



Declaration of Directors General of Probation Conference The Hague, The Netherlands 2015

In The Hague on 27th November 2015, the 6th Conference of Directors General of Probation, hosted by the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands, agreed the following declaration:

- I. Probation measures and community sanctions have an important and valuable role to play within the Criminal Justice Systems across Europe. CEP members provide professional and effective supervision services and interventions to protect the public, reduce re-offending and support integration in the community of ex-offenders.
- II. Partnerships, co-operation and joint working among authorities, agencies and services the Criminal Justice sector in Europe are important elements in effective practice. These include the European Commission, Council of Europe, national authorities, judicial interests, prison services, victim support and restorative justice organisations and other key players. CEP members will seek to maximise their co-operation and working with partners to develop better practice and achieve better results for everyone in Europe.
- III. Supervision and resettlement of prisoners leaving custody is an important part of the work of many CEP members. Mobility and ease of movement in Europe has contributed to an increase in foreign offenders in prison and on supervision in many member states. CEP members recognise the challenges in working effectively with such persons and are committed to working together, with other criminal justice authorities and with European institutions to achieve best outcomes in reducing offending and maximising positive futures.
- IV. The transposing into national law and the implementation in practice of the Framework Decisions 947/2008, 829/2009 and 909/2009 are essential steps in strengthening probation measures and community sanctions in Europe and supporting rehabilitation and community safety. CEP members will work to achieve best utilisation in practice of the Framework Decisions to achieve those goals.

- V. Radicalisation and violent extremism poses a real threat for communities and people across Europe. There is work required to address current radicalisation and violent extremism issues in prevention and detection of those posing risk in Europe and those returning from conflict areas. CEP members will co-operate and work closely with governments, civil society, multilateral agencies and other expert groups, fora and research interests to share experiences and lessons learned, to improve practice, training, monitoring and evaluation approaches and international cooperation.
- VI. The meeting acknowledged the importance and value of an active and positive engagement with the media and the wider community in promoting knowledge and understanding of probation measures and community sanctions. Accountability, transparency and leadership were identified as key factors in preparation, engagement and building confidence. CEP members agreed that communication, as well as operational excellence, are targets for improvement.
- VII. The benefits of the COST project and other EC funded action projects were highlighted in discussions at the meeting. CEP participation was a benefit in strengthening knowledge and providing a bridge to practitioners. The contribution of research and academia in probation measures and community sanctions was identified as an area for development and improvement. CEP and its members will work to develop relationships with research bodies, 3rd level institutions and relevant experts to stimulate research into probation measures and community sanctions in Europe.
- VIII. CEP contributes to European bodies such as the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union to raise the profile of probation nationally and internationally and to inform decision-making and policy. CEP members will actively support and participate in this process through participation as experts, by contributing to meetings and through consultation and other events.

The **7th Conference of Directors General of Probation**, where a review of the progress of this declaration will take place, is scheduled to be held in the second half of 2017.

On behalf of the participants of the 6th Directors General meeting

Date: 12th February 2017