Development and advancement of European standards in probation, community sanctions and measures.

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• Two perspectives: 1. Co. of Europe, 2. Ireland
• Ireland - background
• Council of Europe
• Developing and implementing standards
• The wide and narrow picture – challenges
• The future
• How do standards get developed?
• National law and regulation. Oversight/Inspection.
• ‘Supranational Bodies.’
• UN, Council of Europe (CoE).
• Research / academics.
• Networks, lobby/interest groups, others.
• Service users.
Standards ‘Drivers’ – Ireland

- Constitution. Legislation.
- Organisational standards / customer service.
- Probation effectiveness: including desistance.
- Leadership.
Safer Communities and Fewer Victims
Through Offender Rehabilitation

PROBATION SERVICE

- 400 staff
- 8,000+ offenders under supervision in the community each day
- Services in all prisons
Safer Communities and Fewer Victims
Through Offender Rehabilitation

PROBATION ROLE:

• Manage court orders
• Reduce risk of harm
• Reduce likelihood of reoffending
• Make good the harm caused by crime
Observer Status:
Holy See, USA, Canada, Japan, Mexico; Israel (Parl. Assembly).
45+ non-members are parties to Conventions etc.
• CoE: Established 1949.

• European Convention on Human Rights (1950).

• European Court of Human Rights (1959).

• European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT - 1989).

• Rule of Law > CDPC > PC-CP
Established in 1980 as advisory body to Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC).

Since 2011: 9 members, elected by CDPC Plenary. High-level prisons, probation, administration, legal, research experts.

- Work done to now, and how.
- Current/future work programme.
- Pros and cons, benefits and challenges.
• Standards in prison & probation Management / Work
• Recent work programme: CSMs, Radicalisation
• Current: Children of Prisoners, RJ, EPR Commentary, Prison Overcrowding
• Prison & Probation Directors Conference: CDPPS
• SPACE I & II Statistical Reports
• Web: http://www.coe.int/en/web/prison/home
• Use of additional external experts
• Expertise and representativeness of WG members
• Not overly political in foundation or approach
• Value base
• Links to the Convention and Court
• Variety/connection of bodies and WGs, incl CPT
• Like any big organisation/institution
• Insufficient ‘profile,’ + ‘Identity issues’
• Voluntary nature
• Vast area and different cultures etc
• Can be: high expectations and low capacity (and vice versa)
• Part-time activity and group turnover
• Joint Drafting / Working Group.
• Recommendation No.(99)22 on prison overcrowding & population inflation.

• Intro., + Overcrowding,
• Actual situation,
• CoE Position.
• Root Causes of Overcrowding,
• How to Address,
• National Strategies,
• Media, Public Opinion,
• Conclusions.
Defining ‘Overcrowding’

- Self-assessed
- Reference to CoE standards
- Court judgements (e.g. ref to PC-CP)
- CPT Reports
- SPACE I Statistics / Reports
- Political
- Not just about space (square metres)
What to Do About Overcrowding

• Voluntary v Court Pilot Judgements
• Political will to address
• Law, Policy, Co-operation
• Getting to the root ‘causes’
• Data-tracked outcomes
• Need to be constantly ‘on it’
• CoE Working Group
• Action plan / steps
• Conference / Campaign?
• One bite at a time
• Challenge of “So what?”, follow-through, targeting and implementation
Some Issues for the Future

- Some ‘weaknesses’ also strengths
- Need for an overall vision and strategy
- Build on connections with practice, policy, and academe
- Information sharing & co-operation
- Not only a Criminal Justice issue – build other connections too
Summary / Conclusions

- Goals of Probation, and standards, completely compatible.
- Professionalism / professionalization.
- There are challenges.
- Help is available.
- Not an ‘either – or.’
- Not a ‘zero sum game.’
- Benefits all in the long run.
- This conference.
Ireland – Challenges

• The adaptive challenge of changing organisational culture and individual mindsets.

• Harnessing the energy of, and supporting staff, to implement changes.

• Standards in everyone’s interests.

• Lack of inspection.

• Vision of where we need to get to.

• Lack of a ‘crisis.’

• Economic recovery.
Safer Communities and Fewer Victims Through Offender Rehabilitation

Are you too busy to improve?

No thanks!

We are too busy
• Grounds for optimism

• Challenge of implementation

• Progress will be slow, and may zig-zag

• Practice, policy and academic connection

• International perspectives and co-operation
The Future - Ireland

- Developing and setting out standards.
- Implementation. ‘Whole package’ issue to be addressed.
- New ways of working.
- Monitoring and inspection.
- Measuring success and responding to challenges.
Thank you.

Questions.

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http://www.coe.int/en/web/prison/home
Thank you.

- Website: www.probation.ie
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- To receive our ‘Probation works’ newsletter (bi-monthly), email: psinfo@probation.ie