

Meeting on Research

Online, 1 December 2022

Number of participants: 11 participants (6 female, 5 male)

Categories: researchers, assistant director, university professors and practitioners

Background

Over recent years, CEP has begun to develop engagement with researchers, research institutions and projects. During the term of the previous CEP Board membership by third level institutions was promoted and a representative was co-opted to the CEP. Research, quality assurance and evaluation are key elements in the development of better practice, better and more effective service provision, and improved outcomes for all stakeholders.

The aim of the meeting on research is:

- Create a network of experts of researchers, managers and probation practitioners from various EU jurisdictions;
- Identify potential research topics, develop knowledge and facilitate transnational research;
- Exchange, increase and deepen knowledge about offenders' supervision in Europe, community sanctions and measures, rehabilitation and reintegration etc;
- Develop a long-term strategy (action plan) specifying the main priority areas for research;
- Further explore possibilities and initiate a cross-jurisdiction research;
- Identify funding chains;
- Cooperate with CEP members, partnership organisations, universities, researchers on identifying key priorities and mutual cooperation in research;
- Oversee ongoing researches commissioned by CEP (e.g. the mental health research in probation);
- Develop the topic as a steady part of its website.

Meeting report

Gerry McNally welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the information behind establishing this group. CEP has connections to all probation organizations across Europe so it is able to encourage cross-jurisdictional practice and research. And at the same time this group gathers practitioners and academics from various

jurisdictions. The aim is to get the most value out of this group both for members and research, and start looking at research in more systemic way. It is important to involve CEP members/colleagues and consult them on topics relevant for research.

Marc Ceron informed that CEJFE is a member of EPTA that also gathers academics and researchers, and have a research unit. CEP and EPTA have no contractual connections, however, this year there were connections through Education and Training Network.

Prof. Fergus McNeill delivered a presentation "Probation Research: Questions and Methods". Over the recent years, the interest in criminology grew enormously so there are more probation academics than used to be. However, criminology has the very fraud relationship with policy. The aim is to help probation practitioners understand what academics are at and vice-versa as research is important for probation work. There are a few ways on how to approach research – through research match funding, through knowledge exchange via placements/fellowships/consultancies, Post-doc/Post-PhD submission fellowships, through public engagement, PGR collaborative studentships and internships, as well as influencing European research agenda.

The discussion and brainstorming session went on.

Conclusions of the brainstorming session:

- Towards members –> important to map the needs within the CEP membership to hear what are the needs and suggestions, and come up with topics.
- For CEP –> important to have a long-term strategy and mechanism on how CEP approaches research in the coming years with a focus on funding, sustainability and benefits for CEP and its members.
- For CEP –> question of its resources –> who will be responsible for this agenda within CEP on a coordination level (part-time). Plus as an addition CEP might benefit from offering a funded short-term fellowship scheme for PhD students in order to develop programmatic activities with CEP or other ways through joint funding. The coordinator oversees this.
- For CEP and its members –> important to influence agenda as well as priorities in terms of research on European level.
- For CEP –> important to reduce the division between academics and practitioners and find a best form for them to work together – partnership scheme. One of the examples is CEJFE where practitioners work alongside researchers.

- For CEP, its members and partners –> organize an event (workshop, conference, training activity etc) where both researchers and practitioners get together.
- For CEP, its members and partners –> identify funding schemes.

As a result of this Fergus McNeill offered to draft a proposal for a fixed-term, part-time Knowledge Exchange fellowship, during which an academic hosted by and working with CEP, would consult the Board, CEP members, funders and other interested academics to develop a longer-term Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy (for the next few years).

It was agreed to draft a broader CEP research strategy, of which the KE Fellowship would form one part and would be part of the longer-term planning. Nicola Carr will provide models (research strategies, placements and collaborations etc). Ioan Durnescu will contribute to drafting as well. Fergus McNeill, Nicola Carr and Ioan Durnescu will consult the proposal.

The upcoming meeting that is planned on 15 February 2023 in Utrecht.

Jana Špero informed that the Board meeting is taking place in March and anything connected to research must be decided upon by the Board.

Links: <https://www.cep-probation.org/recap-online-meeting-on-research/>