



# Criminal Justice Platform Europe

## INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS' CONFERENCE

***'RADICALISATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM – Disengagement, prevention, monitoring'***

**Barcelona, Spain – 14 October 2015**

**Centre for Legal Studies - 3 Carrer Ausiàs Marc, 40 08010 Barcelona**

### **Conference Theme**

Radicalisation and the dangers caused by extremists to European countries are a paramount concern of the criminal justice system. This international conference for experts in the field offered an opportunity to review the development of interventions and set the agenda for future collaborative work.

### **Objectives**

- 1. To examine the learning from programmes to combat radicalisation in prisons and probation**
- 2. To consider the benefits of multi-disciplinary collaboration and restorative justice for future developments**
- 3. To identify the future priorities and needs of policy and practice.**

### **Outcomes**

- Learning points from specific programmes identified**
- Examination of the benefits of integrating approaches through workshops involving different professionals (prisons, probation and restorative justice)**
- Dissemination of the presentations, findings and recommendations via the CJPE members' websites**
- To propose next steps for the Criminal Justice Platform Europe's contribution to the radicalisation agenda.**



## Introduction

The Criminal Justice Platform Europe (CJPE) comprises – the Confederation of European Probation (CEP), the European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services (EuroPris) and the European Forum for Restorative Justice (EFRJ). It was launched in 2012 to address issues on the agenda of many European countries – victims, overcrowding in prisons, recidivism and the impact of budget constraints on the criminal justice system.

The Platform organised this event on radicalisation and extremist violence because the issue was becoming an urgent priority for its members and to provide an opportunity to review progress using expert perspectives.

This short summary will be sent to participants, our members and relevant European Institutions. For access to the full presentations and workshop notes from the conference please go to our members' websites, [EuroPris](#), [CEP](#) and [EFRJ](#), where the following documents will be available:

- 1. Conceptualization and definition.** Ms Eva Entenmann LL.M - Programme Manager at the International Centre for Counter Terrorism – The Netherlands
- 2. CoE: Guidelines for Prison and Probation Services facing radicalization and violent extremism.** Ms Iliana Taneva - Secretary to the PC-CP, Council of Europe
- 3. Mr John Scott** – Platform facilitator, **interviewing Mr Harald Føsker** – International Director , Directorate of Norwegian Prison and Probation Service - Norway
- 4. Assessment and intervention of extremist offenders.** Ms Carys Keane - National Offender Management Service – United Kingdom
- 5. Violence Prevention Network (VPN).** Ms Julia Reinelt – Practitioner and Head of international affairs at Violence Prevention Network - Germany
- 6. Dealing with reintegration of former ETA members in Basque Country** - Mr Alberto Olalde – School of Social Work. University of Basque Country – Spain
- 7. How Islamic religious services can contribute to preventing (and countering) religious radicalization in prisons. The Dutch Model.** Mr Mohamed Ajouaou - Head of Imams working in Dutch prisons. Custodial Institution agency – Netherlands
- 8. Back on Track Program.** Ms Marie Louise Jørgensen, Ms Rekha Grue Larsen - Security Advisors, Danish Prison and Probation Service – Denmark
- 9. EXIT Program.** Mr Robert Örell - Director at EXIT – Sweden
- 10. Experiences with young violent right-wing extremist prisoners in German juvenile prisons.** Ms Figen Özsöz – Bavarian State Criminal Police Office – Germany
- 11. Remarks and conclusions.** Mr Marc Cerón – President of CEP



## Background and Event Summary

Terrorist attacks within the EU territory over the last decades, combined with the still unresolved tensions in various parts of the globe, have sparked international concern about radicalisation processes and calls for a more incisive and concerted response from the Member States. International efforts have been focussing particularly on preventive measures to tackle the problem of radicalisation within prisons, as a fertile setting for indoctrination and recruitment of vulnerable subjects, and on efforts to manage foreign fighters coming back from combat zones to EU countries.

The creation of the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in 2011, an umbrella of practitioners and local actors involved in countering violent radicalisation<sup>i</sup>, attests the strong commitment of EU bodies to tackle the problem of radicalisation and the negative consequences it poses to freedom, security and justice of the citizens in the EU. The European Agenda on Security of 28 April 2015<sup>ii</sup> stresses the link between extremist violence and radicalisation processes, which may lead fighters from Europe to travel abroad to train, fight and commit atrocities in combat zones, jeopardising the internal security of the EU on their return<sup>iii</sup>. In addition to further research on the topic of radicalisation and programmes for the promotion of youth inclusion, the European Agenda on Security 2015 focuses in particular on strategies supporting de-radicalisation processes in prison settings.

In line with this growing international concern related to radicalisation and violent extremism and preceding the High-Level Ministerial Conference on radicalisation taking place in Brussels, the **Criminal Justice Platform Europe (CJPE)** organised a one-day conference entitled “RADICALISATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM – Disengagement, prevention, monitoring” at the Centre for Legal Studies and Specialized Training in Catalonia on Wednesday, 14 October 2015. In the three *plenary sessions* experts, policy-makers and practitioners from different EU countries reflected on the concept of radicalisation, exchanged national policies implemented to prevent further radicalisation processes within prison settings or probation and shared successful programmes facilitating disengagement strategies for radicalised people. The participants and speakers had the chance to discuss some of the issues raised during the plenaries sessions in more detail in two *parallel workshop* sessions. Participants and speakers engaged in very lively debates, sharing further details of experiences and practices in the different contexts. Before closing the event with the presentation of **Mr Marc Ceron, President of CEP**, the *round table* provided an additional space for dialogue, bringing in new ideas which had emerged during the event and stimulating participants’ further reflection.



## Welcome

**Mr John Scott, as Chair of the conference**, welcomed all participants and introduced **Ms Bibiana Segura Cros, Director of the Centre for Legal Studies and Specialised Training, Catalonia**, who opened the conference alongside **Mr Quim Clavageura, Director General from the Ministry of Justice, Catalonia**. They welcomed participants who had come from all over Europe. Catalonia is very much committed to the criminal justice agenda and seeking the correct balance between security, justice and re-socialisation. Radicalised and violent extremist offenders were a challenge to every country and the Platform could play an important role in sharing knowledge and the best methods of combating the threats.

The first plenary session on **Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: Definitions and Concepts** was chaired by **Ms Marta Ferrer Puig, Head of the Department of Social and Criminological Research and Training, Ministry of Justice, Catalonia**. She introduced the speakers:

**Ms Eva Entenmann LL.M, Programme Manager at the International Centre for Counter Terrorism, the Netherlands**, enriched the discussion by presenting concepts and definitions to understand better the different radicalisation processes. Even though a shared definition of radicalisation and its driving factors is yet to be agreed upon, radicalisation can be understood as a complex phenomenon, where micro (individual), meso (environment) and macro (society) levels all play a role. Based on extensive research projects carried out in this field and different training/programmes running in different countries, Ms Entenmann stressed the fact that 'radicalisation' does not have a negative connotation per se, but, in certain cases and due to specific circumstances, may lead to violent acts. While some 'pull' factors such as ideology, religion and the internet (the so-called online radicalisation) may facilitate radicalisation, these mechanisms can be better explained as a Steps Model process. Realising that something is not fair and therefore perceived as unjust, are usually the first two steps. In the next stage, the individual starts associating the context and lack of opportunities for change as the conditions under which the unfairness is preserved. In the fourth stage, the individual identifies the apparent source of the problem and he/she can then decide to join extremist groups which, supposedly, will bring about a real change targeting the shared source/s of the problem.

**Ms Iliana Taneva, Secretary of the Council for Penological Cooperation (PC-CP), Council of Europe (CoE)**, described the draft guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism, to be presented for approval at the PC-CP plenary in mid-November 2015. In her presentation, she illustrated three crucial definitions adopted in the draft guidelines:

a. **Radicalisation**, defined as a dynamic process whereby different factors can lead individuals to accepting and supporting violent extremism



b. **Violent extremism**, acts defending a specific ideology and opposing core democratic principles and values, sometimes leading to terrorist acts

c. **Dynamic security**, a concept that broadens the mere structural, organisational and static security within prison settings. This working method calls for enhanced communication and interaction between prison staff and detainees to ensure a better assessment of the risks they may pose to security and safety, but also to contribute positively to rehabilitation and preparation for release.

In her presentation, Ms Taneva outlined the structure of the Guidelines, divided in five sections: 1. Basic principles; 2. Prison and probation work; 3. Detection, prevention and dealing with radicalisation and violent extremism in prison; 4. Post-release work; and 5. Research, evaluation and communication.

Ms Taneva's contribution stressed once again the high importance of tackling the radicalisation process at the political level and the urgency of adopting measures to combat the phenomenon and its negative effects, The Steps Model ensures that the focus is not solely on Muslim radicalisation, but includes other forms of extremism that are equally dangerous and present in different countries.

**Mr Harald Føsker, Director of International Cooperation, Norwegian Prison and Probation Service**, was interviewed by **Mr John Scott** and provided the audience with an opportunity to reflect on another crucial element of violent extremists acts: the impact on the victim. Mr. Føsker is a survivor of one of the two attacks in Norway (2011) that shocked the entire world for the high death toll and brutality. The presentation took the form of a conversation where Mr Føsker described his personal experience of the tragic events, his emotions in the aftermath of the attack and during the trial of the culprit and the difficult journey towards combining his role within the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service and being a survivor of such an atrocity. Participants were challenged about their attitudes to extreme violence and about retaining a victim perspective as Mr Føsker addressed his feelings and his professional responsibilities in an open and inspiring manner.

The second plenary session was chaired by **Mr Kris Vanspauwen – Executive Officer of the European Forum for Restorative Justice, Belgium**. He first introduced:

**Ms Carys Keane, National Specialist lead for Extremism, Intervention Services, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), United Kingdom** opened the second plenary session by offering a detailed overview on the outcomes of extensive research carried out in her country on 1) radicalisation processes, 2) the assessment procedures – i.e. the Extremism Risk Assessment (ERG) and the Extremism Risk Screening (ERS) and 3) the available intervention programmes - Healthy Identity Interventions (HII) and the Developing Dialogues (DD) - to tackle radicalisation. After pointing out that radicalisation cannot be explained with a single factor analysis, Ms Keane stressed that similar psychological



processes are involved in both engagement and disengagement mechanisms and therefore individuals are more likely to be de-radicalised with a multi-steps approach. Four definitions have a crucial role in designing programmes dealing with radicalisation:

**Engagement** – process whereby an individual becomes interested in, or associated with, or forms a commitment to an extremist group, cause and/or a set of ideas.

**Identification** – process whereby an individual comes to define who they are, and what they stand for based on a group, cause and/or ideology.

**Intent** – an individual’s mental state of readiness to support and use illegal means, and/or violence to further the goals of an extremist group, cause and/or ideology.

**Capability** – an individual’s capacity to commit an offence and/or harm others on behalf of an extremist group, cause and/or ideology.

**Ms Julia Reinelt, Practitioner and Head of International Affairs from the Violence Prevention Network (VPN), Germany** presented a wide range of programmes promoting individual exit from extremist groups implemented in Germany and collaborating with international organisations active in the field of radicalisation. The VPN programmes target youngsters arrested for ideologically motivated, violent offences or terrorist acts. They work to promote behavioural change, a responsible and non-violent life-style and to distance participants from inhuman ideologies.

The VPN offers specific programmes for de-radicalisation from right-wing and religious extremism in the community, also within prison settings. Ms. Reinelt pointed out that almost one thousand participants have been involved in de-radicalising programmes since 2001 and the findings of a preliminary evaluation suggest lower recidivism rates for those who took part in the VPN programmes.

**Mr Alberto Olalde, from the School of Social Work, University of the Basque Country, Spain** was the last presenter of the second plenary session. He described the experience of using restorative justice practices when dealing with former ETA members. In the Basque country, a group of former ETA members serving sentences in prison expressed their willingness to undertake face-to-face meetings with victims and family members in order to contribute to the victims’ reparation. Supported by the local authorities and facilitated by professional mediators, restorative encounters have been proved effective in supporting victims’ healing process, diminishing personal suffering and allaying hatred. On the other hand, offenders have found these restorative justice encounters to be deeply humanising experiences and many former ETA members have asked to take part in programmes.

The plenary sessions were followed by Workshops 1 and 2.

After the lunch break, the afternoon plenary was chaired by **Ms Kirsten Hawlitschek, Executive Director of EuroPris, the Netherlands** who introduced:



**Mr Mohamed Ajouaou, the Head of the Imams working in Dutch prisons, Custodial Institution Agency, the Netherlands**, spoke on the subject of: ‘How Islamic religious services can contribute to preventing and countering religious radicalisation – the Dutch Model’ and affirmed that when you regulate, facilitate and supervise the confession of religion in prison, people are less likely to embrace radical perspectives. Drawing upon his personal experience in the Netherlands, he demonstrated that the spiritual leader plays a pivotal role in ensuring a responsible interpretation of religious doctrines and radicalised individuals within the prison context will face more difficulties in recruiting or attracting new members.

**Ms Jørgensen and Ms Larsen, Security Advisors from the Back on Track Programme, Prison and Probation Service, Denmark**, illustrated new initiatives to deal with groups of radicalised prisoners in Denmark. The Mentoring programme targets inmates, remand prisoners and clients on parole accused of terrorism acts or hate crimes, but also those who are considered vulnerable to radicalisation. Coordinated by the mentor, this programme involves families and social networks outside prison and training aimed at the strengthening social skills of the clients, favouring desistance from crime and preparing the individual to re-enter society. The mentor has a crucial role for the success of the programme and therefore proper training, experience and case-by-case evaluation of the most appropriate mentor for the specific case can lead to excellent results.

**Robert Orell, Director of the Exit Programme, Sweden** provided another presentation from a Scandinavian country and stressed the importance of a more individualised cases-by-case assessment to counter radicalisation. The EXIT programme specifically works with men approaching his organisation in order to disengage from their radical views. The main focus is mainly on White Power groups, but recently EXIT has been using similar techniques for other criminal gangs. Openness of the approach is what makes this experience somewhat different from other programmes. Assessment and analysis of the individual case is done through a series of voluntary meetings, so that the case worker is able to collect information on the client biographical history by listening and observation techniques, enabling him/her to design the most appropriate disengagement strategy for that client. The programme provides a bridge for the individual wishing to exit extremists groups and cross back into the mainstream of society through a well-established network of organisations supporting the re-integration phase.

**Ms Figen Özsoz, from the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office, Germany** gave the last plenary presentation event and focused on detainees belonging to right-wing extremist groups. She presented the findings of a recent study on the effects of imprisonment on young right-wing extremists, the impact on their xenophobic attitudes, attachment to the group and the role of personal/institutional factors. The findings suggest that juvenile right-wing extremist offenders in Germany are mainly offenders with a long criminal history, who had also committed crimes not related to the extremist ideology. The composition of the



inmate population greatly influenced the individuals' decisions about joining right-wing groups. Where right-wing subcultures are the majority (for example, in a prison located in Eastern Germany) inmates are more likely to join extremist groups. Segregation may reinforce the creation of these right-wing subcultures in prison and therefore heterogeneous units together with good prison management are likely to facilitate disengagement processes for extremist detainees.

The plenary sessions were followed by workshops 3 and 4.

A lively Round Table took place involving five of the experts.

**Mr Marc Ceron, President of CEP**, then closed the conference by identifying a key message or recommendation from each speaker. He then thanked the participants and all the expert presenters for their attendance and contributions.

For further information, please contact:

**EuroPris** - European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services

**EFRJ**- European Forum for Restorative Justice

**CEP** - Confederation of European Probation

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<sup>i</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/docs/ran\\_charter\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/docs/ran_charter_en.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/basic-documents/docs/eu\\_agenda\\_on\\_security\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/basic-documents/docs/eu_agenda_on_security_en.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> “

