

# Probation *works*

Newsletter of the Probation Service (Ireland)

May 2015

**In this edition of *Probation works*:** Minister Fitzgerald launches Joint Probation Service – Irish Prison Service Strategy, Council of Europe News, The Probation Service in Numbers, CEP Board meeting, Le Chéile Mentoring Project celebrates 10th birthday, Probation Service host Restorative Justice Seminar, IPRT publish 'Turnaround Youth' Report, Probation Service Diversity Champions Programme

## Message from Director

On the 18th of May, the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service published our new Joint Strategic Plan, 2015-2017. This new plan builds on the foundation and success of the previous (2013-2015) one, and specifically on the strong commitment to interagency working by the two Services (Probation and Prisons). One of the actions included in the joint strategic plan is a commitment to ensure that a joint review of funded addiction services for offenders in prison and in the community is carried out. Minister for Justice and Equality, Ms. Frances Fitzgerald TD, in launching the joint strategic plan, emphasised the importance of this addiction service review, especially given the prevalence of substance misuse among the prison and probation populations.



Last month, in the context of our commitment to improve inclusion and to acknowledge diversity among all our stakeholders, I was delighted and honoured to host the formal launch of our membership of the GLEN Diversity Champions programme. Diversity Champions membership invites and challenges all of us in the Probation Service to ensure that every member of staff is respected and valued, and that our policies, culture and services are inclusive.

As part of our ongoing project to build the quality of our programmes, based on evidence-informed practice and professional values, we have continued to put in place improved operating procedures and standards, which we have also already begun to review and evaluate, with a view to ensure our services are the best they can be. Last Monday, Minister Fitzgerald also received our 2014 Annual Report, and that of the Prison Service. The Annual Report sets out our key achievements over last year, and our performance measured against targets for 2014. In addition, both Annual Reports contain a summary update report on progress on the Joint Probation Service-Irish Prison Service Strategic Plan, 2013-2015. The Minister was fulsome in her praise for staff in the two services for their achievements, as reflected in the reports. I also want to acknowledge the diligence, commitment and professionalism of our staff, in achieving what we have done, together with our partners. The road ahead will be no less challenging, but also equally rewarding.

The next edition of *Probation works* will be published in July.

## Vivian Geiran, Director



Director, Vivian Geiran attended the most recent meeting of the Council of Europe's (CoE) committee on penological co-operation, the PC-CP, last month (April). Topics discussed included radicalisation towards violent extremism among prison and probation populations, review of European Rules on Community Sanctions and Measures, and the upcoming 20th CoE Conference of Directors of Prisons and Probation, which will be held next

month (June). A summary report of the most recent PC-CP meeting is available on the CoE website or by clicking on the icon.



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## Minister Fitzgerald launches Joint Probation Service – Irish Prison Service Strategy 2015 - 2017



The Minister for Justice and Equality Ms Frances Fitzgerald, recently launched the second *Joint Probation Service – Irish Prison Service Strategy 2015 to 2017* in the Probation Service Headquarters in Haymarket, Smithfield, Dublin 7 on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The joint strategy sets out how the two Services will work together with their statutory, community and voluntary sector partners to provide a multi-agency approach to offender management and rehabilitation from pre to post imprisonment.

Launching the Joint Strategy Minister Fitzgerald said



Joint Irish Prison Service-  
Probation Service Strategy  
2015-2017

***“The purpose of the joint strategy prepared by the Prison and Probation Services is to focus on interventions that encourage the development of a multi-agency problem solving approach. The second joint strategy builds on the work already underway reflecting the integrated approach to working with offenders by the two Services – work which is closely aligned to the focus of rehabilitation and reintegration contained in the report of the Penal Policy Review Group.”***

The Minister also took the opportunity to welcome the publication of the Probation Service and Irish Prison Service's respective Annual Reports for 2014.

Speaking about the publication of the Probation Service Annual Report 2014, Minister Fitzgerald said,

***“The Probation Service continues to focus on increasing efficiencies in the way it does business within the criminal justice sector. Working with their colleagues in other agencies I can see that they are firmly on the road to supporting a just and effective penal system as envisaged by the strategic review of penal policy.”***



Probation Service  
Annual Report 2014

The 2014 report outlines out how the Probation Service focused its work on the delivery of effective programmes, women offenders, young offenders, the provision of assessment reports for the Courts and the management of sex offenders. Progress is reported on implementing the key objectives in the Probation Service Strategy Statement for 2011 - 2014 and developments during the year are outlined.

Referring to the Prison Service Annual Report Minister Fitzgerald said:

***“Despite a small increase of 2.7% in the total committals to prison the overall daily average number of prisoners in custody has continued to fall. The overall daily average number of prisoners in custody in 2014 was 3,915 compared to 4,158 in 2013, a decrease of 5.8%.”***

There were 16,155 committals to prison in 2014 compared to 15,735 in 2013. The increase is attributed to an 8% increase in the numbers committed on sentences of less than 3 months specifically those committed for the non-payment of a court ordered fine.



Irish Prison Service  
Annual Report 2014

The 2014 Annual Report for the Irish Prison Service sets out the progress made in relation to its strategic actions and also outlines developments during the year. The report provides an overview of the Service, general information on the prison estate, and reports on progress made to the end of 2014 on the Service's Three Year Strategic Plan which was launched in April, 2012.

Copies of the Joint Strategy and both Annual reports are available on the respective websites [www.probation.ie](http://www.probation.ie) and [www.irishprisons.ie](http://www.irishprisons.ie) or by clicking on the relevant icon above.

## CEP (Confederation of European Probation) Board meeting in Riga, Latvia



The Board of CEP (Confederation of European Probation) had its 83rd meeting in Riga, Latvia on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th April 2015. Gerry McNally, Assistant Director, is a CEP Board member nominated by the Probation Service. The CEP Board considered important Probation policy and practice issues including the role of public and private sectors in providing probation services, actions for the transfer of community sanctions across borders in Europe and co-operation with other criminal justice services and agencies.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Conference of Directors of Prisons and Probation

The 20th CDPPS (Conference of Directors of Prisons and Probation), entitled 'Radicalisation and Other Strategic Challenges,' will be held in Bucharest, Romania on 9-10 June 2015, and will have radicalisation to violent extremism as its main theme. The conference will have inputs from a range of international experts and practitioners. Vivian Geiran will chair one of the plenary sessions of the conference. More information on the CDPPS conference, including the full programme, is available [here](#)



## The Probation Service in Numbers\*

**450** - prisoners released on Community Return, under probation supervision, in 2014.

**15,134** - offenders dealt with by the Probation Service in the community in 2014.

**2,179** - Community Service Orders made by Courts in 2014.

**14.8%** - of all referrals to Probation, from the Courts, were female.

**€5,000** - the average cost of supervising someone on a Probation Order.

\* (Source: Probation Service Annual Report, 2014).

## EuroPris newsletter published

The May 2015 edition of the EuroPris newsletter has been published. The newsletter can be accessed by clicking on the icon.



## Courts Service Magazine published

The May 2015 edition of the Courts Service E-zine has been published. The magazine can be accessed by clicking on the icon above



## Le Chéile Mentoring Project celebrates 10th birthday with launch of its new Strategy



On the 5th May, Le Chéile, Mentoring and Youth justice Support services launched its 2015-2018 strategy, Inspiring Change, Transforming Lives. In launching the strategy, the Minister for Justice and Equality Frances Fitzgerald TD, congratulated the organisation on the occasion of its 10th Birthday and welcomed the important contribution which Le Chéile has made in supporting and diverting young people from crime.

The new strategy outlines how Le Chéile will build on the experience of the last 10 years to deliver programmes and approaches which have been proven to result in better outcomes for young people and make communities safer places to live.

The huge work and unique perspective of volunteers, who are the bedrock of Le Chéile, was acknowledged. All who attended the launch found the various presentations beneficial and uplifting in particular the inputs from both a mentor and a mentee who worked so effectively in partnership with Le Chéile and Probation Service staff.

The Strategy can be accessed by clicking on the icon.



## Probation Service host Restorative Justice Seminar



The Probation Service was pleased to recently host an important Restorative Justice Seminar entitled 'Meeting the needs of victims of crime: exploring the challenges and potential benefits for crime victims within the restorative process' at our Haymarket offices on 6th May 2015. The seminar, which was one of the follow up actions from the 2013 Restorative Connections Conference "Developing a Road Map across the Island", proved to be a great success and offered much food for thought for all attending delegates.

The seminar was planned and organised by an interagency committee with representatives from North and South and chaired by Peter Keeley, Director of Restorative Justice Services. The purpose of the seminar was: to provide a forum for victim advocates and restorative practitioners to identify and discuss the challenges within the Restorative process for victims of crime, to promote greater understanding and to develop new working relationships and networks. The event was attended by a range of Agencies working in the area of Victim Services, Volunteers and by Representatives from all sections of Criminal Justice

In his Opening Remarks, Vivian Geiran, Director of the Probation Service, described the event as both significant and timely as the European Directive on "establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime" will be transposed into Irish legislation at the end of the year"

The schedule, through formal presentations and workshops, brought together theoretical perspectives from Professor Kieran McEvoy, Queens University, Belfast and Maria McDonald BL and experiential inputs from those who had engaged with Restorative processes.



## Probation Service Diversity Champions Programme

GLEN is a policy and strategy focused organisation which aims to deliver positive change for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Ireland, ensuring full equality, inclusion and protection from all forms of discrimination. Equality in the workplace is a key priority and to ensure workplaces are safe, respectful and inclusive for all employees including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. GLEN works with employers, employer's bodies, trades unions and statutory bodies to develop good and best practice in supporting LGBT diversity in the workplace.

Diversity Champions is a workplace programme designed specifically to assist employers benefit from the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees. Diversity Champions supports leading employers in communicating their commitment to LGBT diversity and inclusion.

As part of the on-going commitment to inclusivity and dignity in the workplace, the Probation Service is delighted to join our justice partner organisations, An Garda Síochána and the Irish Prison Service, in taking up this membership. From the Probation Service perspective, it is anticipated that participation in Diversity Champions will assist in better support and ensuring our policies, culture and services are more inclusive.

For more information in relation to Diversity Champions and GLEN visit their website <http://www.glen.ie/>



## ACJRD Martin Tansey Memorial Lecture 2015

The 8th Annual Martin Tansey Memorial Lecture entitled "Building Trust and Confidence - Challenges and Opportunities for An Garda Síochána" was given by Garda Commissioner Noirin O'Sullivan on Wednesday 1st April at the Criminal Courts of Justice, Parkgate Street, Dublin 7. In her lecture the Commissioner outlined her vision and plans for An Garda Síochána as a responsive policing service in communities before a large expert and receptive audience made up of criminal justice, community and other interests.

The Martin Tansey memorial lecture will be published in Irish Probation Journal volume 12 later this year and will be available on the ACJRD website at [www.acjrd.ie](http://www.acjrd.ie).

## New Research Reports published

RAPt, (the Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust), a UK based charity who work to help people with drug and alcohol dependence have recently published three Research and Policy Briefings Papers. The briefings, which were formally launched at a reception at the House of Lords, examine the evidence RAPt has compiled into what works in reducing drug and alcohol related crime.

The first three papers, focus on key areas of their work: why reducing drug-related crime is important, substance misuse and mental health in prison and a successful approach to tackling drug-related crime. It is hoped that the conclusions of these papers, and the ones that will follow, provide important lessons for policy in the UK Health, Justice and Home Departments in the next 5 years.

Further papers will be published over the course of the year, providing a comprehensive insight into the interrelated issues of substance misuse, mental health, prison and reoffending, as well what can be done to improve these areas going forward. The first of the three papers can be accessed by clicking on the icon above.



## European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders project 2012 -2014 Justice Co-operation Network (JCN) – final Report publication

Estonia, Finland, Ireland and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Germany), with the University of Greifswald as advisers, were partners in an EU funded project to examine and develop best practice in the transition management and supervision of high risk offenders leaving custody as well as developing a body of knowledge and creating a Europe-wide network of expertise. Ireland, through the Department of Justice and Equality, was represented in the project by the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service.



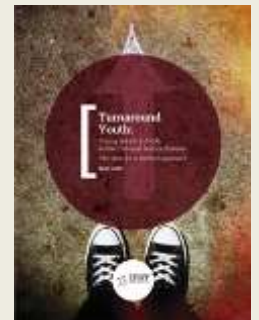
The project began in November 2012 and concluded in October 2014. The work of the project was completed in a series of workshops convened in the partner jurisdictions, published reports and the project conference in autumn 2014.

The JCN project has been a significant success in developing the framework for a European network, identifying best practice models and establishing key standards in the transition management, supervision and resettlement of high risk offenders. It has shown the significant progress that can be achieved and promoted in transnational European co-operation and shared learning.

The Final JCN Project Report has now been published and can be accessed on the Probation Service website by clicking on the icon above.

## IPRT publish 'Turnaround Youth' Report

The Probation Service was pleased to respond to the recent report from the Irish Penal Reform Trust, entitled Turnaround Youth, at its launch in the Irish Film Institute on the 12th may 2015. The report considers the growing recognition worldwide of the need for a different criminal justice approach for Young Adults (18-24), reflected in a range of international policy and legislative measures. It provides a series of proposals to the Department of Justice and Equality in relation to the provision of a discrete criminal justice strategy for this age group.



Welcoming the content of the report on behalf of the Probation Service, Ursula Fernée said that its content would contribute to further informing Probation Service interventions to promote, hasten and sustain desistance amongst young adult offenders.

The report can be accessed by clicking on the icon above.