

European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders project 2012 -2014

JUST/2011-2012/JPEN/AG/2943

Funded by the European Commission in the framework of the [Criminal Justice Programme](#)



European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders project: background and introduction

The prison population across Europe is largely made up of people who have been excluded rather than included, have poor formal educational qualifications, have few employment skills and have experienced long-term housing, family and addiction problems. Women and men leaving prison bring with them the effects of a custodial sentence and encounter suspicion, rejection and hostility as they make the transition from prison to society.

For higher risk prisoners leaving custody these factors increases the risk of their return to crime and custody. The risk of re-offending is high. Up to half of those released returned to prison within two years. Research shows that effective resettlement can assist the prevention of further offending, the reduction of victimisation and is in the best interests of the community in general. This is critical in the management of higher risk offenders who pose the greater risk of further offending.

Across Europe there are examples of effective resettlement initiatives and good practice but no single jurisdiction has all of the key elements in place. There is a need to share, learn and develop best practice for better outcomes not only for the prisoners leaving custody but also for communities and the criminal justice systems.

The objective of the JCN Justice Co-operation Network project (JUST/2011-2012/JPEN/AG/2943) is to develop a European network and database of best practice in the transition management of high

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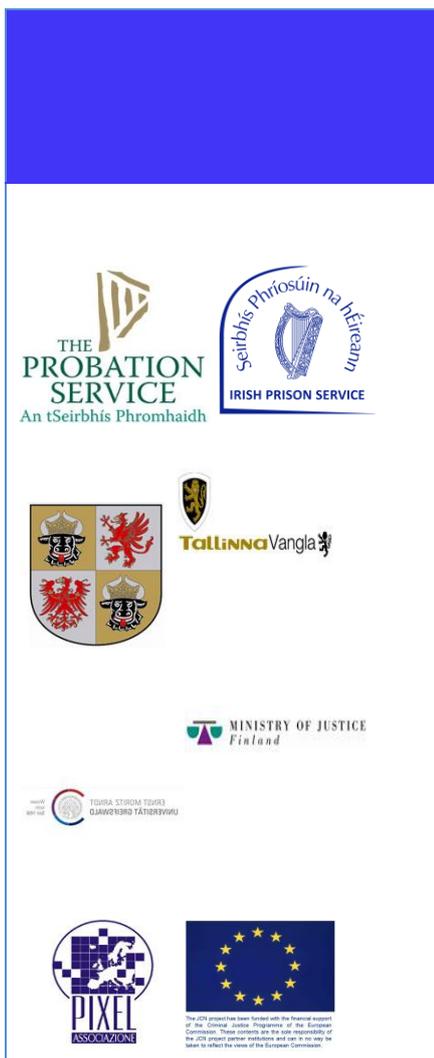
risk prisoners leaving custody. This includes the development of minimum standards and a best practice model for the managing and supervising of high risk offenders to ensure continuity and consistency.

The project is an important and exciting opportunity for sharing knowledge and expertise. It aims to integrate existing informal links, expertise and best practice through shared learning, improved best practice among partners and to develop a strong supporting European network of knowledge and expertise.

The outcome of the project will be a more efficient and effective system for the transition and management of high risk prisoners from custody into the community on their release.

The JCN project, Justice Cooperation Network European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders, is funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Criminal Justice Programme.

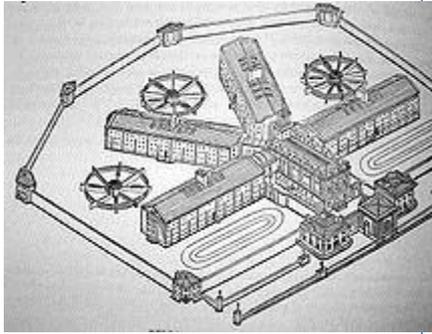
European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders project: who we are and what we do



Germany Estonia, Finland and Ireland are the partners in the project represented by Justizministerium Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany) (Lead partner), The Prison of Tallinn, (Estonia), the Ministry of Justice, (Finland) and the Department of Justice and Equality (The Probation Service and Irish Prison Service). The project evaluation partner is the University of Greifswald (Germany) while financial management and administration is provided by Pixel, based in Florence (Italy).

The project began in November 2012 and will be concluded in October 2014. The work of the project will be completed in a series of workshops convened in the partner jurisdictions, published reports and a project conference in autumn 2014.

The workshops will seek to develop shared understanding and definitions of high risk and dangerousness, compare existing systems of transition management, identify and develop best practice models and standards, disseminate the learning from the project and establish an as wide as possible network of knowledge and expertise on transition and supervision management of high risk offenders.



The work of the project is divided into 6 work streams:

Work stream 0: project management, evaluation and dissemination extends throughout the lifetime of the project and had a kick-off-meeting in Florence in December 2012.

Work stream 1: working out the common basis development of common understanding was managed by the Estonian partners with a workshop held in Tallinn in March 2013 (Report below).

Work stream 2: Comparison of existing systems of transition management is managed by the Irish team with a workshop to be held in Dublin in June 2013.

Work stream 3: Analysis of the elements and programmes (best practice) will be managed by the Finnish team with a workshop to be held in Helsinki in October-November 2013.

Work stream 4: development of a model and minimum standards for managing high risk offenders will be managed by the German team with a workshop to be held in Germany in April 2014.

Work stream 5: Transfer of the findings abroad will be managed by the partners led by Germany with a final conference hosted in Germany in the autumn of 2014.

In addition to the working partners the JCN project has a number of Associated Partners supporting the objectives and work of the project.

The Associated Partners are:

The Directorate General Houses of Justice (Belgium)

<http://just.fgov.be>

German Federal Ministry of Justice (Germany) <http://www.bmj.de>

Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic

<http://www.justice.gov.sk/Stranky/default.aspx>

Prison Administration of Republic of Slovenia,

Ministry of Justice and Public Administration,

<http://www.mpju.gov.si>

The European Organization for Probation (CEP)

<http://www.cep-probation.org>



Workshop Meeting in Florence 10th – 12th December 2012.

The principal task of the first JCN project workshop meeting in Florence was to achieve agreement among the project partners on the project objectives, the activities to be performed and the expected results.

The structure of the project, guiding principles and key actions were quickly agreed by the partners. There was detailed discussion on how the individual work stream activities would be managed, implemented and reported. The parameters of the project were agreed as well as commitment by all partners to assist and support the efficient achievement of the project objectives.

PIXEL outlined the project governance and reporting requirements and obligations which are to be complied with throughout the project.

The workshop in Florence was the first face-to-face meeting of the project participants. It provided an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other, work together and to learn something about the experiences, interests and priorities of each partner. The workshop was important in establishing the project team and positive relationships which contribute to success in the work and achievement of the objectives.

At the Florence workshop Ireland was represented by Gerry McNally (The Probation Service), Gov. Ethel Gavin (Irish Prison Service) and Tony Hickey (Irish Prison Service). Brian Dack (The Probation Service) was not available to attend.

Workshop Meeting in Tallinn, Estonia 13th – 16th March 2013.

The objective of work stream 1 workshop in Tallinn, Estonia in March 2013 was to develop a common and mutual understanding of definitions and objectives in the management of high risk offenders and transition management.

The workshop programme was designed by the hosts to facilitate discussion, exchange of ideas and information and to achieve a shared understanding of who is a high risk offender. Altogether 40 experts from the partner countries, including 20 from Estonia, were in attendance for two full days of intensive discussion and lively exchange.



Prof. Dr. Frieder Dünkel presented initial findings from a questionnaire circulated among the partners on legal provision and regulation in each jurisdiction.

The workshop concluded with an agreed definition of a high risk offender as 'someone who presents a high probability to commit crimes which may cause very serious personal, physical or psychological harm'.

In addition there were visits arranged by the Estonian hosts to the main prison in Tallinn, an open prison outside the city and to a Probation Service office in Tallinn. Tallinn, even with a chill in the air, deep snow and nightly -20c temperatures, was a most inviting, engaging and lively city. The Estonian hosts were generous, welcoming and hospitable and provided a well organised and very successful workshop.

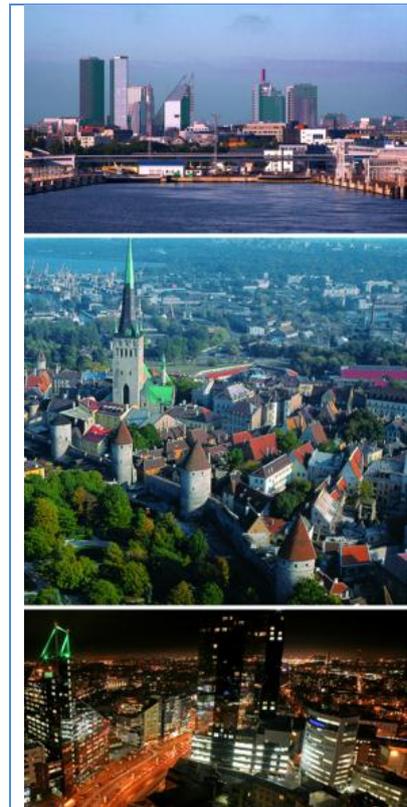
At the Tallinn workshop Ireland was represented by Gerry McNally (The Probation Service), Gov. Ethel Gavin (Irish Prison Service), Tony Hickey (Irish Prison Service) and Brian Dack (The Probation Service).

Keep up to date with the JCN Project

The next JCN project workshop will be in June 2013 in Dublin as part of work stream 2 and will compare existing systems of transition management in the partner jurisdictions.

If you wish to keep in touch with developments about the actions, activities and progress of the JCN project please check the project website at <http://jcn.pixel-online.org/>.

You can also send an email to Gerry McNally at gpmcnally@probation.ie to receive project newsletters and other relevant information.



The next edition of this JCN newsletter in August/September 2013 will include a report on the Dublin workshop meeting.

If you wish further information on the JCN project please check the project website at <http://jcn.pixel-online.org/> or contact Gerry McNally at gpmcnally@probation.ie or by post at the Probation Service, Haymarket, Smithfield, Dublin 7.