επαγγελματική Ανώτερη Εκπαίδευση)

Level 6   Προπτυχιακό - Bachelor
Level 7   Μεταπτυχιακό - Master
Level 8   Διδακτορικό

EFQ in Lithuania
Level 1   Pradinis išsilavinimas
Level 2   9 klasių vidurinis išsilavinimas
Level 3   Nebaigtas vidurinis išsilavinimas (daugiau nei 9 klasės)
Level 4   Vidurinis išsilavinimas
Level 5   Profesinis išsilavinimas, įgytas po vidurinio išsilavinimo (aukštesnysis profesinis išsilavinimas)
Level 6   Bakalauras
Level 7   Magistras
Level 8   Mokslų daktaras

EFQ in Romania
Level 1   Învățământ primar
Level 2   Învățământ gimnazial
Level 3   Învățământ liceal parțial (peste învățământul gimnazial)
Level 4   Învățământ liceal absolvit
Level 5   Învățământ profesional postliceal (învățământ profesional superior)
Level 6   Facultate
Level 7   Masterat
Level 8   Doctorat

EFQ in the Netherlands
Level 1   Vmbo bb / MBO 1
Level 2   Vmbo kb, gl, tl / MBO 2
Level 3   MBO 3
Level 4   MBO 4 / Havo / Vavo-Havo
Level 5   Associate Degree
Level 6   Bachelor
Level 7   Master
Level 8   Doctoraat