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# MUSIC FOR FREEDOM

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## RESULT 1 COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR HIP HOP MUSIC PRODUCTION



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
Research action plan .....	3
<b>Observation and field research on existing systems and their applicability to penitentiary institutions</b> .....	4
1. Methodology.....	4
1.1 Definitions.....	4
1.2 Research method and tools.....	5
2. Results.....	6
2.1 Analysis of data.....	6
2.2 Music projects - an important educational tool.....	9
2.3 Rap Projects – a specific pedagogical tool.....	10
2.4 Music production in prison .....	11
3. Conclusion .....	12
<b>Study of applications of music production technologies and experiences with young individuals, more specifically people with fewer opportunities</b> .....	12
1. Premise .....	12
2. Results.....	13
2.1 Effective models of intervention .....	13
2.2 Impact.....	14
2.3 In Europe .....	14
2.4 Europe vs USA .....	15
<b>General framework of competences</b> .....	16
1. Introduction .....	16
2. Methodology.....	16
3. Competence framework’s organization .....	17
<b>Areas of employment for music production in prison</b> .....	18
1. Introduction and methodology .....	19
2. Overview of the areas of employment (skills and knowledge) required by both prison operators/educators (as audio editor trainers) and young prisoners (as audio editor technicians).....	20
<b>Study of the processes of validation and certification of competences required in Europe</b> .....	22
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	28

## Introduction

The first result of the M4F project is the definition of the framework of competences for the production of hip hop music in prison. It is to be considered as preparatory to the next outcome envisaged by the project which is related to the training required for the implementation of musical workshops in prison. This is an outcome also necessary to harmonize knowledge and practices on the world of Hip Hop and its musical practices among the different partners, providing a comprehensive overview of the educational potential adapted in contexts of discomfort and imprisonment.

The result was pursued thanks to the research work shared at a distance between the partners that characterized Action 1 and 2 of this project phase, to which two training moments in presence were added, i.e. in Lisbon at ETIC and in La Spezia at Arci. These two formative opportunities have allowed an effective sharing of knowledge and working practices focused on the dimensions of learning in the context of imprisonment or similar non-formal educational approaches for young people with fewer opportunities.

### Research action plan

The preliminary research, preparatory to the composition of a comprehensive framework of skills necessary to produce hip hop music in prison focused on two specific different areas:

- The study of the various musical activities in prison and the use of technologies for music production. Analysis of skills, activities and objectives. Comparison with other similar realities worldwide ([Action 1](#))
- The study of existing experiences where music production technologies are applied (workshops) with young individuals, specifically people with fewer opportunities ([Action 2](#))

In order to conduct the research, an action plan was drawn up for both of the aforementioned investigations, which included the following survey scheme:

Actors (WHO)	Activities (HOW)	Logistics (WHERE)	Results (WHAT)	Problems
Who does it Who receives it: what age (incoming skills) Who was involved (stakeholders, funding organizations)	What was done: • Activities • Objectives	Where it was done What timing What tools	Outgoing skills: • Production • Expectations Network	Relationship with prison Relations with prisoners/disadvantaged young people Technical and logistical issues

The scheme outlined in the table has been proposed both to partners directly involved in music productions in prison and to partners who were not, with the request to seek out subjects in their area who could provide their experiences in the field defined by the research itself.

The scheme could be used as a basis for a remote questionnaire, or for an in-person interview.

# Observation and field research on existing systems and their applicability to penitentiary institutions

## 1. Methodology

The aim (from general to more specific) was to identify examples of setting up music workshops in European (and Turkish) prisons; focusing NOT ONLY on rap music but on all kinds of music, in order to understand what are the conditions that generally favor the inclusion of music workshops in prison. With regard to the RAP, the goal is to gain an understanding of how music workshops or courses work in prisons in major music development countries of this genre, such as the US, Canada and the UK.

### 1.1 Definitions

In order to establish a unified research framework among our partners, we outlined a synthesis of the key concepts that will be used throughout the research (ref. All. 1 - Definitions A1).

The hip hop phenomenon includes what are commonly referred to as the "*four disciplines*" or "*four elements*":

- Deejaying: musical expression
- Break (or Break Dancing): body expression
- Rap or mcing (M.C.: master of ceremony): verbal expression
- Writing: graphic expression

In the case of our research, and more generally of the M4F project, we focused mainly on the verbal component, i.e. **Rap**. We believe that rap is the most widespread and easily identifiable element within hip hop culture.

Rap can be broadly defined as a "rhythmic flow and rhyme of words". Over the years many styles and evolutions of this verbal expression have emerged in the realm of hip hop culture. At present, one of the best-known styles is trap.

It is also important to provide a brief explanation of the concept of **Beat making**, which refers to the process of music production involved in the creation of rhythm. We define the beat as "the instrumental base that is played by the DJ during a concert, which serves as a pivotal backing for the rapper". This process relies heavily on music production technologies, which are part and parcel of our project.

Over the past two decades, music production technologies have undergone significant advances. Nowadays with costs becoming more affordable than in the past, music production can be achieved using only a computer with some specific hardware and software tools.

The accessibility and affordability of music production technologies have democratized the process, allowing artists to create professional-quality beats without requiring extensive studio equipment. With the right hardware and software, individuals can now manipulate and organize various sounds, samples, and musical elements to create unique beats that complement the rapper's vocal performance.

Leveraging these advances in music production technologies, the M4F project aims to provide opportunities for young inmates to explore and develop their beat making skills. This integration of

technology allows us to offer a practical and engaging way to self-expression, creativity and personal growth in the prison environment.

## **1.2 Research method and tools**

Based on the above key concepts and the mentioned research action plan, a questionnaire was developed and shared with all partners (All. 2 - Research Tool A1). This collaborative tool has proven useful for collecting data in a consistent way, facilitating the comparison and analysis of the information collected. The use of the latter allowed us to systematically collect data from various sources, such as participants, experts and stakeholders involved in the M4F project.

In accordance with the basic outline of the action plan, the questionnaire is structured into five main sections: Actors (WHO), Activities (HOW), Logistics (WHERE), Results (WHAT), and project implementation problems. Each of these sections is further integrated with additional subcategories. The research includes both Rap projects and music projects in general, specifically within a prison context.

Further definitions for research purposes:

- We define a "**Musical Project**" as any project involving activities related to music, ranging from singing to playing a musical instrument or engaging in rhythmic activities. This definition allows us to capture a broad range of musical initiatives in the prison environment.
- A "**Rap Project**", on the other hand, refers to a project specifically focused on the verbal expression of Hip Hop culture. This distinction allows us to focus specifically on projects that revolve around Rap as a key artistic element.

In addition, another important category worthy of explanation from the outset by presenting the results is the "type of activity":

- "**Recreational activity**" refers to any activity undertaken for the purpose of leisure, relaxation and enjoyment. This category includes activities that provide entertainment, foster creativity and promote social interaction between participants.
- "**Training activities**" include any activity carried out with the aim of imparting professional skills which can be certified at the end of the project or experience. These activities aim to improve the professional skills of the participants, providing them with tangible skills and qualifications for future job opportunities.

The "Music For Freedom" project places particular emphasis on the certification of music production skills, making the distinction between recreational and training activities particularly crucial.

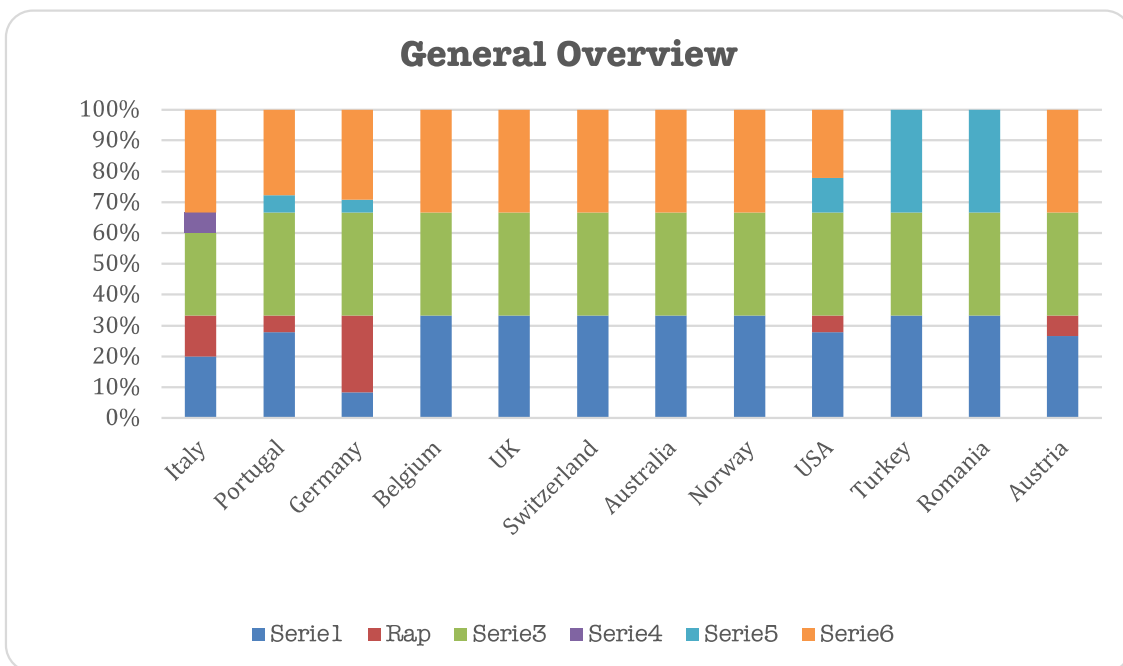
To illustrate this distinction, consider the example of the project "Denied Words" in Belgium. During this project, some inmates had the opportunity to form a musical band called One O Seven, a reference to the total number of years in prison to which the band members had been sentenced. The band successfully produced a CD as part of their musical efforts. Throughout this experience, detainees have undoubtedly developed not only their musical skills, such as a better ability to play their instruments, but also acquired valuable social skills. However, despite the positive impact and development of skills observed, we classify these activities as "recreational" because the primary objective is not focused on the acquisition or improvement of professional skills or qualifications.

## 2. Results

### 2.1 Analysis of data

It is essential to note that the data collected are not exhaustive and therefore do not provide a complete representation of the state of affairs. Due to the scope and limitations of this research, it is impossible to collect data covering all Music and Rap projects implemented in prisons in the selected countries. Therefore, it is important to point out that the data presented here should not be interpreted as statistically significant.

However, we collected a considerable amount of valuable data that allow us to draw some general conclusions and offer useful considerations for the project.



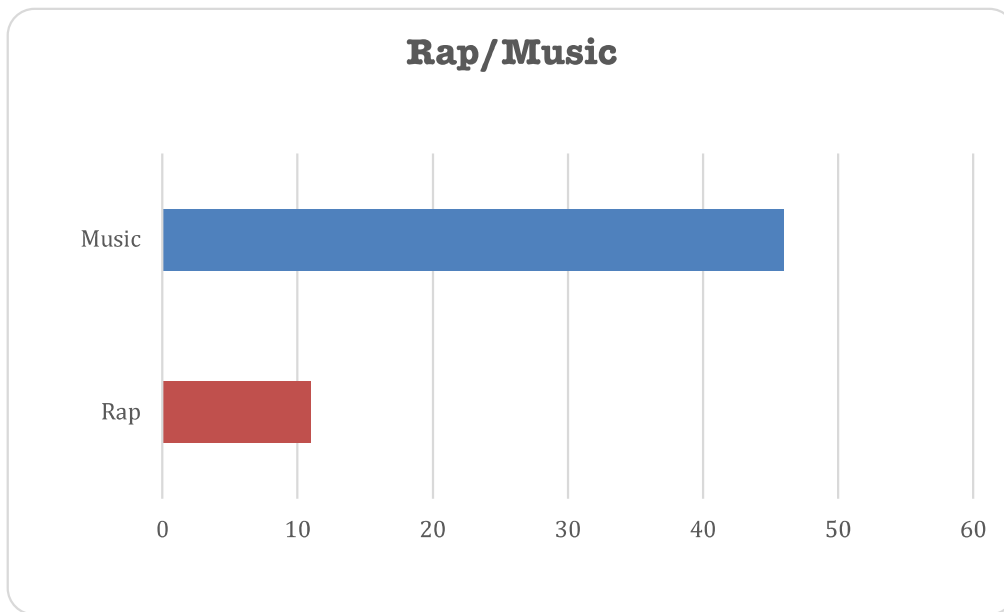
We collected data from a total of 12 countries and analyzed a complete set of 57 projects.

Initially, the geographic scope of the research comprised six of the seven countries in which the project partners operate: Italy, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Turkey and Romania.

As the research progressed, other countries were also incorporated into the study, including the UK, Switzerland, Australia, Norway and the US. The decision to include the United States was made at the beginning of the research process because of the historical significance of the country as the birthplace of hip hop. Moreover, the United States was specifically chosen because it represents the country that paved the way for the use of Hip Hop as a pedagogical tool rather than as an artistic expression.

The inclusion of other countries (UK, Switzerland, Australia and Norway) was enabled through the efforts of the German partner organization, "Aufbruch." While these countries are significantly different from one another in various respects, a comparison of the data collected allows us to draw some general conclusions.

By analyzing the collected data, it becomes evident that most of the sought-after projects fall into the "Music Projects" category rather than "Rap Projects."



This does not necessarily indicate that, in the prison context, rap projects represent a minority of the wider category of music projects, but rather that the research method we adopted has many limitations. It is also possible that information about rap projects in prison is less available on the web.

For example, in Italy, we found that individual artists (rappers) use rap as a pedagogical tool within prisons, but such initiatives often exist in the form of workshops without dedicated websites or extensive advertising in alignment with the European Commission framework.

These factors contribute to poor visibility and availability of information on rap projects in prisons, potentially distorting the representation of such initiatives within the data collected.

There were two exceptions:

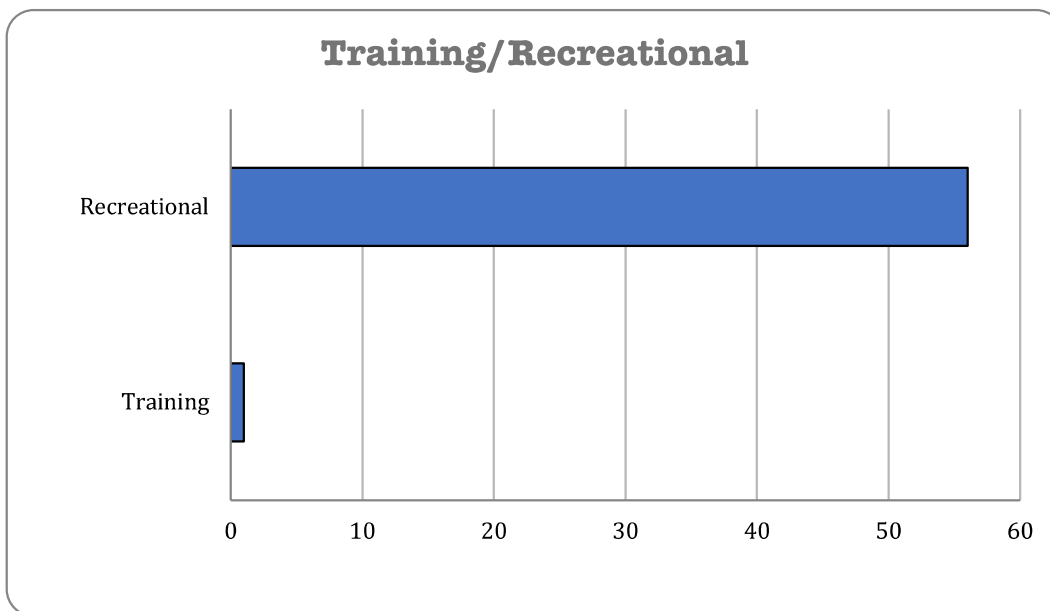
1. Compared to our research, in contrast to what has just been said, there are more Rap projects than Music projects in Germany. This does not imply that rap is more widely used than music in German prisons. However, it can indicate two scenarios:
  - I) Rap is more frequently used as a teaching tool in German prisons than in other research countries.
  - II) The German partner has access to a specific type of data or has a larger network focusing on Rap projects, which may explain the increased representation of Rap initiatives in the data set.
2. Turkey and Romania: There are no RAP projects in prisons in these countries compared to the data collected, but this absence is not entirely linked to the limit of research or the lack of access to information.



Both partners (Izmir Probation Directorate from Turkey and CPIP from Romania) explained that rap is not a widely heard musical genre among young people in their respective countries and therefore is not used as a pedagogical tool in prison.

This specific feature of Turkey and Romania is of significant importance for the project as it represents an interesting challenge that needs to be addressed. The absence of Rap projects in these countries highlights the need for flexibility of the Music for Freedom project in order to be adapted to the specific cultural and musical preferences of each country or may be an opportunity to pioneer when dealing with rap.

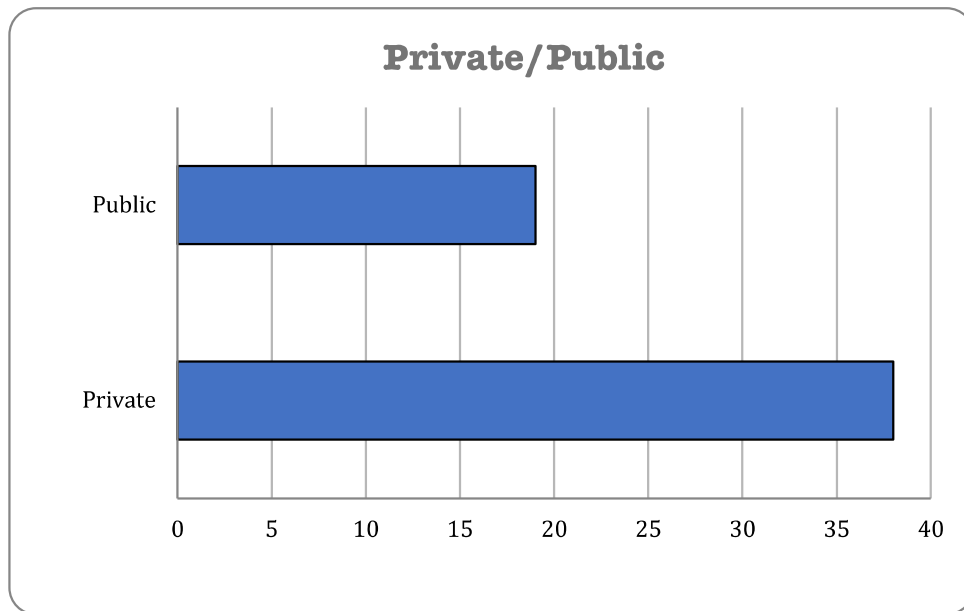
With regard to the analysis of the type of activities carried out, it appears that almost all the activities of the projects are classified in the recreational category. However, there is a project, the "*DigitalMusicLab*" conducted in the "Casa Circondariale" of Pistoia, which may include training activities.



The *DigitalMusicLab* project aims to enhance inmates' understanding of the language of sounds, get acquainted with perception, sensation, communication, and expression, and facilitate the acquisition of skills in specific software for sound and image synthesis and processing. It is also intended to cultivate expressive sensitivity through the practical experience of producing musical and multimedia structures. Given the explicit utilization of specialized systems for sound synthesis and image processing and the aim of developing skills for inmates, it is reasonable to consider that certain activities of this project can be classified as training.

It is noteworthy that the project started at the end of 2022 and is still in its initial phase. Further exploration of the project's intended methodology, as well as the existence and nature of competency validation processes, would be valuable to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

One additional consideration worth mentioning is the distinction between public and private actors involved in the analyzed projects.



By examining the graph, we can notice that out of the total 57 projects analyzed, 38 are implemented by private entities (non-profit associations and individual artists) while 19 are carried out by public institutions.

However, a closer analysis of the data by country reveals that the majority of the projects conducted by public institutions are located in Turkey and Romania, accounting for 17 out of the 19 public institution projects.

This is in contrast to other European and non-European countries included in the research.

In both Turkey and Romania, the responsibility for providing educational and recreational services for inmates lies with the prison institutions themselves. This unique characteristic raises intriguing questions and prompts further investigation into the procedures and possibilities for implementing music (or Rap) projects in prisons within each partner's respective country. Exploring the legal systems, common challenges, and the specific mechanisms involved in initiating such projects would contribute valuable insights to our understanding of the landscape of prison music initiatives across different countries.

## **2.2 Music projects - an important educational tool**

**Impact on prisoners.** If we focus exclusively on Music as a broad and comprehensive creative category that includes various forms or artistic expressions, including Rap, the research shows that all projects share similar impacts on prisoners both individually and in groups, regardless of the type of activity or country.

Individually, such impacts are mainly related to the emotional sphere. Musical projects were found to facilitate self-reflection, improve self-esteem, promote self-control and discipline and increase self-

confidence among participants. It seems that the commitment to musical projects allows individuals to establish a deeper connection with themselves, producing a therapeutic effect, even in the absence of direct involvement by music therapists.

Alongside the individual impacts just mentioned, from a collective point of view the musical projects proved the potential to strengthen relationships between prisoners, acting as a powerful social link between the project participants. These initiatives have the ability to promote a sense of solidarity within the group, stimulating a more supportive and cohesive environment.

The findings suggest that music projects, regardless of genre or specific musical activity, have transformative potential for inmates by positively influencing their emotional well-being and facilitating meaningful social connections.

### **2.3 Rap Projects – a specific pedagogical tool**

Deeping into the specific category of rap project in prison, our research reveals that rap possesses distinctive characteristics (common to all the projects we found) that make it a valuable pedagogical tool.

- **Writing:** writing represents an essential component of rap projects. It serves as the foundation for these initiatives, and the exercise of writing requires minimal resources, such as a pen and paper. This accessibility ensures that prisoners can continue practicing and honing their skills within the four walls of their cells.

In the rap projects a session is often designated for writing: participants engage in activities like text analysis, correction and receiving guidance from the educator. Another session is typically devoted to recording and performance.

- **Narrative dimension:** rap's inherent emphasis on writing allows inmates to delve into their own experiences and encourages them to reflect and elaborate upon their personal narratives. Guided by the educator, the narrative aspect becomes a powerful tool for inmates not only to gain awareness of their current situation but also to envision a future beyond the prison walls.
- **Performative part:** performance plays a central role in rap. Learning how to behave on stage, to hold a microphone and to articulate words are clearly key elements of rapping. The process of learning to perform fosters self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discovery and self-discipline. It enables inmates to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their artistic expression.

The importance of hip hop as a pedagogical tool dates back to the 1970s, when Afrika Bambaataa (Lance Taylor) used it to promote peace among young people involved in gangs (NY). This historical precedent points out that the use of hip hop for educational purposes is not a new concept.

In contemporary times, hip hop gained recognition within the scientific community as a non-formal educational tool. The emergence of a distinct academic field known as "Hip Hop-based education" bears witness to this fact. This field explores and investigates an educational approach rooted in the principles and elements of hip hop culture and rap. It encompasses different educational contexts that transcend prison boundaries.

The establishment of "Hip Hop-based education" as a recognized academic area - in the USA - reflects the growing recognition of the educational potential inherent in hip hop. This approach provides an innovative and engaging framework for teaching and learning and enables the exploration of various subjects, promoting critical thinking, creativity and cultural awareness.

## **2.4 Music production in prison**

As we examine the existing projects, it becomes evident that none of them have incorporated the installation or creation of a music studio within a prison.

This prompts the question: why?

It is important to try to understand the possible reasons behind the fact that, as far as we know, our project could be the first - at least within EU countries - with this specific objective. It is even more important if we take into account one of the previous results: none of the projects we examined combines training activities with a music study.

In order to understand the potential reasons for this observation, it is essential to briefly clarify what a musical study entails.

As our technical partner ETIC explained **there are various options and configurations for creating a music studio**, ranging from hardware-based to software-based configurations, with countless possibilities to combine the two.

ETIC has outlined a basic workstation setup necessary for music production, including:

- A computer with a keyboard, mouse and screen;
- Audio card;
- MIDI keyboard;
- Software for producing music.

It is important to note that each workstation would need to be replicated for both the student and the teacher.

The logistical and technical challenges of installing such equipment in a closed and highly regulated environment, such as a prison, may provide the first answer to this question posed.

Prisons have their own rules and regulations as for the use of materials for educational purposes and therefore it can be difficult to obtain permission to introduce and use equipment like MIDI keyboards and sound cards. Some prison regulations may limit computer usage to specific purposes or prohibit computer usage altogether. These are some of the factors that can contribute to the complexity and potential limitations in installing music production equipment within a prison setting.

Furthermore, the answer to this question may also have **pedagogical implications**. Being a prison youth worker skilled in facilitating rap vocal laboratories or projects does not automatically qualify one to possess the necessary skills and competences for music production or teaching the technical aspects of music production to inmates. The specialized knowledge and expertise required for music production may not always align with the skill set of prison staff or educators involved in the existing projects analyzed.

Therefore, a combination of logistical/technical challenges and potential gaps in pedagogical expertise could explain why the installation and creation of music studios within prisons have been less explored in previous projects. The M4F project, with its specific goal of establishing a music production studio, aims to address these challenges and contribute to the development of innovative approaches in the use of music production technologies and rap altogether as a pedagogical tool within prison environments.

### **3. Conclusion**

The research has provided valuable insights into the use of music in prisons. The findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Music is widely used as a tool within prison settings. Projects encompass a broad range of musical activities, including instrument playing, choral singing, percussion and rhythm. These diverse approaches have demonstrated positive impacts at both the individual and group levels among inmates.
2. Within the cluster of projects analyzed, rap appears to be less prevalent in prisons compared to music in general. However, it is increasingly recognized as a valuable pedagogical tool due to its unique characteristics. The specific qualities of rap, such as its emphasis on writing and narrative expression, make it well-suited for fostering personal reflection, self-esteem and self-discipline among inmates.
3. The majority of the analyzed projects primarily serve recreational purposes. They provide opportunities for inmates to engage in creative and expressive activities, thus contributing to emotional well-being, self-awareness and social bonding.

These research findings have highlighted crucial points of reflection for the M4F project.

It is essential to further explore and address the logistical and educational obstacles related to the establishment of a music production studio in prisons.

Moreover, it is crucial for the consortium to delve deeper into the specific regulations and guidelines governing the prisons where they will be working, as they pose a major risk for the future implementation of the studio. Understanding the nuances and intricacies of each prison's regulations is critical and will facilitate the implementation of the project and ensure compliance with institutional policies and procedures.

## **Study of applications of music production technologies and experiences with young individuals, more specifically people with fewer opportunities**

### **1. Premise**

The focus of this activity is on RAP music but more than that is to identify models of intervention aimed at the inclusion of disadvantaged young people with fewer opportunities or learning difficulties NOT exclusively within prisons but in general.

Hip hop culture - including rap music - has a long history in providing a platform for marginalized voices to be listened to and for individuals to express themselves creatively. By providing training and opportunities in hip-hop, organizations can help empower disadvantaged youth, providing them with positive outlets for expression and promoting social and cultural inclusion.

It can also provide valuable opportunities for personal and artistic development, as well as social and emotional learning. Through participation in workshops and hip hop programs, young people can develop valuable skills such as teamwork, communication, self-expression and self-confidence.

## Methodology

The work of ETIC - School of Innovation and Creation Technologies - leader of this activity, has always been engaged in the field of music production as a learning subject, specializing in teaching to the younger generations. For the purpose of this research, it has combined the information gathered through to the work of the partners (who used questionnaires based on the one indicated in the introduction) with the knowledge assimilated through deep and long experience and firsthand knowledge of the subject.

## **2. Results**

### **2.1 Effective models of intervention**

From the research carried out among partners and the observation of projects discovered also in England, Canada and the United States, we can consider that there are many models of intervention for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people through hip hop. The specific approach may depend on the context and needs of the community being served, as for instance:

- 1. Community-based hip hop programs:** community-based hip hop programs - like those run by non-profit organizations or community centers - can provide a safe and supportive space for young people to engage with hip hop culture. These programs may include workshops and training in hip hop dance, music and art, as well as mentoring and leadership development opportunities.
- 2. School-based programs:** School-based hip hop programs can provide opportunities for young people to engage with hip hop culture within a structured educational setting. These programs may include hip hop dance classes, rap music workshops or curriculum-based hip hop history courses.
- 3. Youth-led programs:** Youth-led hip hop programs, where young people themselves are involved in planning and leading the program, can be particularly effective in engaging and empowering marginalized youth. These programs may include opportunities for youth to perform and showcase their talents, as well as leadership and community organizing training.
- 4. Therapeutic programs:** Hip hop can also be used as a therapeutic tool for addressing issues such as trauma, mental health, and substance abuse. These programs may include workshops and interventions that use hip hop as a way to explore and express emotions, build resilience and promote healing.
- 5. Cross-cultural exchange programs:** Cross-cultural exchange programs enable young people from different backgrounds and communities to come together to share their experiences and learn from

each other. These experiences represent a powerful way to promote social inclusion and bridge divides.

## **2.2 Impact**

The data collected through our research and experiences show that hip hop activities can be particularly important for young people with disadvantages for several reasons:

1. **They provide a creative outlet:** hip hop culture, which includes music, dance, graffiti and words, offers young people a way to express themselves creatively and develop their artistic skills.
2. **They foster confidence and self-esteem:** Hip hop training can provide young people with a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work, which can help build their confidence and self-esteem.
3. **They promote teamwork and collaboration:** Hip hop training often involves working in groups that can foster teamwork and collaborative skills.
4. **They offer positive alternatives to negative influences:** young people with disadvantages may face negative influences, such as drugs or crime, in their communities. Hip hop training represents a positive option and can help young people stay focused on their goals.
5. **They can lead to career opportunities:** hip hop culture has become a global phenomenon and there are many opportunities for young people to pursue careers in music, dance and other creative industries.
6. **Hip hop culture has a history of social and political activism** and can inspire young people to talk about issues affecting their communities. Hip hop training can help young people find their voice and use their creativity to bring positive change into their lives and communities.

## **2.3 In Europe**

According to the data examined In Europe, there are many organizations and initiatives that aim to provide access to music production technologies and opportunities to disadvantaged young people. These may include those from low-income backgrounds, marginalized communities, with disabilities or other challenges.

Despite these potential differences, there are also many commonalities between the training programs in these countries; for instance, they may include a focus on personal and artistic development, social and emotional learning, community building and provide a positive outlet for young people to express themselves creatively.

While hip hop culture is a global phenomenon, there may be differences in the way it is practiced and taught in different countries and regions.

Some potential differences are listed as follows:

1. **Style and approach:** There can be differences in the specific styles of hip hop dance, music and art that are emphasized in different countries. For example, in Portugal there may be a greater focus on kizomba and other Afro-Lusophone dance styles, while in Italy there may be more emphasis on street art and design. In Germany a greater emphasis may be on hip hop as a form of social and political activism, while in Belgium a focus on cross-cultural exchange and collaboration might be prominent.

2. **Level of institutional support:** The level of institutional support for training can vary between different countries. In some countries, such as Germany, there may be significant government funding and support for such programs and initiatives, while in others there may be fewer resources available.
3. **Cultural and linguistic barriers:** In countries with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, there may be additional challenges in ensuring that hip hop training is accessible and inclusive to all young people, regardless of their background or language skills.
4. **Social and political context:** Each country's social and political context can also have an impact on training programs. For instance, in Belgium there are significant tensions between different cultural and linguistic groups and therefore hip-hop training may be seen as a way to promote cross-cultural understanding and bridge divides.

## **2.4 Europe vs USA**

There are some differences in hip hop training for young people with disadvantages in Europe and the USA, although there are also many similarities.

One key difference is that hip hop culture has developed in different ways in Europe and the USA since styles of music, dance, and fashion vary from region to region. In the USA for example, hip hop is often associated with rap music and breakdancing, while in Europe there are also strong traditions of graffiti art and electronic music.

Another difference lies in the fact that the challenges faced by young people with disadvantages may be different in each region. In the USA there are higher levels of poverty and social inequality in many urban areas, and this can make it more difficult for young people to access training and resources. In Europe, there may be different challenges related to cultural integration and language barriers for young people from immigrant or refugee backgrounds.

Despite these differences between hip hop training for young people with disadvantages, there are also many similarities in its goals and objectives. These may include providing a creative outlet, building confidence and self-esteem, promoting teamwork and collaboration and offering a positive alternative to negative influences.

In both Europe and the USA, there are many organizations and initiatives that aim to provide training and opportunities to young people with disadvantages. It is important to point out that hip hop training for youth with disadvantages in Europe and the United States is being developed with different approaches to address the specific challenges faced by each region.



# General framework of competences

## 1. Introduction

At the heart of the project 'Music for Freedom' (M4F) is the creation of a laboratory of music production within the specific environment of a prison structure.

A qualified youth worker is called upon to facilitate the smooth operation of this study and must possess skills in two specific areas:

1. The ability to work effectively in the prison environment
2. Competence in the use of music production technologies

Therefore, the competency framework presented below includes a set of skills specifically relevant to working in a prison and using music production technologies.

As a result of the research work with the contribution of all the partners in both fields, we are now able to achieve a first definition of the skills framework sought.

This framework will allow us to make informed decisions in selecting the most relevant skills aligned with the project objectives while ensuring (when it comes to music production skills) that it can be effectively transmitted and implemented within the prison environment to prisoners.

This first framework of competences is the basis for defining the areas of employment envisaged in the next action for two different subjects: the prison educator and the young inmate. They will be the protagonists of the training planned for the next project result.

## 2. Methodology

The first step in the development of this framework involved:

- Research carried out during the first 6 months of the project.
- A bibliographical review of the skills and needs of youth workers, specifically:
  - The European platform ESCO, a European multilingual classification system for skills, qualifications and professions<sup>1</sup>;
  - Guide and material of the International Organization for Juvenile Justice Research<sup>2</sup>;
  - A bibliographical review of good practices concerning prison youth workers available on Salto Youth;
  - Music school courses.

Once the first framework was in place, we shared it with:

- Youth workers working in prison we are in contact with;
- ETIC, our technical partner for music production.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en>

<sup>2</sup> [oijj.org](http://oijj.org)

### 3. Competence framework's organization

The Competence Framework includes two separate competence areas called “domains”. Under each domain, the competences are listed, and each competence has his specific description.

#### 1. Domain A: Youth Workers – working in prisons

Due to the specificity of the prison context and independently from the type of laboratory, course or project, there are some transversal competences that a youth worker may have when working in prison.

#### 2. Domain B: Youth Workers and Young Inmates - Music production technologies

The domain B is related to the Music production technologies' competences and it refers to both Youth Workers and Young Inmates. As a matter of fact, these competences can be seen as:

- I. The competences that a Youth Workers should have when working in the music field;
- II. The competences that a Young Inmate should learn during the course.

#### Domain A: Youth Workers – working in prisons

COMPETENCE	DESCRIPTION
Understanding of the general Criminal Justice System	Youth Workers should have a comprehensive understanding of the criminal justice system, including legal processes, policies and procedures relevant to working with young offenders
Crisis intervention	Youth Workers should be prepared to handle crisis situations that may arise within the prison environment
Cultural and multicultural competence	Youth workers should be culturally sensitive and aware, respecting and valuing the diversity of the young offenders they work with. They should have experiences to ensure inclusive and equitable practices
Assessment and Case Management	Youth workers should be skilled in assessing and identifying the specific young offenders' strengths, needs and skills for supporting some specific actions for their rehabilitation and reintegration
Mentoring and Guidance	Youth workers should possess the ability to guide and support the youth in the prison context; building trusting relationships and providing membership can impact positively on their rehabilitation
Ethical and Professional Conduct	Ethical standards and professional codes of conduct (i.e. confidentiality) are crucial in the best interest for young offenders

## Domain B Youth Workers and Young Inmates – Music production technologies

COMPETENCE	DESCRIPTION
Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs)	Proficiency in using DAW software such as Ableton Live, Logic Pro, Pro Tools, FL Studio, or Reason to create, edit and arrange music
MIDI Programming	Skill in programming MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) to create and manipulate virtual instruments, trigger samples and automate parameters
BeatMaking	Ability to create drum patterns and rhythmic elements using drum machines, sampling (creating loops, chopping samples) or programming within a DAW
Audio Editing	Ability in editing and manipulating audio files, including timing adjustments, pitch correction and audio restoration
Mixing	Knowledge of audio signal processing, including adjusting levels, equalization, panning, compression, reverb, delay and other effects to achieve a balanced mix
Mastering	Understanding of mastering techniques to finalize the mix, including stereo enhancement, dynamic processing, equalization and preparing music for distribution
Music Theory and Composition	Understanding of music theory principles, chord progressions, scales and musical structures
Recording Techniques	Knowledge of audio levels, microphone selection and placement, signal routing and recording practices
Music Industry Trends	Awareness of current trends, genres, and styles within the music industry to stay relevant and produce commercially viable music
MC'ing	Proficiency in the art of MC'ing and in-depth knowledge of Hip Hop culture. Ability to develop students' lyrical content, rhyming flow and delivery

# Areas of employment for music production in prison

## 1. Introduction and methodology

The definition of the areas of employment and consequent analysis of the skills required by prison operators/educators and prisoners for music production in prison is based entirely on the framework of skills defined in the previous activity. The following sheets will indicate the skills and abilities provided for the two categories mentioned for training purposes. On the one hand, the form related to the educators will be defined, listing all the skills and abilities that they must have not only as technicians and connoisseurs of the prison environment, but also as trainers. On the other hand, the form of the prisoner will be outlined presenting the outgoing skills that the participant of the course must possess at the end of the training.

Two considerations should be taken into account:

- 1) The areas of employment were selected to focus on the specific skills and knowledge to be developed for the implementation of the workshop and of the necessary training by educators and young prisoners. In this regard we can also consider the value of some prerequisites that will be useful for the selection of candidates to be included at this stage of the project.
- 2) People wishing to participate in the project do not necessarily have to follow the training for all the training modules which will be developed on the basis of the areas of employment described here, for two reasons. First is that they may already be trained on certain skills; second is that they can be interested only in some specific areas of project implementation. That is to say that each laboratory/workshop can develop in different specific fields, allowing people to develop specific and contextualized skills and abilities.

## 2. Overview of the areas of employment (skills and knowledge) required by both prison operators/educators (as audio editor trainers) and young prisoners (as audio editor technicians)

Young operator/educator in prison			
Areas of employment for music production	Training modules	Knowledge	Skills
INSTRUMENTS AND TECHNIQUES OF MUSIC PRODUCTION	Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs)	Software DAWs	Proficiency in using DAW software such as Ableton Live, Logic Pro, Pro Tools, FL Studio or Reason to create, edit and organize music
	MIDI Programming	MIDI Programming	Ability in MIDI programming (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) to create and manipulate virtual instruments, trigger samples and automate parameter
	Beatmaking	Beatmaking	Ability to create drum patterns and rhythm elements using drum machines, sampling (creating loops, cutting samples) or programming within a DAW
	Audio Editing	Techniques of audio processing	Ability to edit and manipulate audio files, including timing adjustments, pitch correction and audio recovery
	Mixing	Knowledge of audio signal processing, including adjustment, equalization, panning, compression, reverb, delay and other effects to achieve a balanced mix	Ability to achieve a balanced mix
INSTRUMENTS AND TECHNIQUES OF MUSIC PRODUCTION	Mastering	Understand mastering techniques to finalize the mix, including stereo enhancement, dynamic processing, equalization and music preparation for distribution	Proficiency in mastering techniques to finalize the mix
	Recording Techniques	Knowledge of audio levels, microphone selection and placement, signal routing and recording practices	Ability to master recording practices
COMPOSITION	Music Theory and Composition	Understanding the principles of music theory, progressions of chords, scales and musical structures	
	MC'ing	Knowledge of the art of MC'ing and in-depth knowledge of Hip Hop culture	Ability to develop students' lyrical content, rhyme flow and delivery
INDUSTRY	Trends in the music industry	Awareness of current trends, genres and styles within the music industry to remain relevant and produce commercially viable music	Ability to focus on music industry trends, genres and styles

Areas of employment for music production	Training modules	Knowledge	Skills
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND PENITENTIARY REGULATION	The general criminal justice system	Comprehensive understanding of the criminal justice system, including legal processes, policies and procedures	Ability to manage and deal with the system in particular procedures for working with young prisoners
	Prison regulations	Knowledge of the specific rules of the penitentiary in which you work	Ability to move between the rules of the penitentiary
METHODS OF TRAINING EVALUATION STRATEGY AND TOOLS (IN PRISON)	Development pedagogy	Knowledge of the principles of youth development. This includes an understanding of the psychology of young people and the unique needs and challenges they face in the prison system	Ability to apply the principles of youth development in the relationship with prisoners, understanding of youth psychology
	Techniques and tools for evaluation and enhancement	Knowledge of techniques and tools to evaluate and identify the specific skills and knowledge that young prisoners acquire on music production	Skills assessment and identification, ability to build monitoring and evaluation tools
METHODS OF TRAINING EVALUATION STRATEGY AND TOOLS (IN PRISON)	Mentoring and guidance	Knowledge of models, techniques and tools for mentoring and guidance of young prisoners in the prison context in the prison system	Ability to assess the efforts, needs and skills to support specific actions for the rehabilitation and reintegration of young prisoners  Ability to guide and support young people in prison; building trust relationships and providing membership can have a positive impact on their rehabilitation
	Ethical and professional conduct	Understanding of ethical standards and professional codes of conduct (i.e., confidentiality)	Ability to apply the code of ethical conduct
MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIP	Effective communication	Theory and techniques for effective communication to build positive relationships with young offenders and between them and educators	Ability to communicate more effectively
	Conflict Resolution	Knowledge of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation techniques	Conflict management skills, negotiation to help educators and young inmates maintaining a safe and constructive environment
	Crisis Intervention	Knowledge for the management of crisis situations that can occur in the prison environment	Problem solving skills
MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIP	Enhancement of multicultural competence	Cultural awareness and sensitivity. The enhancement of multicultural competence applies to young prisoners both as a tool for managing the relationship and as a cultural deepening	Ability to respect and value the diversity –including cultural- of young offenders

# Study of the processes of validation and certification of competences required in Europe

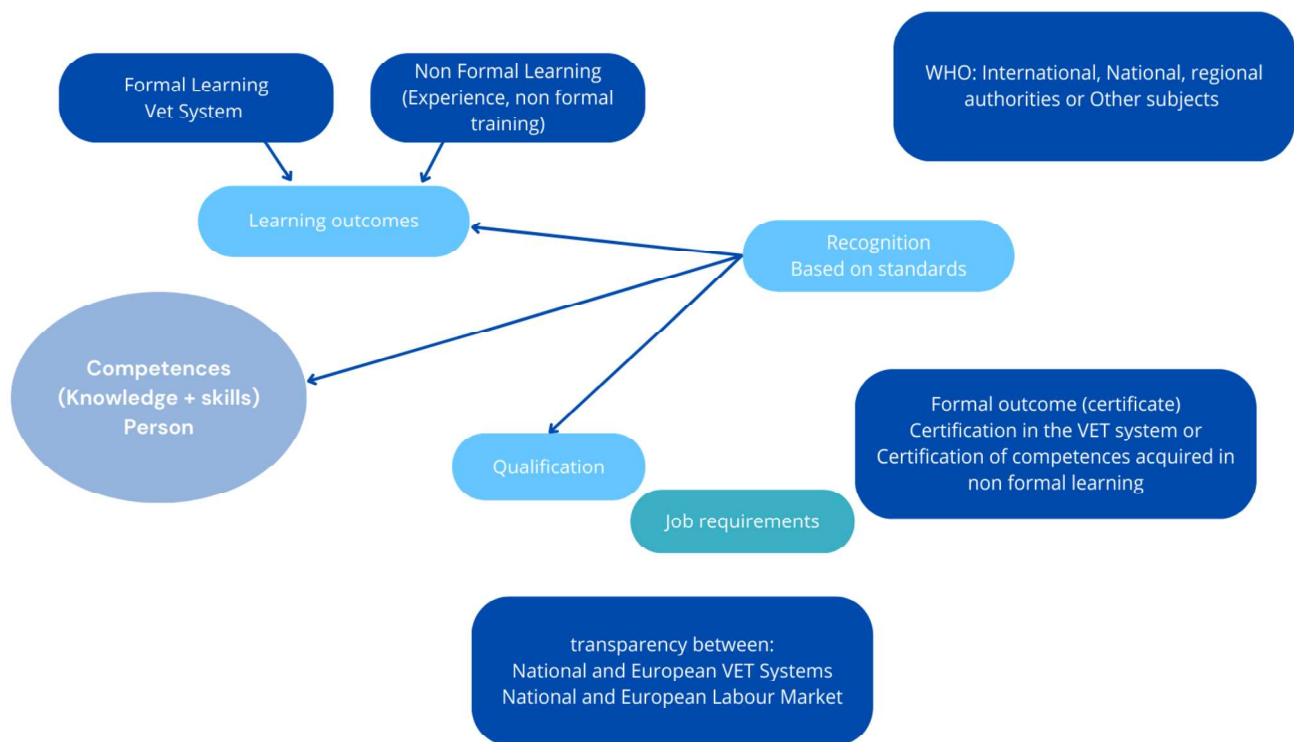
The aim of this study is to share with partners the criteria to select the best method to have an M4F competency framework - hence a re-reading of the forms identified in the previous chapter - which can be recognised in most countries for professional purposes.

Formal recognition, which is well interpreted for example by ETIC - the Portuguese partner - refers to a long path that is not easy to provide to the project target audience and in the prison context. The recognition and certification of non-formal learning is probably the most suitable way to recognize the acquired competences at different levels.

Since 2012<sup>3</sup> the European Union recognizes and promotes non-formal learning by enhancing the development of the national system for the recognition and certification which are rather different from country to country.

Generally speaking, the process and relationship between the formal and non-formal path can be schematized as in the following map:

## MAP OF THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION, VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCES IN EUROPE



<sup>3</sup> For a quick summary of the background: White Paper 1995 on teaching and learning and the Lisbon Treaty 2000

- Mutual trust between education and training systems
- Recognition mechanism in favor of the person
- Documents of recognition of competence issued by an authority following an assessment of the competence and knowledge of the person requesting them

Since 2002

- Transparency tools: recognition documents (such as diploma supplement, European CV, Europass)
- Tests for mutual recognition of qualifications (such as ECVET)
- Tools on the quality of training

2008 → 2017 European Qualifications Framework EQF- 8 descriptor levels: Knowledge, skills and responsibility/autonomy. National qualifications framework - reference reports.

2012 - COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning 2012/C 398/01.

Some further questions accompany the issue about the construction of the M4F competency framework:

1. Can the selected competences be matched with an already existing standard? In any country?
2. Which is the kind of recognition that matters? Does it come from the labor market, the final user (for example, web music consumers), the educational/IVC national systems?
3. What kind of impact can the prison environment have?

To face this general issue, the partners searched for the opportunities in each partner country, answering some guiding questions that are summarized here below.

**As for the National public official title for professional profiles linked to music production (formal training), every country has some formal courses at different educational levels.**

In **Portugal**, there is no specific national public official title exclusively for professional profiles linked to music production. However, there are various educational and training programs related to music and music production available in Portugal.

Individuals interested in pursuing a career in music production often study music-related courses at universities, conservatories, or specialized music schools. These courses may include music production, sound engineering, music technology and other related fields. Many professionals in the music production industry hold degrees or certifications in music, audio engineering or similar disciplines. But in this field, talent, networking and gaining practical experience working on music projects are the most valuable things to establish a career in the industry.

In **Belgium**, The Flemish Department of Education has the following programs on level 4 of the EQF<sup>4</sup>. Long-term courses of study - 4 degrees - Multiple years of study per grade.

These courses of study lead to one of the professional qualifications in the 4th stage:

- Carillonneur
- Amateur creating musician
- Amateur conductor
- Amateur DJ
- Amateur performing musician

In **Turkey**, people who graduate from music departments of universities receive the title of "musician". There is no official title for the graduates of the music technologies department. They work in many areas related to music such as studio or stage tonemaster, sound operator, sound production services, music infrastructure arrangement.

In order to study music and in music-related departments of universities it is necessary to apply to the faculty of fine arts. Students are admitted to the faculty of fine arts through the aptitude test and once they pass the test, they are eligible to study in these departments. After finishing school, they graduate with a bachelor's degree.

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<sup>4</sup><https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/naar-een-academie/welke-opleidingen-kan-je-volgen-in-het-deeltijds-kunstonderwijs/muziek>



In **Italy**, there are a number of options both at higher education level (academic degree, issued by specific academy or universities) and at the vocational training level (regional vocational system), with a varied number of professional competences and profile description.

In the regional registers of the professional profiles there are some referring to sound engineering such as: Fonico-Tecnico del suono (Liguria, Basilicata, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Lombardia Piemonte, Sardegna), Tecnico delle produzioni sonore dal vivo, registrazioni musicali, composizione e mixaggio di musiche ed effetti sonori utilizzati nei prodotti multimediali (Toscana), Tecnico di produzione musicale (Piemonte, Sicilia). The process towards a common standard is managed by the “atlante delle qualificazioni regionali”<sup>5</sup>.

In **Romania**, nationally recognized occupations are listed in an official register called the "Classification of Occupations in Romania". The occupations listed in this register related to music production are: lyric artist, soft/pop music composer or songwriter (this brings together several subfields, such as pop, dance, soul, rock, folk, hip hop, rap, funk, punk, etc.), electronic music composer (who builds and/or uses musical instruments that produce virtual sounds - synthesizer, sampler) and music producer (who creatively combines and edits several musical sections or layers to achieve the desired sound). For all these professions there are formal training courses that take place at the National University of Music in Bucharest which offers several courses including: music and multimedia creation, specific musical arrangements, mixing and mastering in music production, etc.

**With regard to the procedures and titles delivered after a recognition process of non-formal learning, countries are more differentiated.**

**Portugal** has a process for recognizing non-formal learning and providing official recognition through various means.

The process for the recognition of non-formal learning in Portugal typically involves assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal or informal learning experiences. This may include workshops, training courses, work experience, volunteering and other activities outside formal education.

In Portugal, the recognition process for non-formal learning is often carried out by specific entities, such as the National Qualifications Authority and Recognition-Validation Centers.

To initiate the recognition process, individuals usually need to gather documentation related to their non-formal learning experiences. This may include certificates of attendance, work records, training materials or any other evidence of the skills and competences acquired.

The assessment process varies depending on the type of competences being evaluated. It may involve interviews, practical tests and other forms of evaluation to determine the level of knowledge and skills acquired.

In **Belgium**, the partner states that there are no procedures and titles in non-formal learning. The NGO Graffiti vzw offers short courses<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://atlantelavoro.inapp.org/dettaglio\\_ada\\_pre.php?id\\_ada=73&id\\_repertorio=&codice\\_repertorio=SR](https://atlantelavoro.inapp.org/dettaglio_ada_pre.php?id_ada=73&id_repertorio=&codice_repertorio=SR)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.graffitivzw.be/nl/berichten/hiphop-voor-beginners>

In **Italy**, the Validation and Certification of competences acquired with informal, non-formal and formal learning was stated in 2013 (D. LGS 13/13); however, the system is developed at different stages in the Italian regions (since the vocational training is in charge of Regional governments). In Liguria the system is active and refers to the Regional register<sup>7</sup>, where the “Tecnico del suono” (Sound technician) profile is listed. The regional system can certify the whole profile or single competences to people who have a significant experience (non-formal learning).

As in Portugal, to initiate the recognition process people need to gather documentation related to their non-formal learning experiences and submit the request to designated organizations. The documentation may include certificates of attendance, work records, training materials or any other evidence - also self-produced - of the skills and knowledge acquired.

In **Romania** the procedures for recognition of non-formal learning are complex and can only be carried out by state institutions or with their approval. The validation process of professional competences acquired in non-formal or informal learning contexts is regulated by law and the main responsible organization for this process is the National Qualifications Authority (NQA). Recognition and validation of vocational competencies acquired in non-formal and informal contexts are performed by the assessment centers authorized by the NQA in accordance with the Procedure of the assessment and certification of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts (Procedure), approved by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labor.

Individuals who would like to be assessed with the view of recognizing non-formally and informally acquired vocational competencies need apply to an assessment center authorized for that occupation/qualification.

The NQA is responsible for authorizing assessment centers. Unfortunately, validation is an early stage of the process and is rather difficult for the following reasons:

- It is a service that involves paying fees;
- Lack of popularity and knowledge of these types of facilities among people;
- Lack of confidence in this type of service.

An individual assessor is also involved in this process. The individual assessor must be authorized by NQA in accordance with the Occupational Standard of Evaluator of professional competences. The performance of individual assessors is evaluated and monitored by internal observers also certified by NQA. The legislation sets out clear competence requirements for the internal observers. The actual assessment procedure is followed by an internal verification process and by the possibility for the applicant to appeal against the decision.

In **Germany**, the introduction of the validation of non-formal and informal learning followed the disposition of the European Union in 2012, with a study group established at a federal level. The competences distributed between federal and lander level in this respect do not reach an overarching system. The project ValiKom, launched in 2015 by the BMBF with the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce<sup>8</sup> (*Deutscher Industrie- und Handelstag* – DIHK) and the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (*Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks* – ZDH) developed and tested a standardized procedure for recording, assessing and certifying vocational competences for selected occupations with eight chambers from industry, commerce and skilled crafts. The procedure was based on the *Qualifikationsanalyse* (qualification analysis), an instrument developed to improve the assessment and

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<sup>7</sup> <http://professioniweb.regione.liguria.it/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.dihk.de/de>

recognition of professional and vocational education and training qualifications of foreign workers. Now the pilot project is transferred with the “Vali-Kom-Transfer”. This project does not seem to cover M4F profiles, although the *Qualifikationsanalyse* (qualification analysis) tool can be applied. Another interesting option for the artistic profiles is the *Kompetenznachweis Kultur* (Cultural Competency Record): a skills certificate. It is awarded to people who actively participate in cultural learning and arts education programs<sup>9</sup>.

**Partners' opinions on the possibility of recognizing the delivered thanks to the project activities are different.**

In **Portugal**, the recognition of acquired competences within an Erasmus+ training might be difficult as it requires training to be designed and aligned with the EQF levels, National Qualifications Framework (NQF), quality assurance and validation and recognition tools. The Portuguese partner assumed, since the beginning, that this is not possible in a short/medium term.

On the other hand, Asturia (**Belgium**) wants to use formal adult education modules to recognize the writing and technical skills of students.

For CPIP (**Romania**) it is impossible to recognize the competences that will be acquired by the participants in the project since this process can only be carried out by centers specifically authorized by the National Qualifications Authority. CPIP can only provide an informal recognition, but not a validation or certification.

İzmir Denetimli Serbestlik Müdürlüğü (**Turkey**), believes that certification or formal education is not very important in occupational groups based on performance and skills. Everyone is interested in one's performance, talent and quality of work. Formal training is not always expected to be proficient at what you do, especially when it comes to music. The most important thing to be accomplished within the scope of the project is to provide technical opportunities for disadvantaged and underprivileged youth and to give them the opportunity to develop themselves.

The musical abilities of young people can range in different fields. Therefore, this situation can be taken into account in the training program to be created. For example lyrics, technical parts and singing. Young people can be directed to the training related to the field in which they have greater skill.

For the recognition **the Badge option** was considered. All the partners agree about the opportunity to deliver badges to recognize the project training, workshops and experiences.

CPIP specifies, however, that it needs to be established from the beginning what will be the standard for the achievement of the badge, what are the tasks the participants have to accomplish, who approves the giving of the badge and what is the methodology for awarding it.

ETIC well summarizes the advantages: delivering badges to recognize the activities of the project can be a valuable and effective way to acknowledge and validate the achievements and competences of individuals involved.

Advantages of delivering badges in the context of recognizing project activities are:

- Visual Recognition: Badges are visually appealing and can be easily shared and displayed online, on social media, or on digital platforms.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://kompetenznachweiskultur.de/ueber-den-knk/>

- Motivation and Engagement: Badges can serve as motivational tools, encouraging participants to actively engage in the project and strive to achieve specific goals.
- Promotion of Learning: The pursuit of badges can promote a culture of continuous learning, as participants are encouraged to acquire new skills and knowledge.

## Conclusion

Based on the comparison between partners, the sharing of a common glossary and the existing background in Europe, we can admit that an official validation and certification of the skills identified in the framework for M4F will not be possible for the entire duration of the project. However, it is certainly a goal to aspire to.

Certainly, each partner country will have to decline its training paths on the basis of what can be useful at a personal and professional level to young prisoners participating in music workshops because in each country such processes develop differently.

The most objectively significant problem seems to be the one highlighted by the Portuguese partner ETIC - who is familiar with formal training - regarding the time available to effectively achieve the formal competences that prisoners would like to acquire. This can be stated for both formal paths and non-formal learning which needs time to gain sufficient experience.

A valid alternative, feasible in the project time, is the digital badge. Based on the competence description and the learning method developed in the project, one or more badges can be prepared and issued. This option is now under consideration by the partners.

On the other hand, the market could be another way to overcome the obstacles posed by the formal recognition of competences in this field. In particular, we could make use of existing web-based enhancement systems that have determined the success of young artists for many years now in a simple and objective way. This prompts us to address a general problem that also affects other aspects of prison activities, namely Internet access, which is mostly prohibited in European prisons.



**MUSIC FOR FREEDOM IS COORDINATED BY:**

Arci Liguria (Italy)

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

Asturia WZW (Belgium)

Aufbruch (Germany)

CPIP (Romania)

ÉFA – Équipe di Formatori Associati (Italy)

ETIC (Portugal)

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