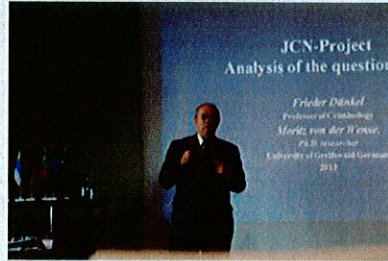


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## Managing the transition of high risk offenders from custody to community: An EU Project

Among higher risk prisoners leaving custody there is a particularly high potential of their return to offending behaviour and ultimately harm to the community. Effective resettlement work with high risk offenders can assist the



Professor Frieder Dünkel delivering his presentation at the recent JCN workshop

prevention of further offending, the reduction of victimisation and harm to the community.

The Probation Service is driving the development of best practice in this area, through an exciting Justice Co-operation Network initiative.

Under the umbrella of the Justice Co-operation Network, Estonia, Finland, Ireland and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Germany), with the University of Greifswald as advisers, are partners in an EU funded project to examine and develop best practice in the transition management and supervision of high risk offenders leaving custody. The project will also focus on developing a body of knowledge and creating an EU network of expertise. Ireland is represented in the project by the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service.

The first project workshop in Tallinn, Estonia in March this year focused on the clear definition of who are high risk offenders. It was agreed that, for this project, a high risk offender is a violent or sexual offender who presents a high probability to commit crimes which may cause very serious personal, physical or psychological harm. The second project workshop was held at the Probation Service, Haymarket, Dublin 7 between 12th and 15th June 2013 and looked at current practice, issues and challenges in managing the transition of high risk offenders from custody to the community in each of the jurisdictions.

In addition to partners from Estonia, Finland, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and the University of Greifswald the attendance included delegates and experts from, the Probation Service, Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána, HSE, Homelessness Services and community organisations and interests.

The workshop programme featured presentations on identifying high risk offenders, interagency management of sex offenders (SORAM) and interventions in custody as well as lively and valuable discussion groups and prison visits. Thanks are due to the many Probation and Prison Service personnel who contributed to making the workshop a smoothly run, welcoming and very successful international event.

A report entitled "Transnational Comparative Analysis of Transition Management Strategies" will be completed as part of the report from the Dublin workshop. An information leaflet on the work of the project is available [here](#)

## Inspector of Prisons Annual Report for 2012 published

Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr. Alan Shatter TD, published the [Inspector of Prisons Annual Report for 2012](#) on 3rd July 2013. The Minister also took the opportunity to publish the Inspector of Prisons Report entitled [An Assessment of the Irish Prison System](#). Copies of the both reports are available on the Department's website or by clicking on the appropriate link above.

## Diverting the mentally ill away from the criminal justice system:

The work of a very successful interagency forensic mental health prison in-reach and court diversion programme, based in Cloverhill Prison, Dublin, was reported on in an article (by McInerney, C. *et al*) published in the International Journal of Mental Health Systems (2013, 7:18) last month. A copy of the article, which found "consistent levels of diversion from the criminal justice system to appropriate mental health services," is accessible here: [Diverting the mentally ill away from the criminal justice system article](#)

## The Probation Service in Numbers

**2,952** reports, assessing offenders' suitability for Community Service, prepared for Courts by Probation Officers in 2012.

**963** Community Service assessment reports prepared on the same day they were requested in 2012.

**55** Victim Impact Reports prepared for Courts in 2012

**34%** Probation Service savings since introducing new fixed line telecommunications contracts.

**30%** savings on contract cleaning services, since we introduced regionalised tendering.

**14%** savings on expenditure on stationery since centralised purchasing arrangements implemented by the Probation Service