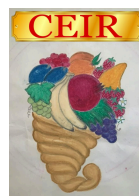




# GOOD PRACTICES

Partner: CEIR

Practice's title: **Chess in Prisons programme in Latvia**



Including **Chess As a Re-education Up-Skilling** tool

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# 1- BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

## 1.1 Background

*Where does the practice come from? What is the context in which the practice was created and experimented first?*

The number of countries where chess is introduced to prison inmates keeps growing. The initiative expands as those coaches and prison officers who already use chess as an efficient tool for reintegrating incarcerated people share their experience in chess education with the countries joining the program. Earlier in May Mikhail Korenman, Manager of the Chess Programme at Cook County Sheriff's Organization, Member of the FIDE Social Commission and the driving force of the "Chess in Prisons" initiative, and Thomas Peter Dart, Junior at the University of Illinois, have visited Baltic countries to promote the idea of chess being used for educating and empowering prisoners.

In 2022, Latvia launched Chess in Prisons programme.

The Chess in Prisons programme in Latvia aims to transform people's lives for better.

## 1.2 Main subject

*What is the main subject at the heart of the practice? What are the themes developed in the practice?*

The Chess in Prisons programme in Latvia promotes positive use of leisure time for inmates, improving their behaviour, helping to reduce violence and developing communication skills.

## 1.3 Target

*What's the intended target group of the practice? Are there primary and secondary beneficiaries? (eg.: other teachers as primary beneficiaries and adult learners as secondary beneficiaries, or vice versa).*

The target group of the practice is prison in-mates in Latvia.

# 2- OUTLINE OF THE PRACTICE

## 2.1. Description

*Please describe the activities contained in the practice. If possible, try to divide them in Learning Units. Also, define how long the training practice will last (1 to 4 hours).*

Accompanied by FIDE Managing Director Dana Reizniece-Ozola, they met with the Latvian prison authorities. Mikhail shared his ten years' experience with chess in Chicago Cook County Prison, and it was agreed to start the programme in a women's establishment in Ilguciema, Latvia.

The first chess lesson for 27 female prisoners was conducted by Dana Reizniece-Ozola just a few weeks after the initial meeting.

"They were patiently listening to how chess helps to make smart decisions, understand the link between cause and consequences, respect your opponent and use your resources smartly. I was stressed as if I had to perform in Davos. Why? In such a closed environment, time and space are different. Every word you say and every move you make does not fly away; it stays and works right there," Dana Reizniece-Ozola said after the lesson.

## 2.2. Aim/goal

*Please describe the aim(s) and goal(s) of the practice: what are the objectives that the practice wants to reach?*

The aim of the practice is to help prison in-mates

- to increase their self-awareness,
- to adapt their behaviour,
- to develop their metacognitive skills including
  - o logical thinking skills and
  - o learning skills
- to enrich their social skills including communication skills.

## 2.3. Training Approach

*What kind of training/teaching methodology is implemented in this practice? Is there a literature/bibliography (not mandatory)?*

Professional chess training for participation in annual International Online Chess Championship for Prisoners, scheduled for the International Day of Education in Prison. More info: [chessforfreedom.fide.com/tournament/](https://chessforfreedom.fide.com/tournament/)

## 3- TOOLS

*Which tools and materials are necessary for this practice to be implemented/to be successful?*

The important tools are

- Chess set
- Chess playing as well as
- A good book about chess play.

## 4- OBSERVATIONS

*This space can be used for all comments and observations, including what you couldn't fit in the previous sections of the template.*

A number of prison in-mates in Latvia who take part in annual Chess for Freedom program has increased since 2022.

Links:



[https://x.com/FIDE\\_chess/status/1799369975087484940](https://x.com/FIDE_chess/status/1799369975087484940)



Including **C**hess **A**s a **R**e-education **U**p-**S**killing tool