



Confederation of European
Probation



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Confederation of European Probation

World Congress for Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration

*"European Practice and
Perspectives"*

Kyoto
7th March 2021

CEP Presentation Agenda

- Introductory remarks
- Europe and the CEP
- Probation volunteers in Europe
 - Past
 - Present
 - Work with community volunteers –why it is important
 - Structures and organisation
 - Roles and activities
 - Future... some strategic considerations
- Concluding remarks

CEP Introductory remarks...

An acknowledgement -

- of my family - who introduced me to the work of probation volunteers
- of the hospitality offered by VPOs during the World Congress on Probation – Tokyo
 - and the insights into the work of VPOs to support desistance from crime

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Europe, European bodies, and the CEP

- **Europe – geographical; 44 countries**
- **European Union; 27 Member States**
- **Council of Europe; 47 countries**
- **Confederation of European Probation (CEP) ...**



Members of the Council of Europe (Extract CoE website)



Founded 1981
60 Member organisations across 40 countries
Probation agencies, Universities, NGOs, individuals, and more
Affiliate organisations around the world

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Vision for Europe
“To contribute to safer communities by rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders and providing the best possible interventions to reduce offending and the impact of crime.”

CEP ... promotes pan-European cooperation including by conferences, ... reports ... partnering research, jurisdiction reports, digital newsletter, website; CEP stimulates exchange of ideas on probation in Europe – and contributes enthusiastically to the World Congress on Probation!

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Past present ... and future

Europe - 19th century - including Netherlands and United Kingdom

Volunteers, often attached to churches or charities, worked with courts to support offenders – especially those with drink problems.

In Ireland work with discharged prisoners developed, an early form of parole being practiced from the 1850s.

Followed over time by moves towards a formalised probation service -

For example, UK 1887, Probation of First Offenders Act allowed a person charged on a first offence to be released without punishment.

No supervision order initially - this followed and ..

In 1907 the Probation Service was created.



Q; Is there a “right” or “best” balance between the contribution of volunteers and the work of professionals? If so, can we say where (approximately) It should it be?

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The importance of work with community volunteers ...

“Justice cannot be effectively administered in isolation from the community it seeks to serve; it requires both the acceptance and the respect of the public. This level of confidence and commitment is most likely to be achieved if members of the public are encouraged and enabled to participate in the administration of justice”.

Past, **present** ... and future



Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 3 on the European Rules on community sanctions and measures

“The involvement of volunteers can be part of the contribution made by wider civil society in responding to crime, rather than handing over such work solely to professionals”.

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The importance of work with community volunteers ...

"They can also work as *mentors* and can *befriend* suspects and offenders, offering a relationship that is *valued all the more because it is less formal* than the relationship with a supervising officer. Suspects and offenders often especially *appreciate the time and commitment of people who are giving their support and advice without payment*. Volunteers may assist professional staff in a range of practical tasks by agreement with the authority. Volunteers can also act as '*champions*' of community sanctions and measures, *helping society to better understand their aims and value*"

Note: Emphasis added

Past, *present* ... and future



Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 3 on the European Rules on community sanctions and measures

"Although they are formally associated with the authority in this way, just because they are not professionals and are unpaid, their *contribution is different and can serve to make and strengthen bonds with the community*.

Like professionals, volunteers can help suspects and offenders change their lives, can serve as a positive role model, and help offenders understand the harm done by offending".

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Past, *present* ... and future Community Probation Volunteers

- "JIVE" Report 2015 (Justice Involving Volunteers in Europe)
- "The role and value of volunteers working with (ex) offenders, their families and victims of Crime"
- "NGOs ... Working effectively in partnership with statutory and private organisations"

• Clinks Lead – NGO Partners from 7 European Countries

- *Foundation 180, The Netherlands*
- *Aproximar, Portugal*
- *Clinks, United Kingdom*
- *Penal Justice Reform Foundation, Romania*
- *BAGazs, Hungary*
- *GRADO, Romania*
- *Cooperativa Sociale Cellarius, Italy*
- *University of Bremen, Germany*

- Funded by Justice Programme of European Union
- A Baseline Survey – 2015 – Respondents from **22 EU Member States**

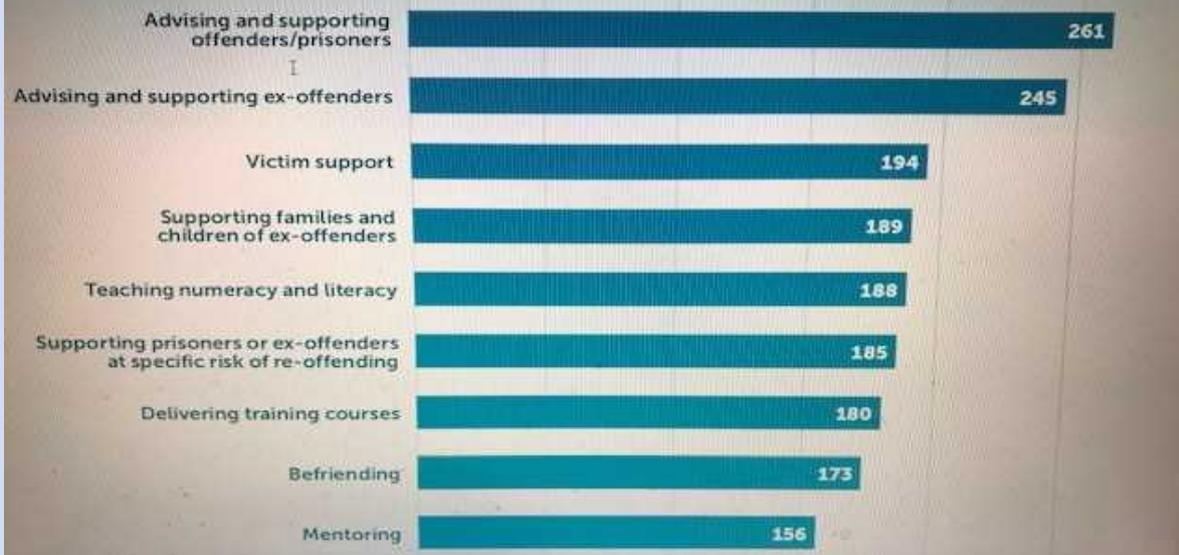


Two distinct areas of justice and resettlement voluntary activity –

- More formal – in courts, prisons, for example honorary judges, legal guardians, prison advisory board members

- Widespread engagement of volunteers in civil society through NGOs

Graph 4 / **Distribution of the different activities undertaken by volunteers**



Jive Report 2015; Graph 4 (part) showing first 9 ranked activities undertaken by volunteers (in European survey)

CEP *Present – overall picture*

A range of structures/organization and roles/activities

The following represents a small “snapshot” within Europe

... selected to illustrate the range

There are many other examples that could have been described

CEP Present – overall picture

A range of approaches to organization

- ✓ Formal
- ✓ Integrated with main probation service provider professionals
- ✓ Organised with NGOs/Civil Society

NGOs often recruit and deploy volunteers who are involved in a wide variety of activities

- ✓ Single focus, for example resettlement from prison,
- ✓ Multiple focus
 - ✓ within the justice system, for example resettlement, mediation
 - ✓ within the justice system and with other (non-offender) client groups

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CEP Present – Organisation 1

INTEGRATED Volunteers and Professionals

NEUSTART – Probation Service - Private not-for-profit organization

Volunteers and Professionals working closely together

Number of **volunteers** – **992** (f 59.85% m 39.72%)

Number of **professional employees** – **432** (f 57.4%, m 42.36%)

Role - personal tutor, social work

AUSTRIA



Requirements include

Standardised selection
Compulsory education curriculum
Team working led by professional, regular team meetings
Full case responsibility (supervisory control by team leader)
Selected cases, maximum 5 clients
Quality manual for volunteers
Expenses

Significance includes

Additional
- know-how and work experience
- personal potential in supervision
- external resources
Experience – 8.5 years average
View from outside
Ambassadors of values
Cost reduction (but high quality supervision)
Connection to society

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Present – Organisation 2... and future

IRELAND

The Probation Service *actively supports and promotes the work of volunteers through funded NGOs.*

In total, the Probation Service funds over **60 Community Based Organisations (CBOs/NGOs)** providing services and interventions.

All CBOs/NGOs are **charitable bodies with volunteer boards of management** overseeing service delivery, management and strategic policy in concert with the Probation Service.

UK - ENGLAND AND WALES

HM Prison and Probation Service

12 (new) Regions

Probation Service delivers core probation tasks

Regionally Contracts and Commissions

Specialist Services, including civil society

Integrated approach - **Co-location encouraged** to support reintegration: probation officers, **volunteers**, police, prisons, health

Volunteers may include **peers**

“Clinks” provides national support of voluntary and community sector in justice system



Present – Roles/activities - Reintegration

Gevangenenzorg Nederland (Netherlands)

- One of 100 affiliates of Prison Fellowship International (60,000 Volunteers globally)
- NGO – allowed visits outside of family visits time
- **Volunteers meet prisoners in prison, meet families, and follow through after release**
- *“Merciful justice, helping prisoners and families to restore their lives during and after detention”*
- *“Trustworthy, listening, non-judgemental - people from society, investing time and energy in their future, for no apparent financial or other benefit to the volunteer”*
- **Govt. annual budget for NGOs about 4 Million Euros, 40 recognised NGOs, and 4,000 volunteers**

The Clink Restaurant Charity (UK)

- In partnership with Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service
- "Clink Integrated Rehabilitation Programme (CIRP)" – 11 years
- Training and work experience – *hospitality and horticulture industries*
- Involves industry professionals, mentors and others
- Delivers **12 training projects**: *4 prison restaurants, 3 gardens, 3 kitchens, 1 events catering business and 1 cafe.*
- National qualifications and soft skills
- Integrated Programme in prison and post-release: *Recruit, Train, Support, find Employment and Mentor.*
- *Mentors assist with CVs, ensure somewhere to live, job interviews, meet at gate, ongoing support 12 months +*
- *280 hospitality employers*
- **65.6% reduced reoffending; £1 philanthropic funds = £4.80 national saving**
- **Circa 100,000 customers dine in prisons, 1 million customers in total – changing public perceptions of prisoners.** National awards. All four restaurants achieved **No 1 on TripAdvisor** (on one occasion at the same time!) – suggesting **support strong public**

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Present – Roles/activities- Peer Mentoring

ST GILES UK - charity using expertise and real-life past experiences to empower people...

"Turning a past into a future"

- **Multiple focus** including people caught up in crime or a combination of issues
- **Prevention, resettlement, reducing reoffending - Peer Advisor Programme – 35 male and female prisons** - majority of peer advisors embark on qualification whilst in prison

KRIS (Criminals Return Into Society) – Sweden

- Formed 1997 by individuals with long history of involvement in crime and drug misuse
- Association of *people with similar experiences - supportive network for individuals wishing to leave a life of crime and drug abuse behind them.*

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CEP Present – Roles/activities- Peer Mentoring

Shannon Trust – UK - Peers improving literacy

- “We inspire and train prisoners who can read to teach prisoners who can’t.”
- Uses “Turning Pages”, a phonics based reading programme
- Prison schemes are also supported by visiting volunteers based in the community

SAMARITANS – UK and Ireland

- **Peer “listener”** schemes in prisons supports those who are struggling to cope
- Telephone, mail, and visit support from volunteers based in community (may also support staff)
- Samaritans services are confidential, whether in relation to individuals in prison, or any other setting

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Present – Roles/activities

Multiple Volunteer Roles

Le Cheile Mentoring – Ireland

- Youth Mentor
- Parent Mentor
- Restorative Justice Volunteer
- Victim Panel Volunteer



Le Cheile MENTORING

Home What We Do **Volunteer Now** Publications News About Us Contact Us

Recruitment and Training

Youth Mentor
Case Study: Amy and Caroline
Case Study: Connor and Adam

Parent Mentoring Volunteer

Restorative Justice Volunteer

Victim Panel Volunteer

Administrative Volunteer

Volunteer Now

Make a difference in a young person's life – volunteer as a Le Cheile Mentor.

Apply Now!

Volunteer as a mentor and work with teens and families involved with Young Person's Probation.

Our services are delivered by trained volunteer Mentors, aged 21 and over, who act as positive role models in the lives of the young people and parents who use our services (Mentees).

A Mentor's role is to build a trusting and supportive relationship with their Mentee which they do through a programme of community based activities and goal setting. Mentors encourage their Mentee to try new activities and work towards the goals they have set for themselves.

•Independent research with young people who have offended and their parents., reported they *really appreciated the fact that the mentors are volunteers*. They often have many professionals involved already – they *value the relationship, the chats, the encouragement and hope*.

•Le Cheile's mentoring service is a *partnership with the statutory Probation Service; evidence of statutory - voluntary partnership working well* with young people with high levels of need, with *effective training, support and supervision provided by Le Cheile for the volunteers*. (Italics added) 20



Present – Roles/activities -Work with Women ...

The Footprints Project (England) – Gender Specific Support for Women

Reintegration

- Visited by **specialist female member of staff**
- **Assess needs and offer additional support** around domestic violence, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
- Women are **matched to female mentors who continue the gender specific support in the community**
- **Services include;** meet at prison gate, transport to local area, ensure immediate needs met such as health registration, probation meetings, financial support registration, foodbanks
- **Mentor support may be weekly, plus phone, for as long as required**

Female Out of Court Diversionary Scheme in partnership with police

- Women who are **classified as vulnerable and at the point of arrest** of committing a crime
- For the first time, or have previous criminal record but have not offended in the past 2 years.
- **Given conditional caution and opportunity to work with project rather than offence progressing to court.** Vulnerabilities include mental health problems, women living in coercive or controlling relationships, domestic violence, and committing petty crime to support their family.
- **Meet specialist worker once a week for 4-6 weeks - then offered on-going volunteer support**

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Present – Restorative Approaches

Community Restorative Justice Ireland

- **Delivers a range of accredited restorative justice practices and programmes designed to empower individuals to resolve issues that affect their quality of life**
- Mediation services, advice services, intervention services, other forms of support
- **Volunteers receive accredited restorative justice training** and must pass comprehensive background check.

Restorative Solutions (England and Wales) - Volunteers receive one day induction and 3 day accredited training, plus group and 1:1 supervision. May lead to professional qualification.

Work with people convicted of harmful sexual behaviour

Circles UK (2008); Circles of Support and Accountability – “COSA” (UK England and Wales, Latvia, Netherlands, Ireland, and other jurisdictions)

COSA – a **group of 4 – 6 volunteers** who work with the core member (the person with the harmful sexual behaviour)

Meet regularly - over time a group cohesiveness develops

The circle **supports the core member in the community encouraging them to be responsible and accountable for their behaviour**, and links with outer circle including professionals

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Present – Roles/activities Overseas Prisoner Reintegration and Support

Support for prisoners detained overseas (Netherlands)

- Dutch **volunteers living in the country of detention visit prisoners and provide a range of assistance** guided by Dutch Probation Service resources and a team of international probation officers in the Netherlands
- Detention abroad causes additional social exclusion resulting in decreasing chances of reintegration and increasing risk of reoffending
- Assistance includes help in dealing with stress, addressing practical problems, emotional support, and preparation for return

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Community Probation Volunteers *Past, present ... future*

World Congress for Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration

KYOTO Declaration on Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration

*Recognising value, promoting the role ... in support of reintegration, preventing crime,
and constructing peaceful and secure communities*

Important areas for future development - including evaluation...

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Community Probation Volunteers

Past, present ... *future*

JIVE REPORT 2015 – FINDINGS INCLUDE -*

“Overall, the results of the study indicate that organisations which involve volunteers are moving towards **further improving** their **standards**, through the use of **recruitment strategies, standardisation and quality management**.

However, to truly modernise volunteering, it must **lose its image of** being an activity which people just **do for personal, altruistic reasons**, and move towards *becoming a key social networking activity grounded in a commitment to civic engagement*.

Volunteering should be seen as an integral part of the rehabilitation process, not as simply an add-on or free resource” .

*“Volunteering is freely given, but not cost free –
- it needs and deserves targeted support from all stakeholders”*

(Emphasis added) Justice Involving Volunteers in Europe

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Community Probation Volunteers

Past, present ... *future*

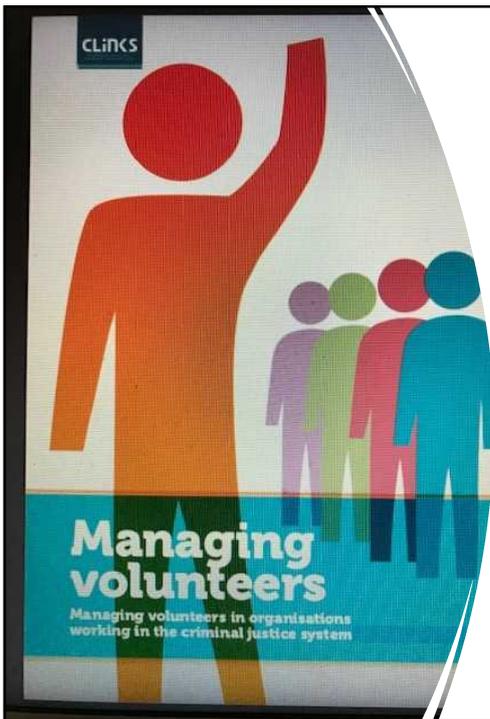
JIVE REPORT 2015 – RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE -*

- European mandate to promote **improved integration of justice and voluntary sector** services
- European standard of **accredited training** to improve response to complex target groups
- Improve **recruitment, training and support** to reflect a demanding voluntary role
- Adequate **resources and volunteer’s value** recognized
- Invest in a **culture of volunteering**
- Recognise **diversity**
- Reward, recognize and motivate**
- Improve **evaluation**
- Support volunteering** to build **healthy, resilient communities**

*Justice Involving Volunteers in Europe

(Emphasis added)

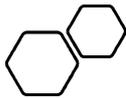
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Community Probation Volunteers Past, present ... *and future*

- A new resource about volunteers
- Clinks (2020)
- “Managing Volunteers in organisations working in the criminal justice system”

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Community Probation Volunteers Past, present ... *future*

Closing remarks -

KYOTO Declaration on Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration

*... highly significant step towards enhancing the role of
community probation volunteers – and their support at a
global level - of reintegration, preventing crime, and
building peaceful and secure communities*



Thank you for your Attention!

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