

**Innovative strategies for the prevention of re-offending**

Practices and recommendations for local players

This publication is the fruit of the collaboration between

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## The interest in taking action....

Re-offending is an irksome phenomenon, not widely known and subject to portrayals appealing to our personal motives. We easily have in mind an outline of paternal sanction that puts an end to childish distraction with, at the end of it all, the promise to never start over again, with one's word being kept fairly frequently. We would like our system of sanctioning to function in the same way — the arrested offender must confess his fault and promise never to do it again — but it does not always work like that.

The few scattered studies across the world reflect a more complex reality. First of all, it is not frequent for an offender to let himself get caught. The functioning of our penal system does not allow of high percentages in solving the most commonly committed crimes. And when the offender does get caught, only part of his reprehensible acts is elucidated. Thanks to surveys of self-reported crime, it has been established by criminologists that the acts committed are numerous over more or less long periods. It has also been established that sanctions apparently do not lead to arrest, this being particularly true for prison. Reality is more complex. One gets involved in crime step by step, and the seriousness of offences can remain low; but one can also embark on an escalation. It is also established that escaping from crime happens progressively, with a decrease in the number of acts or a regression in seriousness. These observations, shared between different countries, appear appropriate to the analysis of causes of crime. The multifactorial analysis of crime brings out the fact that these causes do not disappear overnight and that society's response can be ambiguous. The fight against re-offending is a complex undertaking, the first verity being that it is not the monopoly of any one individual or institution. Justice gives a 'penal signposting' to the person's behaviour, but it is up to society as a whole to mobilise and put an end to the criminal career path.

The offender is a person belonging to a community of interests, neighbourhood, solidarity and citizenship. He does not lose his rights from this belonging, neither more nor less. His crime puts him in an awkward position vis-à-vis his fellow citizens who, often victims of the same social handicaps, do not react in the same way. Everyone has his or her own ways of adapting to the social or personal handicaps experienced. The prohibition of illegality is also an apprenticeship, like the duty of solidarity. It is advisable for the good of all to compensate for these lacks and allow the faltering person to grasp opportunities that the community offers him.

Who can best implement this policy of cultural, social and economic opportunities? The cities with their multiple, varied supply of development opportunities. Cities embodied in the person of the mayor. Social cohesion, the social bond between inhabitants of a territory are symbolised through his office. It is up to him to be the organiser and driving force behind the policy of fighting against re-offending. If the social body does not mobilise under the mayor's impetus to lend credibility to sanction, the latter will increasingly lose its structuring character for our collective life.

Michel Marcus  
Magistrate  
Executive Director

# INTRODUCTION

## **The prevention of re-offending: a priority for international and European institutions?**

The repetition of offences feeds European crime statistics in large part. The overall rise in prison populations is constant. Studies reveal that a limited number of persons commit three-fourths of offences in certain categories. Regardless of the organisation of criminal justice systems, re-offending rates range between 50% and 70% across Europe<sup>1</sup>, and the human and economic costs resulting from this crime are increasing in all the member-states of the European Union. This is why the necessity of implementing strategies for the prevention of re-offending is recognised as a priority by international and European institutions.

The Recommendations<sup>2</sup> of the Council of Ministers to the member states concerning new methods of dealing with juvenile delinquency and the role of juvenile justice emphasise the leads to follow in this matter: ‘The principal objectives of juvenile justice and the associated measures aimed at juvenile delinquency should be the following: preventing the first offence and re-offending; (re)socialising and (re)integrating the delinquents...’.

The objectives of the comprehensive strategies of the European Union in the areas of employment, the fight against discriminations and social inclusion, put the accent on a way of thinking that focuses on the importance of the social and economic re-integration of those being released from prison or young multiple-offenders.

Along the same lines, the Council of Europe, in the framework of its integrated programme ‘Responses to daily violence’<sup>3</sup>, has identified twelve principles of action. It is indicated that an ‘integrated national policy aiming at reducing daily violence should include, in particular, prevention centred on offenders: eventually, re-adaptation and reintegration of offenders in society and the prevention of re-offending should be considered objectives worthy of a comprehensive prevention policy.’

Since the European Urban Charter, proclaimed in 1992 and setting forth in its articles devoted to urban security and crime prevention that ‘the prevention of re-offending and creation of alternative solutions to incarceration constitute essential objectives’, the European Union has made the prevention of re-offending one of its overall strategic objectives. The European penitentiary rules, adopted since 2006, are an example of the evolution of

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1 These rates were observed empirically in the countries visited by the project.

2 Recommendation Rec(2003)20 of the Committee of Ministers to the member states concerning new methods of dealing with juvenile delinquency and the role of juvenile justice (adopted by the Committee of Ministers, 24 September 2003, at the 853rd meeting of the Ministers’ Delegates)

3 Recommendation 1527 (2001), text adopted by the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe, 27 June 2001, at the 21st meeting.

the attention of the European Union on this topic<sup>4</sup>.

### **What place for the prevention of re-offending in local security policies?**

Although the importance of taking action to prevent re-offending has been acknowledged at the European and international levels, the fact remains that it is at the local level that the commission of offences has the greatest impact. A certain number of local security policies taking prevention into account — in their diversities and complex histories across Europe — have thus been set up. But for many local elected representatives, re-offending is considered as lying within the competence of judicial authorities (acting rather at the national level) and thus not coming within their sphere of competence.

Prison being a closed world with its rules and principles, there is a real gap between the prison world and the outside, universes that rarely meet and often do not understand each other. If re-offending has now become a phenomenon reaching disturbing proportions, it is also due, in part, to a lack of dialogue and connection between the inside and the outside, and going from one to the other occurs abruptly, sometimes without prior preparation. Hence the failure of the reintegration of ex-convicts and back to square one: prison.

International organisations have clearly brought this to the fore: the prevention of re-offending has to come about through innovative actions. It is therefore necessary to get away from the strictly penal framework and propose alternative solutions making a link between prison and the outside. To do so, it is indispensable to mobilise new players and develop integrated solutions, for the approach built on a single angle — the penal response — has already demonstrated its limits.

Who then, aside from the judicial authorities, has an interest in investing and putting a lot of effort into the prevention of re-offending? The first answer that stands out is that the key players of these new policies are those people leaving prison themselves and the community that receives them, knowing that cohabitation frightens both sides. It is up to the mayor, as the first representative of the inhabitants of his municipality, to find the right balance in order to ensure that ex-convicts have as many rights as the citizens of the city, and that the latter do not feel threatened.

The cities, their elected officials and citizens must feel involved in the prevention of re-offending, because it is by favouring the social and economic reintegration of offenders and, especially young first-time offenders, it is possible to noticeably reduce the perpetration of crimes on the territory. By giving their vote and trust to their elected officials, citizens consider themselves entitled to a certain number of living conditions being ensured. Local authorities, concerned about the transparency and clarity of their actions, can then seize this opportunity to involve citizens in the decision-making process. At least, the population can be informed as to the advantages of a joint approach regarding the follow-up of those leaving prison.

4 Recommendation Rec (2006) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to the member states on European Penitentiary Rules (adopted by the Committee of Ministers 11 January 2006 at the 952nd meeting of the Ministers' Delegates)

A number of studies<sup>5</sup> have brought out the fact that re-offending is often due to a lack of choices for the person being released after a prison sentence. Although the authorities are not capable of providing an appropriate response to the basic needs of the ex-convict (housing, food, clothing — the latter two can be paid with the provision of a job), the sole option remaining for the former inmate is to procure them illegally. That amounts to, in the long- or short-term, a return to prison as well as to more or less serious inconvenience for the community.

Citizens and their elected officials therefore have an interest in working together on the conception and implementation of inclusive policies that guarantee the well-being of every level of the population and therefore intervene, in particular to facilitate the transition from the closed world of prison to community life. Thus, the prevention of re-offending becomes a major stake in social cohesion policies of any city, which allows for real gains in terms of sustainable economic and social development.

## **Context and work methods**

Reflection on the possibilities of improving the reintegration process of ex-convicts in order to reduce the re-offending rate has stirred interest on the part of local authorities concerned by any question relative to the security of inhabitants.

The efforts carried out in this sphere have focussed on particular groups of delinquents and on developing strategies for helping those leaving prison. In the framework of these interventions, the accent has been placed on help in finding employment and housing, on dealing with problems related to substance abuse, and on identifying potential supports in the framework of the family or the community. Former prisoners are in fact confronted with multiple problems that affect their aptitude for becoming law-abiding citizens. This is particularly true for high-risk offenders with long police records.

The attention paid to reintegration of offenders into the community constitutes the key element of every prevention programme and every intervention whose objective is reducing the rate of re-offending. These interventions include quite a varied range of measures and attest to efforts agreed upon in this domain by the criminal justice system, in collaboration with community bodies and agencies.

Today, very few rigorous evaluation studies that allow us to identify good practices and judge the effectiveness of specific interventions. Despite the limits shown by the evaluations carried out, it is nonetheless possible to bring to the fore certain forms of intervention that seem to have a positive effect by contributing efficiently to the reintegration of ex-convicts into the community and reducing the rate of re-offending. These programmes continuously cover the detention phase, the release from prison and the post-release period, their implementation calling for close collaboration between the public authorities,

5 Müller, T. 2004: Kommunale Präventionsgremien in Niedersachsen. Grundlagen, Rahmenbedingungen und Strukturen für eine erfolgreiche Netzwerkarbeit. Papier des Landespräventionsrates Niedersachsen Hannover 2004. [Http://www.lpr.niedersachsen.de/Landespraeventionsrat//Module/Publikationen/Dokumente/20050606\\_2\\_F87.pdf](http://www.lpr.niedersachsen.de/Landespraeventionsrat//Module/Publikationen/Dokumente/20050606_2_F87.pdf)



judicial bodies, social services, health agencies, families and community bodies.

However, these successful experiments of working on the reintegration of ex-convicts remain isolated actions that have been unable to benefit others, for lack of communication. It was precisely this observation that was the starting point for the idea of a cooperation project between European cities on the theme of preventing re-offending. There was strong demand on the part of the member cities of the European Forum for Urban Safety — an ONG bringing together some 300 European cities and regions on security issues — to work on this topic that affects the daily management of local security but for which a large portion of the elected officials felt powerless, deeming they did not have enough information or ideas to set up innovative, effective actions.

Convinced that they have a role to play in the prevention of re-offending, five European cities — Brasov (Romania), Göttingen (Germany), Le Havre (France), Opava (Czech Republic) and Valencia (Spain) — and a training and research institute, active in prisons — Società Ricerca e Formazione<sup>6</sup> (Torino, Italy) —, decided to pool their knowledge, go beyond their borders to look for viable solutions that could be adapted to different local contexts, test and propose leads for action at the local level. That happened in the framework of the European project 'Innovative strategies for the prevention of re-offending', coordinated by the European Forum for Urban Safety and partly financed by the European Commission in the framework of its Lifelong Training programme, via the Grundtvig Education for Adults sub-programme. The project's objective was to reflect on, analyse and try to implement actions and projects for the prevention of and fight against re-offending at the local level, with the tools that cities can make available and the resources they can mobilise.

This publication is in part the result of research carried out in the framework of this project on innovative actions in terms of prevention of re-offending at the local level in Europe and North America as well as pilot programmes set up in three of the partner cities. It also represents an invitation to cities to appropriate the results and improve upon them by adapting to their local context. From this point of view, this publication may be considered the starting point of future work to achieve at the local level, a minimal outline, which should be enriched by creative, innovative contributions at the level of every city envisaging the inclusion of prevention of re-offending in its local security plan.

Aimed at city players as much as at local elected representatives, given their catalysing role in the initiation of public partnership policies, as to practitioners in charge of setting up these comprehensive security policies, this publication is arranged in two main parts corresponding to the two levels of action: political and technical.

### *Work method*

Firstly, each partner in the project carried out a national study on existing activities in the sphere of the prevention of re-offending. Practical approaches were also observed during study visits organised in the municipalities represented in the project: Göttingen (Ger-

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6 Research and Training Institute

many), Paris (France), Torino (Italy) and Valencia (Spain).

Next, three of the six cities — Brasov (Romania), Le Havre (France) and Opava (Czech Republic) — were chosen as ‘pilot sites’ to try to develop and/or reinforce strategies and actions dealing with the prevention of re-offending, on the basis of knowledge acquired through exchanges with the other cities. These strategies and actions were accompanied by the experience of all the partners in the project and evaluated in order to meet the particular needs of each local context.

The target group of actions carried out included local practitioners in charge of prevention and urban security policies, those in charge of social cohesion policies, local elected representatives in charge of those policies as well as stakeholders working in prisons as prison or association personnel in charge of ensuring the transition and accompaniment towards freedom.

The project tried to respond to their need for a panoply of arguments and proofs allowing them to be convinced and to convince their environment that the fulfilment of the sentence, inside or outside the prison, is not always enough in itself to avoid re-offending and that the existing mechanisms for training and integrating the working world must be used — and sometimes rethought — in order to be adequate for the objectives. Social cohesion policies must integrate offenders in the interest of all. Actions of this type, of which results are difficult to measure, because they require monitoring over several years and are complicated to carry out. For those conducting them, the isolation is considerable. Networking these actions at the European level and giving them prominence has, in this framework, been an important support, especially for the pilot cities.

The results of the project’s work, accompanied by research in countries other than those participating in the project (Italy, Germany, Spain, France, Romania, Czech Republic) in the European Union and North America on the partnership based activities carried out at the local level, allowed for the elaboration of joint recommendations and principles of action for realising a local programme for the prevention of re-offending, with the goal of providing support to the local actors involved in developing these actions.

The first part of this study is intended as a methodological basis of work for practitioners, featuring operational suggestions, observations and outlines of leads for actions for the local players involved in the realisation of a programme or local action concerning the prevention of re-offending. This basis might also quite simply serve for the development and/or improvement of local strategies for the prevention of re-offending. Examples drawn from the experience of the pilot cities as well as research carried out in the framework of this project illustrate practices that turned out to be effective, taking into account the difficulties that the local actors had to confront.

The research work carried out in the framework of this project and including both innovative practices and European and international agreements, as well as experimentation in three pilot cities, allowed for defining a certain number of recommendations aimed at local elected representatives wishing to enrol in a European dynamic of comprehensive, integrated security policies. These recommendations and principles of actions will form

the second part of this study.

The overall objective of this publication is to convince local elected representatives that they have an essential role to play in the prevention of re-offending and to provide them with principles of action that are justified and legitimated in relation to European and international recommendations in this area, as well as by the compendium of innovative practices assembled here.



# 1

**Guidelines for  
Carrying out a  
Local Project to  
prevent  
re-offending:  
Methodology and  
Putting it into  
Practice**

## **Introduction: a few indispensable definitions**

Proof of the interest for cities in programmes for prevention of re-offending is no longer needed: social rehabilitation of those leaving prison ensures both their reintegration and consequently an important contribution to peace in community life and the tranquillity of the inhabitants. Local elected representatives therefore have a responsibility and a chance to reintegrate these persons into society by strengthening the social link that knits a community of inhabitants together. It is therefore essential to know the key elements indispensable to the elaboration of any local security policy targeting the reduction of re-offending rates.

It is in this perspective that the partners of the 'Innovative strategies for the prevention of re-offending' project, coordinated by the European Forum for Urban Safety (EFUS), engaged in a joint approach for two years, the goal being to effectively bring out the key aspects of a local policy for the prevention of re-offending.

As of the first meeting, a certain number of definition difficulties were raised, underscoring once again the complexity of working on a common base when definition borders vary from one country to another.

### *What is re-offending?*

This question arose during the first meeting between partners. What are we talking about? The committing of the same offence? Or the committing of another offence/crime that results in a second or umpteenth prison term? How many prison sentences are necessary for us to talk about re-offending? What's more, we must remember that a second prison sentence does not mean, necessarily, that there were no other offences after the first incarceration, but that justice was aware of only a certain number of events. The answers were not obvious, for there is no standardisation at the level of the legal criminal framework of the different countries represented in the project.

### *What is sanction?*

The debate on the meaning of sentence and sanction went well beyond the framework of this project, for it lies in a dialectic opposing different world-views. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that there seemed to be consensus around the table on the finality of the sanction oriented towards the compensation for losses sustained by the victims and towards the social rehabilitation of convicts leaving prison.

### *Who are the re-offenders?*

In order to try to better delimit the profile of the persons who would form the subject of research in the framework of this project, a certain number of points were raised:

- Age: knowing that legal procedures are not the same when it comes to minors or young adults and that, in addition, the age of legal responsibility varies according to the country (15 in some, 16 or 18 in others), it was decided to talk about measures intended to favour social reintegration and improve the possibilities for employment. One of the focuses of work therefore had to concern working-age persons sentenced to prison.
- Gender: another question concerned the distinction based on gender: should there be specific treatment depending on sex? Once again, the majority chose to make no distinction.
- The type of offence: should the study address first-time offenders or repeat-offenders? This distinction was not deemed pertinent, if one considers that the renunciation of crime is a progressive process and that an offence for which a sentence was delivered is generally followed by others.
- The nature of the offence: would research focus on petty crime or organised crime? All the partners agreed in acknowledging that the study should concern minor offences, which represent approximately three fourths of the statistics on re-offending.
- Another question concerned the fact of knowing whether drugs and alcohol were linked to re-offending. Since the project was centred on re-offending, this distinction did not seem sufficiently pertinent to give it special treatment but should be dealt with in a comprehensive approach.

*What is the target public of this project?*

Given that the project was intended to train local players in the specificities with a marginalised swathe of the population — those leaving prison —, it was clarified that the target group is made up of adults working in the services of different cities with young delinquents who are only indirect beneficiaries. The parents must also be included in the target group, since they are supposed to have a strong impact on the behaviour of their formerly delinquent children.

*What actions should be gone into more deeply and promoted?*

The prevention of re-offending, at the intersection of different authorities' actions (legal, police, local, associations, educational) with competences at different levels (local, regional, national), the choice was made in the framework of this project to consider the actions that can take place at the local level with strong involvement on the part of cities, preferably in partnership with other local players, with all action linked to the social reintegration of those going from prison into the community.

### *What is social reintegration?*

This question came up when the project was already underway, and a comprehensive response was provided following developments of the project. When it is a question of social reintegration, one generally refers to the aid granted to former prisoners after their release from prison in view of facilitating their return to society. However, a broader definition covers all the interventions following arrest: in particular, every alternative measure such as restorative justice or therapy, allowing the person having served a prison sentence to avoid a return to the criminal justice system.

Such a definition also includes sanctions within the community, which facilitate the social integration of convicted persons rather than marginalising them and subjecting them to the perverse effects of imprisonment. For those who are sentenced to a deprivation of freedom, the notion of social reintegration refers to all the programmes implemented in the correctional universe as well as post-prison interventions. The term 'reintegration' must not however be taken too literally, given that certain offenders, before entering prison, were already not integrated in the community, sometimes living on the fringe of society with a deficit of socialisation.



# I FOR A COMMON METHODOLOGY

One of the objectives of this project was to get to a common methodology for carrying out a local project for the prevention of re-offending. The difficulties in finding common denominators, whether at the level of the age of legal responsibility, the legislative framework specific to each country, or the different levels of competences of the various players brought to intervene in the career of someone leaving prison led the partners to admit that it was difficult to propose an innovative project model. On the other hand, it seemed more realistic to propose a common structure containing the essential questions to be raised before the implementation of such a project, knowing that the responses would necessarily differ from one country to another.

The partners' experiences as well as research work carried out in the framework of this project underscore the fact that any programme of prevention of re-offending must necessarily go through three phases:

1. Diagnosis
2. From partnership to action plan
3. Evaluation

## 1. Diagnosis

### A. Inventory

An inventory of the places adapted to each of the pilot sites was drawn up. Despite the very different political and legislative contexts, a certain number of similarities could be observed:

- In general, there is a profound break between prison and the outside world. Local authorities do not really feel concerned by the inmates, reckoning that it is up to the judicial system to take charge of them and that the city has no real role to play in prison. The only moment that might pose a problem is the release from prison, for those leaving prison usually tend to return to their city. Different studies have already proved that re-offending is often caused by the lack of appropriate responses on the part of local, regional or state institutions for integrating the former inmate into the community.

- Another observation that might be generalised is the lack of communication between the different players who intervene during the offender's incarceration. It can happen that prison welcomes representatives of the state education system to offer literacy and refresher courses for inmates. It can also receive representatives of NGOs that work on developing inmates' social skills. Nonetheless, it often happens that these different interventions are done in the form of parallel, non-coordinated interventions, hence a

reduced impact on the itinerary of the person leaving prison.

- Short-term stays (the most frequent for first-time offenders) do not permit the implementation of holistic programmes, which require long-term monitoring. Once outside, the former inmate often disappears from sight, as much from the prison authorities as from the educational authorities.
- The few reintegration programmes proposed are often ill-adapted to needs, for there is a real lack of knowledge on the part of the targeted public. The city's social services that receive the dossiers of those released from prison are not in a position to target and adapt offers according to needs.
- Finally, the policies set up are too rarely based on the results of factual research. Penal policy too often depends on the priorities of the moment and integrates too little long-term thinking about the causes of crime. The scientific studies that objectively evaluate the cost of detention in relation to the cost of alternative sentencing are often ignored.
- The change of personnel concerned by the prevention of re-offending on the territory of a city also poses a problem in terms of continuity, for new arrivals need time to adapt and learn about the way to manage an inmate's itinerary. It is often necessary to start from zero and be sure that new people continue to honour commitments made by their predecessors.
- The frequency of political and legislative changes also has a negative impact on setting up innovative projects or initiatives over time.

## **B. The stages of the diagnosis**

When the return of a former inmate to the community results in failure, it obviously brings with it economic and social costs that are not negligible. Moreover, it is necessary to take into account, beforehand (planning) and afterwards (evaluation), the savings achieved in setting up programmes for the integration of offenders. But it is, in any case, interesting for a city to try to do everything possible to avoid these additional costs. To do so, diagnosis must follow a certain number of stages before precisely characterising the strategy to implement:

**What are the risk factors** that may intervene after one is released from prison? In particular:

- Absence of housing,
- Unstable job situation,
- A lack of qualification or vocational training,
- The non-existence of family or social relations allowing for renewing relations with the outside world

**How to master them?** Evaluation studies carried out in the United Kingdom permitted identifying interventions that reduce the impact of risk factors, namely:

- Pre-school training,
- The literacy rate in the family,
- Information and support for parenthood,
- The acquiring of cognitive and social skills,
- Changes in school organisation,
- Learning to read,
- Psychological support of specialists,
- Access to care for persons with addictive behaviour

The effectiveness of these interventions varies, and no programme is totally satisfying. Certain interventions do not achieve their objective because only some of the inmates submit to the envisaged treatment. Indeed, the results depend in large part on the offenders' desire to assume their responsibilities and on their motivation to change. The participation of young inmates in academic and vocational training programmes, for example, runs up against several obstacles such as lack of knowledge regarding the stakes amongst the persons providing the training and programmes whose objectives conflict with one another. Inmates who follow the treatment programmes all the way to the end have more chance of reintegrating society than the others. Factors exerting a positive influence on participation in treatment programmes are:

- A high level of academic training (numerous years of schooling);
- No incident of sexual victimisation;
- Few prior incarcerations;
- Little tendency to minimise or justify the offence.

**What are the possible fields of action?** On the basis of the elements identified as having a positive or negative impact on the future path of a person leaving prison, it is possible to distinguish fields of action on which it is necessary to act to ensure a positive impact of programmes of prevention of re-offending. The list of them is summed up as follows by the Youth Justice Board<sup>7</sup> :

- Personalised handling of cases and transition /accompaniment towards responsible freedom
- Housing
- Education, training and employment
- Health
- Use of drugs or other substances leading to addictive behaviour
- Family and social relations
- Finance, indebtedness and public aids /allocations

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7 Youth Resettlement – A Framework for Action, publication of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/Publications/Resources/Downloads/Youth%20Resettlement%20Framework%20for%20Action.pdf>

**Who are the players concerned?** It is difficult to achieve good results if just one field of action is taken into account or if actions are carried out concurrently, without coordination. It is therefore necessary that release from prison take place with the crossed accompaniment of various partners who propose a comprehensive solution to each individual. The question that must be asked is not ‘Who does what now?’ but rather ‘What action has the most chance of bearing fruit at this time?’ and then deciding who will coordinate the action and with the support of which partner authorities. It is therefore essential that release from prison not be solely the affair of representatives of the penal system but that it bring together, round the same table, representatives from:

- the prison system
- the educational and vocational training system
- public housing agencies
- the city’s social services
- local employment services
- centres for physical and mental health care
- NGOs
- entrepreneurship

**What human, financial and material resources are necessary?** Before embarking on a project, it is advisable to make an analysis of needs in terms of human, financial and material resources. Thus, must be decided in advance:

- Who are the persons that the different partners listed above can employ with an aim to reducing re-offending; at what moment is their intervention necessary; what skills are indispensable for successfully carrying out their mission; what their needs are in terms of training to work with inmates leaving prison.
- What funds can be mobilised in this aim; resources that might come from a local, regional, national or European fund; subsidies from patrons; participation of private enterprises in the framework of public/private partnerships.
- What use of other available resources (premises for hosting training programmes, reception centres and shelters, health centres).

## **2. From partnership to action plan**

### **A. Partnership**

Once the inventory and diagnosis have been carried out, it is advisable to formalise the partnership in order to ensure a comprehensive, personalised taking charge of those leaving prison. Signing a partnership agreement allows for defining everyone’s roles and tasks, the

moments and means of intervention, the protocols for sharing information and ensuring the perpetuation of each partner institution's commitment.

Useful information for the construction of a prison release plan is more easily conveyed to the institutions concerned, and the timing of each intervention can be better determined. That often also involves an open-mindedness and a sharing of skills and resources that can only create synergies at the level of the comprehensive action envisaged vis-à-vis the person leaving prison. Thus is it possible to provide integrated responses to complex questions raised by the reintegration of ex-convicts to prevent re-offending.

Example: the collaboration protocol to fight against re-offending – Brasov, Romania

#### CONTEXT

- Before the involvement in this European cooperation project, there was no reference to re-offending in Brasov's local security policies.
- The existence of the high-security Codlea Penitentiary in the county of Brasov, 14 kilometres from the city, could not be ignored by the local authorities, which had no adapted solution for inmates being released from prison. Given its capacity, the prison takes in prisoners from other cities who, upon release, remain in Brasov, without being able to benefit from the city's social services since they are not residents.
- There was practically no communication between local authorities and prison authorities.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Inclusion of the theme of re-offending on the city's political agenda;
- The creation of a functional partnership thinking about the intervention framework;
- The exchange of information between the different players concerned;
- The search for solutions adapted to the situation of those being released from prison;
- The identification of good practices;
- The identification of fields of action on which the partnership can have an impact.

#### STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

Starting point of the project

Regular communication and free exchange of information between the partners throughout the project

Full commitment and support of the other partners for achieving the objec-

tives defined in the framework of the project

Cooperation with local, regional and national authorities in order to communicate on the objectives and results of the project, as well as for the dissemination of these results

Close collaboration between the various partners in view of ensuring the perpetuation of the project and expected benefits

#### Phase 1

First, an initial collaboration protocol was signed between the municipality of Brasov, the municipal police, which are put in charge, by the mayor, of ensuring law and order and public peace, and the Codlea High Security Penitentiary.

Agreeing on a joint action concerning those leaving prison, the city's social services, the municipal police and the prison's social services began to set up personalised monitoring, based on the needs assessment and the profile drawn up in prison by the social worker. This information was passed on to the municipal police and the city's social workers in order to ensure the reintegration of former inmates.

#### Phase 2

Practice has encouraged a larger number of stakeholders in prison to gather round the same objectives. It was deemed opportune to crystallise these informal cooperations in a cooperation agreement that brings together, round the same table, all the players supposed to intervene in prison and on the outside.

A broadened partnership with more complete monitoring was set up for residents of Brasov leaving prison (the others not being able to benefit from the various aids provided by the local authorities for disadvantaged and marginalised persons).

#### LEADER and PARTNERS

Leader: Municipality of Brasov

Partners: Brasov Local Council, through the services and subordinate units: Department of Social Services, Municipal Police, Centre for the Homeless, Codlea Penitentiary, Brasov Association for Urban Security and Mediation, County Employment Agency, Brasov General Management for Social Aid and Child Protection, NGO 'Diaconia International', Agapedia Romania Foundation, National Scouts Organisation – Brasov Branch 'Virgil Onitiu' Brasov, the 'Casa Sperantei' Protestant church.

#### RESULTS

23 persons have been followed since the beginning of the programme, of whom:

- 6 persons were able to obtain identification papers for their release from prison
- 6 persons found a job in Brasov
- 7 persons found a job abroad
- 1 person was able to get in contact and resume ties with his institutionalised children
- 19 out of 23 persons benefited from social counselling
- 1 person returned to prison after having re-offended

## EVALUATION

The project began less than a year ago, so it is premature to talk about evaluation strictly speaking. However, positive results could be brought to the fore in relation to the persons monitored since the beginning of the project.

In the long term, there is a proposal from the former vice-mayor, currently a Member of Parliament, to turn this pilot project into a law initiative so as to put into widespread use the principle of working in partnership as concerns re-offending, this representing an objective that goes beyond what the project had hoped to achieve.

## **B. Strategy**

The elaboration of an effective strategy for the prevention of re-offending can only be done as a partnership. It is the body of partners that decides on a strategy in keeping with the spheres of actions on which it can have an impact, after analysis of resources, risk factors and success. The partnership — already identified following the diagnosis shared, initiated and coordinated by the local authorities — decides which are the priority objectives and, for each of those objectives, identifies the measures to set up and the authorities in charge of carrying out the measures, as well as the coordination and evaluation methods, the indicators and periodicity of the monitoring.

It is interesting to note, for example, that before its involvement as a pilot site in this project, the city of Opava had no strategy concerning the prevention of re-offending. It was the cooperation with other European cities and the study visits organised in four of the partner cities that convinced it to provide itself with a comprehensive security strategy, with one part targeting the prevention of re-offending. After having identified the players concerned by the prevention of re-offending at the local level, the municipality took on the coordinating role of the partnership and initiated a think tank that resulted in the signing of a cooperation agreement between the partners and the definition of a joint strategy for the prevention of re-offending.

## Objectives and Measures

### Objective 1 – Reinforcement of social services

1.1) Creation of a durable system of cooperation in the framework of a strategy for the prevention of re-offending

1.2) Creation of conditions favourable to ensuring the financing of actions aimed at the social reintegration of former inmates

1.3) Training of the personnel involved in rehabilitation activities for those leaving prison

### Objective 2 – Reintegration of former inmates

2.1) Creation of conditions favourable to ensuring housing for ex-inmates

2.2) Creation of conditions favourable to improving the job supply for ex-inmates

2.3) Improvement of offenders' social skills through new or existing reintegration programmes

### Objective 3 – Communication/Marketing

3.1) Regular, long-term communication with courts and probation services; convincing them to impose participation in a reintegration programme as an integral part of the sentence

3.2) Initiation of discussions amongst experts on monitoring by a social worker of every person released from prison

3.3) Promotion of the project with the general public in order to obtain a favourable opinion on the progress of the integration programme in order to reinforce social cohesion

3.4) Promotion of the project with potential financial backers (public or private enterprises, association sector)

3.5) Promotion of the project with inmates to motivate them to enrol in a reintegration programme

## C. Action plan

After the creation of a formal partnership and the elaboration of a strategy, the next step involves setting up an action plan that includes concrete measures, carried out by clearly



identified players within the partnership, according to communication and collaboration protocols established by common accord. These protocols must not be rigid and are supposed to evolve to stay within realities of the field and take into account the first feedback of evaluation (*on evaluation, see the following section*).

Decisions on concrete measures of application should be at the intersection of the requests that the population of ex-inmates might have and what the city and its partners are capable of offering. For lack of correspondence between demand and supply of services, the gap between the closed world of prisons and the community risks to widen and trigger a re-offending process.

#### Example: City of Le Havre

Following the diagnosis carried out on the territory, all the partners concerned by the prevention of re-offending — this partnership being steered by the Social Cohesion Service of Le Havre City Hall — decided to set up two working parties, one on employment and the other on housing for recently released inmates.

Thus, on the occasion of a work group on 'housing and prevention of re-offending', it came out that the partnership was only partially mobilised.

Armed with recommendations formulated by its partners, the city of Le Havre defined a methodology for making progress on these two themes. In fact, there was a real desire for the partners to work together, but they did not know each other well, and it was necessary to surmount a certain number of obstacles.

The action was organised as follows:

- Defining the leader: the Local Security Contract was named coordinator of the work time to be spent on the different tasks to accomplish
- Defining the partners: Probation Services, PJJ (Youth Judicial Protection Services), NGO's, Mission Locale (youth services for employment, etc.)
- Defining the work methods

The technical committee then permitted validation of the process and it was decided that the partners would meet monthly. The fact that the validation is collective allows for giving a sense of responsibility to all the partners and thereby ensuring their involvement as well as creating a form of solidarity between them.

It was also decided that the operational method would be as follows:

- The funding come from the Governmental Interagency Fund for the Prevention of Crime.

- The NGO's, Mission Locale or justice services propose the case of a young person in the hands of justice.
- A monitoring committee, organised by the city of Le Havre validates situations.
- A charter is signed between the young person, the integration and probation counsellor and the referral agent (PJJ, Probation Services, member of NGO's)

The procedure will try to identify the obstacles to integration and mobilise funding opportunities that are insufficient outside of the common law, through a specific sum devoted to innovative, adapted solutions of training or integration.

### 3. Evaluation

#### A. Why is evaluation of the project important?

The first answer to this question (sometimes given by the local project coordinators) is that evaluation often concerns a demand by the body paying the invoices. But this sole justification is limited: evaluation is an important tool for improving professional practices and, consequently, the results of the project. Improving and progressing are essential processes, in particular when it comes to setting up innovative projects: a new practice with better results. Accepting, anticipating and preparing the framework for the improvement of mechanisms confirms above all the fact that a project falls within a dynamic and is not a rigid, routine process. This process must also show how the outside public benefits from the project's accomplishments and thereby contribute to improving the level of future projects, which will have integrated the do's and don'ts according to the experiences already implemented.

The evaluation process thus serves to:

- Support the project and verify that the objectives are achieved;
- Optimise the results by judging the value and quality of the project;
- Simplify decision-making and, if necessary, facilitate important changes.

**How to begin the evaluation process?** The evaluation process will be all the more pertinent and effective if begun at the outset of the project, at the first meeting with the partners or, better yet, during the preliminary meetings, when elaboration of the project is still underway. The coordinators, who are also responsible for the results, must anticipate possible reticence on the part of partners as concerns the object and way of evaluating. The

evaluation culture cannot correspond to their way of functioning, and it is then useful to have pertinent arguments to heighten their awareness to such a process. They will be able, for example, to adopt this type of strategy in other projects or on the outside. They must be encouraged strongly — the organisation that recognises the pertinence of an evaluation approach supports the whole partnership.

**Financial aspects.** Financial monitoring, just like the project's methodology, must be the subject of an evaluation from the very start, for the most common form of evaluation always relates to a balance between costs and profits. Consequently, it is important to take into account the time that the coordinator and all the partners will devote to it.

**Coming to an agreement on the project evaluation strategy:** Constructing an evaluation model is a difficult task owing to the diversity of contents, publics and partner organisations. Nonetheless, one always expects a project to obtain results at a certain number of levels, which predisposes the partners to choose a series of instruments of measurement for evaluating and showing the project's progress and accomplishments at each stage.

The difficulty lies in finding common denominators, for the various partners round the same table do not share the same evaluation culture nor do they use the same indicators for measuring the same phenomenon. It is incumbent on the coordinator to identify each partner's instruments of measurement and see which ones might be standardised and integrated by the whole partnership. Decisions must nonetheless be made on the basis of consensus. It is also possible that the multitude of points of view may bring out new indicators.

It is always the body of partners that decides which moments will be used as a point of reference, and at what periodicity the quality monitoring should be carried out.

**What to evaluate?** In every project, a certain number of questions must be identified as soon as work begins. That concerns the adequation between the project's objectives and the pertinence of the partnership, the action plan, the implementation measures and their realisation. As previously pointed out, it is a matter of identifying the quantifiable elements that will serve as an instrument of comparison between the pre- and post-implementation of the action. It is therefore important to list:

- The objectives to be achieved
- The measures that should put these objectives into practice
- The needs for achieving the objectives in terms of human, financial and material resources
- Potential financiers and the human, material and financial contributions that each partner can mobilise within the various services they coordinate for setting up the project
- The realisation indicators of these measures to be used throughout the implementation and at the end of the project
- Potential partners, their fields of competence and the nature of each one's intervention
- The partnership's strengths and weaknesses
- The hoped-for results
- The concrete changes that should intervene following the setting-up of the project
- The work methodology
- The monitoring methods to use as of the initiation of the project

## II TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Before going into detail and illustrating the possible actions that have an impact on the reduction of the re-offending rate, it seemed pertinent to define what are ‘innovative’ projects<sup>8</sup>.

### **Definition:**

One of the objectives of the *Innovative strategies for the prevention of re-offending* project was to identify innovative approaches to preventing re-offending. Although a technical innovation is relatively easy to identify, in the sphere of social work it is complex to determine whether the approach is innovative or not. To better target the definition in the framework of this publication, it seems useful to recall the very general definition of the term ‘innovation’. Innovations are new solutions allowing for a relative improvement expressed by numerous advantages in relation to a conventional approach. Two criteria must therefore be respected for an approach to be considered innovative:

**Novelty:** Novelty is attained if the changes are considerable in relation to the previous state. It is difficult to answer the following questions generally: At what moment is an action considered new? To what reference must a novelty be compared in order to be considered new? For example, an innovation may be recognised as such when only one aspect or element of the action is innovative or if a previously-used solution is transferred into a new context.

**Better results:** A newly developed response may be considered innovative if it is more effective in resolving identified problems than the current practice. It must be more efficient, i.e., allow for obtaining better results at the same cost or obtaining similar results at lesser cost.

These two criteria must be respected to evaluate the innovation of a particular response in the context of a project. There exist numerous other criteria for describing the quality of an innovation, but their utilisation in the context of a project aimed at exchanging innovative practices does not make their definition necessary. Moreover, further measuring the degree of innovation would have necessitated considerable means. In the framework of this publication, it is the ‘best results’ criterion that most specifically retained attention during the choice of practices, knowing that these were not evaluated in the literal sense of the term.

After a necessary detour via definitions and methodologies, the partners turned their attention to questions concerning concrete modes of action: How can the city and its services, within the limits of their competences, have an impact on the rate of re-offending?

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8 A ‘classification’ of innovative projects is also available in the appendix.

## 1. Thematic actions having a significant impact

In the light of the completed evaluations, it seems that the projects that have had the most success rely not only on actions carried out in prison as actions on the outside after release, which ensure the accompaniment and preparation for freedom. Practitioners, social workers and justice professionals in charge of inmates' social reintegration all agree with the statement that successful reintegration begins on the first day of detention. It is at this moment that the profile of every inmate must be drawn up, as well as the list of possible trajectories that may lead to a successful reintegration and thereby a reduced risk of re-offending.

Projects must be tailor-made and, as far as possible, encompass all the areas having a significant impact on the life of inmates, namely:

- housing
- employment
- qualification or vocational training
- access to care for persons with addictive behaviour
- maintaining family ties and social relations, which ensure the transition to a 'normal' life in society
- dealing with debts, financial management

### A. Housing

During the study visits made in the framework of this programme, directors of penitentiary institutions underlined that, for part of the prison population, the reason for committing crime, whether or not in a re-offending case, sometimes followed a survival pattern. Literature in this field<sup>9</sup> also shows that, in a certain number of cases of re-offending, in particular for offences of minor importance, the criminal act is the result of a lack of choice. Turned into social misfits, having broken off with their family or lost their housing and the means for providing a roof — precisely because of the period spent in detention — these persons come back to commit offences to obtain a prison sentence that ensures them room and board. For this category of person, in particular the homeless, it has been observed that offences committed coincide with the arrival of cold weather.

It is clear that if housing were assured after release from prison, the perception of the risk of losing that housing by committing a new offence would allow for reducing re-offending. However, cities have less and less rental spaces under management, and the housing problem has been pointed out in all the partner-cities of the project as the principal obstacle to an accompaniment that eventually leads to the social reintegration of the recent

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<sup>9</sup> Two decades of Juvenile Justice, Improvements since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989-2009, International Juvenile Justice Observatory, <http://www.oijj.org/crc20/index.php>

inmate. It is in those cases that the group of partners can demonstrate inventiveness and work together to find innovative solutions. Such is, moreover, the case of the city of Le Havre, which decided to set up a plan centred on the housing of released prisoners in the framework of its programme for the prevention of re-offending.

City of Le Havre: leader of the partnership with the public housing agencies, reception centres, the social SAMU, the Probation Services and the prison institution itself.

Starting from the observation of a compartmentalisation of services (see above), it appears necessary to create bridges between the different institutions. On the occasion of the 'prevention of re-offending and housing' work group, it appeared that the partnership was only partially mobilised, this constituting an obstacle to incarcerated persons' access to housing.

Thus, the probation offices noted the following obstacles:

- Rejection by inmates' families
- Reluctance on the part of housing centres to take in former inmates. In fact, the governmental strategy insists more on the necessity of providing housing for couples and families in difficulty than persons under the hand of justice who are temporarily excluded from society.
- Partners' lack of knowledge about arrangements for integration through existing housing.
- The emergency number, 115, even though more or less saturated depending on the season, is rarely called on by persons followed by the Probation Services.
- Concerning housing centres, which constitute the most appropriate solution, there are an insufficient number of places, and the criteria for admission are sometimes rigid. Improved access to these centres necessarily calls for an evolution in the partnership.

Thus, it is advisable to formalise the partnership on this subject through the signing of a charter. In Le Havre, this should concern a residence (UCJG, young workers' residence), the prison service and the manager in charge of housing for young people (the CLHAJ, Committee for the Housing and Habitat of Young People), and allow to put aside a few places.

A partnership with the CLHAJ was also initiated in order to permit information with the personnel (explain the methods for being taken charge of by the Probation Services in order to optimise common law). Later on, the CLHAJ will make a diagnosis to set up a particular, individual accompaniment.

Moreover, the city's principal public housing agency should also commit itself in this process and propose to put aside places in public housing for

recently-released inmates. A regular assessment would be made between the Probation Services and the housing agency in order to review the situation of those entering and leaving prison (in order, for example, to avoid debts mounting up while the person is incarcerated). The CLHAJ will carry out the accompaniment in this agency's housing.

Finally, the partners pledge to reflect on setting up a fund allowing for financing the remainder.

Here we shall also mention a project that has succeeded in setting up lasting solutions in terms of housing for recent inmates. As in other examples, success has been ensured by the crossed intervention of several players: prisons, local authorities, NGOs and private enterprises. This is the CASA project in Torino, Italy.

## PROJECT NAME: PROGETTO CASA – Torino, Italy

### CONTEXT

For the past few years, at the Lorusso e Cutugno Prison in Torino, experiments in accompaniment for work have been underway, through either activities inside the prison or social integration activities outside it.

However, it often happens that the end of the detention period marks the beginning of a new deprivation: that of housing. The difficulty of being able to satisfy this need engenders the obvious risk of misrepresenting the path taken by the inmate, with the consequence of negating the sense of the sentence and the value ascribed to it by the legislator.

The housing supply for persons in the hands of justice is often limited to temporary lodging to meet an immediate 'bed place' need, letting the ordinary housing market to satisfy the need.

### OBJECTIVES

The idea of the project is to devote considerable attention to housing, to favour 'voluntary' integration rather than the 'forced' integration of detention, and to get beyond the idea of the house as speculative property and instead constructing the idea of it being a place of solidarity and good living—together, sharing..

### STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

The Overland Casa association does not own the houses it manages but lets them in different ways: via the social housing bodies or directly on the property market. Tenants pay monthly rent to the association, this amount being, with the agreement of the tenant and his employer, deducted directly

from his salary. Every recent inmate can benefit from this arrangement for a year, at the end of which they are supposed to have acquired the necessary skills and resources for living in full autonomy.

#### LEADER and PARTNERS

Two organisations working with inmates in the Torino prison—SRF (Società Ricerca e Formazione) and the Puntoacapo social cooperative—founded a private-law association, Overland Casa, which has to manage the flats at the inmates' disposal. Everyone benefiting from these services is a member of the Overland Casa association. The association's statute and objectives provide for the organisation and management of temporary reception pending a definitive solution.

The association is part of a collaboration and exchange network made up of public institutions (municipality, the city's social services, prison integration services) and third sector organisations.

#### EVALUATION

The project was set up in 2001 and since renewed, for it is built on an outline that ensures its durability.

## **B. Employment**

According to the recommendations of the European Commissions's EQUAL programme, which has contributed to financing many projects aimed at the inclusion of marginalised persons such as former inmates, 'a job is the most important factor in the prevention of re-offending, so greater efforts are necessary to mobilise public and private employers and evaluate the other forms of job creation.'

It is therefore advisable to concentrate primary integration efforts of persons on housing and employment. As concerns the latter, the task may appear equally difficult, given that these people are sometimes destructured, lacking points of reference, and might have trouble managing their schedule. The fact that prison is a closed world where everything is organised in advance requires just a minimum on the part of inmates who, once they are released, have trouble bending to the requirements of the working world and making decisions on their own. However, independence and autonomy outside come about through stable employment, so it is essential to draw up a complete assessment of each person's knowledge and skills in order to be able to construct a personalised plan with him (or her) for vocational training or qualification.

Public/private partnership can turn out to be a valuable resource in achieving this objective. Even then, reintegration agents must canvass entrepreneurs and contribute to increasing the population's awareness as to equal opportunities. Since time in prison is always



stigmatising, it often constitutes an obstacle to getting a job. Local authorities can intervene in this area, either through employing in its services inmates who have been able to benefit from alternative measures, by providing them with a 'normal' work framework, or by proposing reductions in council and other taxes to private companies that hire inmates or former inmates.

A fine example of public/private partnership success for favouring access to employment of persons sentenced to prison is the one run by the Interm'Aide Association in Tourcoing, France.

**PROJECT NAME:** Reintegration by selective sorting, city of Tourcoing, France

#### CONTEXT

Observation: Out of approximately 200 persons followed annually by Interm'Aide, only ten could hope to find a job. Inmates released from prison had difficulties in finding work, both in the framework of reduced sentencing as well as upon release from prison.

A partnership concluded with « Triselec », the Judicial institution and NGO's allowed for proposing a contract outside of prison the goal being to propose reintegration to individuals in the hands of justice

#### OBJECTIVES

Proposing training that would lead to a job to avoid re-offending

Restoring dignity through work

Expected results: avoiding re-offending and reimprisonment

#### STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

The partnership offered inmates nearing the end of their sentence or able to benefit from reduced sentencing:

- Training for a growing trade (currently the sorting and recycling of waste)
- Training on a sorting line inside the prison, with training and an employment contract upon release
- A minimum of three months' training, discovery of products, sorting, introduction to computer skills
- Social and professional accompaniment of indeterminate length inside and after prison

Support is important for the results are encouraging towards a lower re-offending rate. Another image of prison has been developed, in particular thanks to communication by television, the press, ADEME (French Envi-

ronment and Energy Management Agency), prison newspapers.

## LEADER and PARTNERS

The initiator of the project is Jeanine Gheysen, through the Interm'Aide association in Tourcoing, an intermediary association that has been present for 20 years in Tourcoing's sensitive neighbourhood called 'La Bourgogne'.

A partnership agreement was signed by the project's official partners: the services of the Probation Services and Prison of the city of Loos, the DRTEFP (Regional Department of Work, Employment and Vocational Training), the employment services (ANPE), the R'Libre and Interm'Aide NGO's, and the Triselec Lille/Halluin company

## BUDGET

Three different budgets contribute to the implementation of this project, each body managing its own as follows:

Expenses: Triselec company: €60,906 for trainers, travel, writing off equipment costs; R'Libre: €18,000 for OPI (Individual project objectives) services; Interm'Aide: €36,000 for internal and external accompaniment, coordination

Revenues: covered; in part by the city of Tourcoing, the state, the employment services, the ESF (European Social Fund), sale of products, employee leasing agreements

## RESULTS

Real reintegration for the inmates, the certainty of an employment contract upon release

Cleanliness of premises, discovery of recyclable products

Drop in the re-offending rate: from 60% to 15% for the public concerned

## QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

- Main elements of success

The drop in the re-offending rate, the hope of a contract for the inmates,

Necessity of improving the inmates' standing with employers

Necessity of state involvement in the monitoring of existing actions

- Main obstacles and/or inadequacies

The sorting line being inside the prison, only internal waste is sorted; if there is the possibility of outside work, salaries would be higher and therefore reimbursement of private parties would be greater

Necessity of an existing partnership

Major recommendation: a clear agreement specifying the role of each partner

## PROSPECTS

The project has been renewed every year, thanks to the partners' involvement.

### **C. Qualification or vocational training**

On-site visits as well as research carried out in the framework of this project agree on the observation that one of the major factors in the risk of re-offending is represented by the poor employability of those leaving prison. The situation is clear and similar in most of the prisons visited in Europe: a high illiteracy rate, early dropping out of school, little or no professional qualification, a lack of temporal points of reference for respecting imposed schedules and finally, a lack of social and/or lucrative skills allowing for integration into a work collective.

To reduce the risks of re-offending and prepare for release in optimal fashion, every inmate must have the possibility of improving his employability. A complete integration programme must therefore include an in-depth evaluation of the inmate's individual skills so as to take into account his needs and aspirations at the moment of admission. It must also take into account and evaluate the needs to be filled in the job market, so it is important to survey potential employers. Training programmes offered in detention may thus be adapted to all these constraints.

Such approaches are in place in most of the member states of the European Union. Study visits allowed for identifying highly interesting approaches to the subject.

At the Göttingen open prison, one of the essential objectives is acquiring a technical skill, based on the wishes and needs of each person (no standard). Vocational training is done straddling the classic Göttingen establishments (for the theoretical training) and the centre itself (which has a carpentry and metal-working shop, a garden, a garage and a restaurant, all open to visitors). During the visit to the metal workshop, the director insisted on the specificity of the training. This is naturally an obligation inscribed in the young person's commitment to serve his time in the framework of the open prison but acts as a motivation for the present (courses and work on the outside, slight remuneration) and for the future (acquisition of a skill that can enhance his standing after release). The wager is to find a motivating activity, learn to meet needs of a market and integrate into a team and its working hours/constraints. This favours a different mental attitude from that of a young inmate and furthers reintegration upon release from prison, for the young person is already in a real-life context.

The Lorusso e Cutugno Prison in Torino provides another example of a closed world that is trying to open up a maximum to the outside world to prepare releases under good conditions. The prison receives several cooperatives, which organise the training of inmates in trades demanded on the labour market outside whilst ensuring three-month fixed-term contracts for inmates enrolled in the prison's training programme.

One of the workshops proposes learning the trade of fabric printer. Thus bags, t-shirts and caps are printed in the prison and distributed on the outside, with the cooperatives finding clients. Another workshop trains future auto mechanics. The local transport authority of Torino signed an agreement with the prison and cooperative providing training personnel for dismantling buses that are out of service and making minor repairs. This training aroused a keen interest from the inmates, the only problem being the limited number of places available, for lack of training personnel.

An original initiative, *Pausa Caffé*, is organised round a joint undertaking of fair trade and inmate reintegration work. It concerns coffee-roasting, the production of chocolate, and the packaging and sale of products made by employing inmates. The coffee and cocoa beans come from a village in Latin America that pledges to produce them in accordance with the natural rhythms of the earth without harming the quality of the environment. The cooperative coordinating the project organises the transfer of raw materials from the village in question to the Torino prison, trains and supervises inmates in the preparation and packaging of products, organises the distribution outlets and sales in general, and remits half the profits to the village inhabitants, the remaining half covering all the other expenses (logistics, training, distribution, promotion).

Finally, as in other prisons, Torino proposes a carpentry workshop. The specificity is that qualifying training is offered to the inmates, bearing in mind that it is necessary to attend classes for three years to obtain the diploma. This training thereby excludes straightaway inmates serving sentences of less than three years. An examination is set at the end, and a diploma, recognised by the Italian Ministry of Education, is awarded, with no mention of where it was delivered.

This latter experiment underscores one of the limits of the prison system, which can only have an impact on inmates serving longer sentences that allow for the construction of a long-term reintegration process.

It is up to the community, via the municipal services, to take over for persons leaving prison after relatively short sentences, who were unable to take advantage of training programmes during their incarceration. This is akin to an acknowledgement of powerlessness by the directors of the prisons visited in the framework of this project, who were aware that short sentences did not allow for the setting-up and completion of preparation programmes, which have a real impact on those leaving prison. In fact, after the few months of incarceration, most persons drop out of sight vis-à-vis social workers and educators active in prisons, and it is only in the event of re-offending that these services will see them again. Nonetheless, upon release there remains the same problem of lack of skills and failure to adapt to the requirements of the labour market.

Henceforth, it appears essential that the city's social services be in contact with those in the prison in order to be able to set up personalised monitoring of each released inmate and thereby offer more choices to this marginalised, stigmatised population in the goal of preventing their relapse into delinquency.

Through the contribution and coordination of the different reintegration services on a given territory, it is possible to obtain convincing results, as is shown by the following experiment in the city of Le Havre.

PROJECT NAME: 'Accompagnement croisé' ('Crossed Accompaniment'), City of Le Havre, France

## CONTEXT

The re-offending rate at the Le Havre prison reaches 50%.

All the professionals involved with inmates observe that re-offending applies mainly to a young public, a large majority of which encounters difficulties in integrating professionally.

Moreover, the transition between 'outside' and 'inside' remains problematical. Inside prison, social workers manage to meet with inmates and, for the most part, aim at reduced sentencing in view of early release. In this framework, the professionals are therefore perceived as 'the way out'.

Releases are sometimes decided rapidly, with the professionals not always informed, so it is difficult to make the connection with the structures present in the neighbourhoods.

The training programmes offered in the common-law framework do not necessarily suit the targeted public, taking into account individual problems and administrative waiting periods.

Finally, in order to permit real reintegration, it is important to be able to respond quickly to persons and propose short, qualifying training programmes to allow rapid access to employment.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Preventing crime – Implementing a crossed accompaniment to:

- enrol young people, whether first-time offenders or known for their high-risk behaviour, in an active integration process;
- keep young people who are in the process of dropping out of common law owing to time limits imposed by the implementation of itineraries in their active integration process.

2. Preventing re-offending by:

- reinforcing the means of receiving young people by the *Mission Locale* in prison;
- preparing the release from the prison environment;
- setting up an integration path as of release by facilitating access to short training programmes and capacitations allowing for rapid access to the job market corresponding to the needs spotted in local companies.

## TARGET GROUP

Young people aged 16 to 26,

- living in the pinpointed area: Caucriauville
- inmates of the Le Havre prison
- encountering integration difficulties owing to their status as first-time offender or presenting risks of crime due to their difficulties in integrating
- spotted by partners of the territory:
- not enrolled at the *Mission Locale*
- at odds with institutions:
  - without contact for three months and without a job during those three months
  - who do not follow up on steps initiated with the counsellor
  - who have not shown up at their last meetings with the counsellor
- in the process of dropping out of common law owing to waiting periods imposed by implementation of the process.

## STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

This is a matter of linking common law, association action and preventive action for accompanying, in a crossed, interactive way, young people integrated in the action. This crossed accompaniment will allow for constructing effective, reliable points of reference for the young person and give him a functional, reassuring framework for implementing the steps linked to professional integration.

This crossed accompaniment will take different forms (active orientations, three-party exchanges) and generate the creation of tools such as:

- A common file taking up only the planned steps in the young person's plan so that everyone—young person and stakeholders—have the same level of information on the actions to be carried out by the young person.
- A monitoring committee bringing together all the professional partners in order to study the young person's paths, difficulties encountered, obstacles to overcome and means to be activated for speeding up the process.
- A pledge signed by the young person, the counsellor from the Mission Locale and the association referral agent designated in the framework of this action.

This action provides for a sum of money enabling the speeding up of the process either by co-financing or by direct financing of specific actions useful to the young person at this stage in his itinerary. It can be a matter of:

- access to a short training programme enabling the obtaining of accreditation favouring rapid access to a job
- learning to drive during the waiting period before beginning a job and/or training
- short collective training actions aiming at adaptation to employment in terms of inter-personal skills
- various actions: athletic activity, medical consultation, etc.

#### LEADER and PARTNERS

The project was initiated by the team of the Local Security Contract (CLS) attached to the Cohesion Department of the city of Le Havre's Social Development Office. The works are coordinated by the CLS.

The city of Le Havre has developed a close partnership with the services of the Ministry of Justice — the Prison Integration and Probation Service (Probation Services) and the Juvenile Judicial Protection (PJJ) — in order to define methods for setting up the action.

Employment professionals: the *Mission Locale* occupies an important place as well as the associations.

#### BUDGET

€40,000 of which three fourths go to providing services (training, driving licence), and one fourth to remuneration of the training personnel.

#### RESULTS

The partners bring a positive outlook on this action.

The short vocational programmes seem to suit the situations of young people and allow for a rapid 'catching' between the counsellor and the young person.

Young people feel recognised and see a future taking shape.

The action allowed for better knowing everyone's missions and accompanying the young person in an interactive, structured way.

#### QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

In all, some forty persons were spotted, 14 of whom having benefited from funds granted within the National Crime Prevention Fund

Type of proposals and actions carried out:

12 persons benefited from one or more training programmes

18 training programmes were financed

4 driving courses were financed (totally or partially), with two licences having been obtained to date

8 financial aids linked to the training project have been awarded (mobility, housing during the training, purchase of professional clothing)

2 young people signed the engagement charter and will participate in training actions that will be financed during the next budget period.

Professional integration:

1 young person created his own company (express parcel service)

1 is temping regularly

1 will be hired for temping on 1st July, followed by a permanent contract

4 are in the process of taking training, one of whom has a lead for employment at the end of the programme

4 are looking for a job

3 are currently in training for a 'B' driving licence (vehicles of less than 3.5 tonnes)

End of accompaniment:

2 young people were excluded from training – Meetings between the educators and *Mission Locale* referral agent have been scheduled.

In order to guarantee the monitoring of situations, it is imperative that the partners be mobilised on the action, certain times of exchanges having sometimes not been overly productive given the players' lack of availability.

The primary obstacle to carrying out this action is the administrative constraint of state services: a late decision for the validation of the action and an obligation to use the funds by 31st December of the year, which, in practical terms, postponed the action by three months.



## PROSPECTS

Given the positive result of the action, it was renewed for the year 2009, integrating a second neighbourhood, Bléville, equally a priority.

### **D. Access to care for persons with addictive behaviour**

One of the frequent difficulties in the reintegration process of those leaving prison is the fact that a large number of these persons are subject to multiple dependencies. Even then, the distinction must be made between persons convicted for drug trafficking and those convicted for drug consumption or possession; for the latter, drugs are often a source of alleviating suffering. In most European countries, where drug use is criminalised, there are a large number of people who should be entering clinics to fight addiction but instead find themselves in prison, which often only makes their case worse.

Having no impact on the definition of national drug policies, the local and prison authorities can only have an influence on the treatment that the drug addict will have to follow in prison and after his release. Given that the substitution treatment remains fairly costly, it is primarily up to these two institutions to find the right partners in order to tackle the drug problem and ensure access to care. Here, we must recall that inmates, whether addicts or not, remain full-fledged citizens and should benefit fully from fundamental rights. Providing access to care to former inmates addicts largely contributes to their reintegration process and thus to lowering re-offending rates. An example of this is the project carried out by the municipality of The Hague, in The Netherlands.

PROJECT NAME: Reintegration of drug-addicted inmates, City of The Hague, The Netherlands

#### CONTEXT

There was no structure for taking care of and monitoring drug-addicted inmates, who most often have no future prospects.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Ensuring access to the care of drug-addicted inmates
- Preparing for their release and reintegration in the city

#### TARGET GROUP

Drug-addicted inmates

#### LEADER and PARTNERS

Leader: Municipality of The Hague (Health, Employment, Housing)

Partners: State (Justice, Health)

## STRATEGY AND ACTIVITIES

Setting up the 'Triple-Ex' programme, under the joint direction of the Municipality and the Public Prosecutor's office.

The proposed approach is broken down into three phases: Housing/Training/Treatment.

The method used is organised round a reduction in therapeutic care and optimal personal attention for every patient.

As follows, the three phases of the programme, the length of which depends on the patient:

Housing Programme: it in turn breaks down into three phases:

- House arrest with the obligation of a medical diet (3-6 months)
- Living in an open environment under supervision (6-9 months)
- Living alone under supervision. At the end of this phase, housing is found for the addict through the Municipality.

Education/Employment Programme: tests, orientation, information, training. The training programmes offered are limited: technical education, catering, health, cleaning, road/parks maintenance. At the end of the training programme, the addict benefits from an aid for finding a job.

Treatment/Care Programme: a social atmosphere in which the addict feels comfortable constitutes the essential instrument of the treatment. At the same time, psycho-therapeutic treatments are offered, as well as physical and psychological relaxation activities (sports in particular) and social and legal counselling.

## RESOURCES

The state: up to €800,000. (Phases 1 and 2: €80/day/patient; Phase 3: €35/day/patient).

## OBSTACLES

Difficulty in reaching the addicted population in prisons coming from ethnic minorities. – Long-term success of the Triple-Ex programme has yet to be proved.

## EVALUATION and PROSPECTS

After a year of activity and taking charge of 35 patients, we can note: 7 relapses, 5 giving up or postponements, 63% success in phases 1 and 2.

## E. Maintaining relations with family and the community

Numerous studies, trying to draw up the profile of the typical re-offender, were able to identify similarities at the level of his relations with his social environment: these are often marginalised persons who have broken off with their family and who, once out of prison, have no support, either from family, friends or a benevolent community. For these persons suffering from a lack of affective relationships, prison can then seem the only place where they understand and quickly integrate the rules, for they do not have the necessary keys for understanding and respecting the laws governing community life.

An essential aspect in the prevention of re-offending is therefore the work on affective relationships with the pre-prison environment. To counter isolation, the family and community in the broad sense must feel responsible for the incarcerated person's situation and be willing to work together on setting up a reintegration plan following release. The rules of a closed prison universe being likely to subject inmates to a certain dependency towards the institutions, it is indispensable that accompaniment towards the acquisition of autonomy be set up starting on the first day of detention. That is the sense of this project set up by the city of Hackney in the United Kingdom.

PROJECT NAME: Hackney: Mentoring for Young People, London, Borough of Hackney, United Kingdom

### CONTEXT

Mentoring is very popular in England today. Generally, it relays the following principle: a volunteer guide, accompaniment, advises or supports another volunteer to allow the previous to find confidence in himself and to achieve certain goals (at an academic, personal or professional level).

'Mentoring Plus New Deal' was created in 1998 in order to respond more specifically to the need for the training of troubled young people aged 18 or over, and amongst them, the young people leaving prison. The idea that underlines this project is that a young person who presents several 'risk-factors' (family problems, socio-economic difficulty, failure at school, drug addiction...) and who has committed a crime has more of a chance of re-offending and to commit other, more serious crimes, than a young person who only presents difficulties in one field. These young people therefore need all the more support and accompaniment to restart their lives on a sound basis.

### OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project is to reduce juvenile delinquency or criminality and to prevent re-offending, by helping young people leaving prison to regain confidence in themselves, to rebuild a life plan and by accompanying

them in finding a job or training. It is aimed at young people aged between 18 and 24.

## LEADER

The project was run by the 'Mentoring Plus New Deal' association

## STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

Adult volunteers or 'mentors' are charged with following one or several young people. The mentor is someone who is simultaneously gainfully employed in another activity, who has a clean criminal record, who comes from the same community as the youth and who is not associated with any other adult who represents 'authority' in the eyes of the young person, and with whom they have been known to have difficult relations, notably: police officers, teachers, social workers, judges, or even parents. The identification of the young people is made via the police or penal institutions services. Normally, the young person must take this step voluntarily but more and more, the law 'requests' that a young person who has committed a crime should have a mentor. Every six months 'Mentoring Plus' recruits groups of between 15 to 30 young people.

The choice of a mentor is made over the course of a weekend in the countryside, where each group of young people meets a group of mentors. At the end of the weekend, each youth must indicate in writing, the mentors with whom they would like to work, in order of preference; and in the same way each mentor must indicate, in order of preference, which young people they would like to mentor. Therefore one tries to satisfy everyone's desires.

The mentor must be someone patient and sensitive to the personal situation of the young person that they will accompany. The relationship between a mentor and their 'mentee' is established starting from a 'friendly contact' of six months. This period was fixed to prevent the creation of a relationship that is too strong or intimate between the two individuals. Because of this, at the end of six months, the presence of the mentor must become superfluous for the youth. Each week, the mentor must inform the coordinator of 'Mentoring Plus' of their work with the youth by telephone and address a written report to them, without going into personal considerations, in order that the relationship of trust is not broken. If the young person commits a crime during the week, the mentor must inform the coordinator.

## RESULTS

In 2002, that is two years after its creation; 'Mentoring Plus New Deal' had successfully offered 68 mentoring services to troubled youths. The external evaluations have demonstrated that the crime rate amongst the young people participating in the project, had clearly diminished (by about 60%) and that 75% of them had found a full time activity (schooling training or paid

employment).

These positive results led Crime Concern to run similar mentoring projects in other cities: Camden, Islington, Bexley, Newham, Brent, Lambeth, Lewisham, Manchester, Stoke, Western-Super-Mare and Bath.

#### FUTURE PROSPECTS

Mentoring Plus would like to increase its services for troubled young people and thus regularly launch campaigns to recruit a large number of mentors. These campaigns are already starting to bear fruit as the body had received a very large number of volunteer applications in the last few months.

### **F. Management of debts, financial management**

The time in prison, a world in which money does not exist per se, where everything is paid for by exchanges in kind and services are offered for free (electricity, heat, food, access to training and to the few leisure activities available in prison), can lead inmates to lose a precise notion of the value of money and consequently make them incapable of managing a budget on their own. Managing one's resources well in order to cover expenses without accumulating debts is a know-how that many inmates lose after a long detention or never really had to begin with.

This inability to handle finances (anticipating expenses, earning money to pay bills, respecting payment deadlines) is quite problematical for the period following release, for it can result in debts and re-imprisonment in the event of insolvency. Under these conditions, it becomes imperative that the institutions in charge of the reintegration of those leaving prison provide training and accompaniment on this issue so that these persons have all the necessary tools for gaining economic independence and autonomy in the community to which they return.

Research reveals only very few programmes addressing the acquisition of this indispensable know-how. As such, the example of the microcredits project set up in the city of Valencia, Spain is very interesting.

**PROJECT NAME:** Microcredits Programme for Inmates – Valencia, Spain

#### CONTEXT

The Foundation for Justice is a non-profit organisation, which for the last two years has been pursuing, in cooperation with the Generalitat Valenciana (Valencia's regional government), the Spanish Ministry of the Interior and the Penitentiary Institutions Department, this successful and innovative stra-

tegy for preventing recidivism.

The seeds of this idea are to be found in *Lessons from the Poor*; in this book, four Third World entrepreneurs showed that poverty can be overcome with work, private property, the market and freedom.

## OBJECTIVES

The Foundation for Justice is implementing a socio-professional reintegration programme by granting microcredits to prison inmates so as to promote self-employment.

It is a matter of:

- Training, raising awareness and supporting people in the design and implementation of their business project.
- Granting microcredit to enable professional reintegration for individuals in the target group.
- Creating lasting work positions

## TARGET GROUPS

Three target groups have been identified:

- inmates,
- young adults (aged 18-21) and
- drug addicts.

The programme is for prisoners who are serving their sentence in an open prison system known as Grade Three confinement in Spain, where the prisoners are generally only required to sleep in jail. Prisoners are not, however, selected in accordance with a given criminal profile.

## STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

The steps of the Programme, which lasts 15 months, are as follows:

1. The inmate's voluntary registration in the Programme after an information campaign has been run at the prison.
2. Three months of prisoner training relating to the creation and management of SMEs. Open to any inmate interested in taking part.
3. Prisoners present business plans for their future companies; mainly in the hospitality sector, call shops, laundrettes, etc.
4. Selection of the business plans. The best seven business plans are chosen out of the total number presented (25) to enter into the Programme. The Foundation has an Assessment Panel for this purpose, which works together with a Bank (Bancaixa, CAM or La Caixa savings banks) to undertake a feasibility study, evaluating any potential risks.

A loan of up to €25,000 is available to each selected proposal, and the Bank provides monitoring, with backing from the Foundation. The Bank makes payments directly to the providers and receives monthly repayments of the loan (for five years, with low interest rates and commission-free), so that money is not handled directly by the inmate, but rather through the intermediary of the Bank.

Profits from professional activities:

- Income
- Responsibilities regarding social welfare contributions, taxation, administration, suppliers

LEADER and PARTNERS

Leader: The Foundation for Justice

- Participates in awareness-raising among prison population and general public
- Advises on project design and drafting of business plan
- Monitors companies' plans
- Takes part in interim and final assessments
- Manages and organises training regarding technical aspects, ethics and business and microcredit management

Partners: Generalitat de Valencia, the Ministry of the Interior and Director-Generalship of Penitentiaries, private banks (La Caixa), local employment agency, jurists and voluntary company directors for training

RESOURCES

Training is taken care of by the Foundation for Justice with the support of the Ministry of the Interior; the projects are financed by social activity banks.

RESULTS

The project has only been operating for two years, so an in-depth evaluation has not yet been carried out, even though the positive results are encouraging the partners to pursue pilot projects.

## 2. Exemplary comprehensive actions

The reintegration of ex-inmates from a viewpoint of reducing re-offending is a complex process, one that involves taking a wide range of problems into account. Ignoring even one single of the numerous aspects of reintegration risks reducing the chances for the success of this process. It is obvious that urgent needs such as housing and employment will always be primordial; nonetheless, to believe that re-offending will be stopped with a flat and a source of income would be a simplistic solution to a complex problem. Often, for lack of means, institutions give only limited responses, for they are based more on available supply than on a veritable analysis of needs. Therein, moreover, lies the cause of the failure of numerous reintegration programmes, because the state offers what it has in stock, not what people need. The approaches must not only be pluridimensional but also integrated.

The simple cumulative effect of responses contributed by the various institutions intervening in the itinerary of the person leaving prison risks leading to confusion and prejudicing the clarity of the interventions. To overcome those drawbacks, local authorities can invent new approaches taking into account the totality of needs of citizens who are temporarily deprived of freedom. Research confirms that the comprehensive, integrated approach is the only one that gives the best results. At first glance, it may appear costly, given the number of persons involved in monitoring, but the gain in terms of social benefits — reintegration in the community as well as in terms of public tranquility — is well worth it.

This is why we wanted to put forward here two examples of integrated projects: the BASIS project of Göttingen, Germany, and the PALMER project of Valencia, Spain, to provide readers with sources of inspiration. These projects are based on a crossed intervention that takes into account both affective needs and psychological support along with material needs such as the necessity of having a job and a stable income. So far, these examples, backed up by figures, remain the only ones to have proven effective in terms of reduction of the re-offending rate.

PROJECT NAME: BASIS – Guidance towards freedom - Offener Jugendvollzug Göttingen (OJV) - The Open Prison, City of Göttingen, Land of Lower Saxony, Germany

### CONTEXT

In Germany, the Länder control their prison policy.

In 1982, the government of Lower Saxony opened an experimental centre, the ‘open prison’ for young delinquents (OJV), in the premises of a former youth hostel located in a Göttingen suburb.

The OJV is one of three open departments of the Justizvollzugsanstalt Rosdorf (JVA), a high-security prison for adult men with a capacity of 318 inmates.



Since its opening, the open prison has been enlarged and developed and currently houses a maximum of 125 young people aged 15 to 24 (average age: 19 years and 6-7 months, or 19.8), sentenced to a maximum of three and a half years for violent acts; young people convicted for minor offences are not housed in this establishment. There is also an annex, located in Hammeln, which accommodates 72 young people, and a specialised institution for young people aged 20-27.

This experimental centre, distinguished several times at the federal level and maintained for more than 27 years but still the only one of its kind in Germany, lies within a repressive and preventive whole that is complex and inventive. The open prison is not conceived as an alternative to prison, of which it preserves the confinement, but differs from it in the absence of isolation.

The open prison remains the last opportunity before confinement. Approximately 19% of young convicts in Lower Saxony live in this type of structure. Certain profiles are rejected in advance (serious drug addiction, serious illness, pyromania), for they necessitate specialised monitoring that the open prison cannot provide.

## OBJECTIVES

The entire project relies on the motivation of the young person for an open solution and encouraging the young convict to assume more responsibility.

The objective is to involve the young inmate in the rehabilitation process through awareness of his act and the consequences it implies.

The objective is to also use the detention time to train the young person through learning a trade, in community living and in taking charge of himself (physical, economic) with a view to avoiding re-offending.

## STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

Acceptance into the open prison is done on the choice of the authorities (of the Land and the centre), depending on the personality and acts for which the young person was convicted. The team in charge of choosing the young people who will enter the open prison consists of a psychologist, a social worker and a judge.

Approximately half the cases are accepted.

Upon arrival, the young inmates spend a few weeks in the only building resembling a classic prison (with locked doors and bars at the windows), for the risk of escape is still too great at that point, despite the decision made by the selection team. After some three weeks of detention, the young person, if he so chooses, enters the open centre, accepting its obligations.

The buildings of the open prison have neither an outer wall nor barrier and

give directly onto the streets of the city neighbourhood. The confinement is therefore not physical but mental, for the inmates are not allowed to go out without prior authorisation.

The main activities are:

1. initiation into collective and individual life in a community of 10 young people maximum
2. vocational training
3. education through sports and leisure activities
4. follow-up on specific cross-disciplinary issues: drug addiction, social behaviour...

#### 1. Organisation of individual and collective life

Every inmate moves into a flat of six individual bedrooms in which five other young inmates live. They are supervised by an educator-supervisor who assigns daily individual and collective chores to each one. The objective is to 'set realistic life standards' and experiment with conflict management other than by violence. The role of the educator-supervisor is indispensable to the success and proper running of flat life: beyond the primary function of security, the educator-supervisor participates actively in the individual and social work run by specialists with whom he is in constant contact.

The flats group young people with similar profiles in terms of types of offence and length of sentence.

A flat accommodates young people who wish to break off with drug use; admission to the open centre is conditioned by the young person's desire to stop drugs and submit to regular urine analyses and specific work with the social workers. The centre is currently confronted with a larger number of applications than available places.

#### 2. Vocational training

One of the objectives of the open prison is to acquire a technical skill, on the basis of the young inmates' wishes and needs and not on the basis of training programmes offered by the open prison. To respond to this aspect, vocational training is co-organised by the city of Göttingen's classic training establishments (particularly for theoretical training) and the open prison, which has a carpentry and metal-working workshop, a garden, a garage and a restaurant, all open and accessible to visitors.

The young people earn some remuneration for the work they do.

The stakes of this type of training is to find a motivating activity for the young person and teach him to meet the needs of the market, integrate into

a team and respect schedules and constraints.

### 3. Education through sports and leisure activities

During their free time, the young inmates play sports 3-4 times a week and meet with professionals from the 'START' project who accompany them in approaches linked to their physical and mental health and in updating administrative papers. Amongst other things, they learn how to manage their money and keep a budget.

### 4. Specific cross-disciplinary sections

All the young inmates participate in specific cross-disciplinary sections whose objective is to provide social and psychological counselling as needed.

With the objective of later reducing re-offending, since 2001 the open prison team has developed a pilot project, 'BASIS', for accompaniment in release after a stay in a detention centre. This project targets a limited group of volunteer young inmates (16 in all). Having identified, amongst the causes of re-offending, the difficulties upon release linked to the loss of all supports provided by the educators and specialists in the open prison (OJV), the social workers seek, on the one hand, to make these young people understand that liberation is a process and not a break and, on the other, to guide a transition between life inside the open prison and life after release.

Moreover, since 2002 a flat was created with specific supervision taking in the 16 young inmates, all selected volunteers, in preparation for their life 'afterwards'. The project is based on permanent support before and after release from prison and is designed round the network of partners concerned by the social reintegration of young people leaving the open prison.

The personnel of the open prison try to further ties with parents and relatives as much as possible, even though the young inmates' family contexts often turn out to be unfavourable to the gradual reduction of violence.

180 employees work in the open prison.

### LEADER and PARTNERS

The Land of Lower Saxony, Prevention Council and Ministry of Justice, and the city of Göttingen

The principal partners are NGOs such as Jugendhilfe (Youth Aid), which is in charge of the BASIS project, or the associations of aid and development in education, as well as public structures such as schools, the employment bureau or support and counselling centres.

The centre also works on the creation and dissemination of awareness campaigns with NGOs, police and judicial institutions, primary and secondary schools and the social workers of the city of Göttingen.

For the past few years, the government of Lower Saxony and the city of Göttingen have striven to reinforce partnerships with the private sector.

#### TARGET GROUP

The beneficiaries of the project are young convicts aged 15-24. In particular cases, young people of up to 27 can also take advantage of this arrangement.

The average age is 19-20.

#### RESOURCES

The project had begun with European financing from the European Social Fund and then was underwritten primarily by public financing from the Land of Lower Saxony and the city of Göttingen and, in part, with private funds.

Owing to the costs of personnel and of the social and pedagogical project, numerous activities, in particular training programmes, are currently being developed by outside partners.

#### IMPACT

The decision to place a young person in the open prison is not definitive: in the event of using this semi-freedom to prepare or perpetrate a criminal act, return to a closed centre is immediate. The main challenge for all the young delinquents is therefore not to flee the prison but to participate actively in the activities proposed.

The BASIS project has produced very good results. The training, support and supervision of the programmes outside prison during the length of imprisonment and afterwards, when they live and work at home, have allowed for reducing re-offending: only 40% of the young confined in the open prison versus 80-90% in closed prison re-offend after release.

#### WHY IS THIS PROJECT A SUCCESS? (RECOMMENDATIONS)

The project's success is based on different factors:

- confidence: a relation of trust between inmates and social workers is indispensable;
- responsibility: giving young people a sense of responsibility vis-à-vis their actions and the consequences that ensue allows them to play an active role in the reconstruction of their life after the prison stay
- continuity: the young are accompanied and monitored by specialised personnel throughout their whole stay.
- information: the young people are informed of their duties and consequences in case of non-respect of the rules.

The open centre offers better accommodation, greater comfort and better

living conditions in relation to a traditional prison.

Practical training in a trade and work in establishments outside the open prison allow the young people to integrate in a real-life context by favouring their mental attitude and their reintegration after release from prison.

### OBSTACLES

The principal difficulties are linked to:

- public financing from the state (Land), which can be greater and allow for developing new activities
- maintaining cooperation with the partners
- networking between public institutions and NGOs or the private sector.

### PROSPECTS

Knowledge of all the parameters (living conditions, characteristics of the target group, social conditions...) allows for preparing a programme favouring autonomy, responsibility and self-respect and respect of others, as well as increasing the chances of changing the behaviour of a juvenile who has already committed an offence. The perception and analysis of needs, problems and failures favour the improvement of the project.

In order to succeed in preparing release from prison for young inmates concerning the practical as well as the psychological and individual aspects, the personnel working in the open prison needs training in order to properly accompany and support the young, even after their release.

At the present time, the principal task of the director of the open prison and his staff is the improvement in 'transition management' from prison to freedom.

The PALMER project is interesting in several respects, given that it starts from the basic need for housing to tackle other difficulties with which recent inmates are confronted when leaving prison and concern housing as well as the integrated management of affective relationships, free time, employment, cohabitation — or, quite simply, community life. This is the example of an integrated approach, relying on the intervention of several partners in view of helping the former inmate find his place in the city.

PROJECT NAME: PALMER Project, City of Valencia, Comunidad Valenciana, Spain

### CONTEXT

The project arose, firstly, in response to the observed lack of public initiatives offering assistance to those concluding their term of detention resulting from a criminal conviction. The primary approach of the programme

is to consider the problem of prisoners as a significant social issue, and not merely as an individual situation requiring attention. This highlights the dysfunction of society's integrating mechanisms and the underlying responsibility of many institutions and also shows the significant role to be played by the wider community in solving the problem.

This integrating project would be meaningless were it confined to the prison walls. The reintegration process needs to start on the inside but does not end with the individual's release from jail. Release actually places former inmates in a difficult situation for which they are generally ill-prepared. In some cases the lack of specific training for entry into the labour market, as well as the upheaval caused by years of separation from family and society, leaves the person little option but to return to marginality and crime. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that there are cases where it is not advisable for the individual to return to their socio-familial environment due to their role as the primary instigator of marginal or criminal behaviour.

For the above reasons, the Project is deemed vital in order to perform an educational task, offering inmates the resources needed to face life in society successfully. This requires a holistic approach, with personal development as the pivotal component, which gives meaning to the educational work undertaken.

## OBJECTIVES

This 'PALMER' reintegration programme responds to basic needs, in terms of board and keep, of people who, on release from prison, face family destabilisation or have lost their family ties altogether.

The programme does not stop, however, at filling these gaps; it also offers the person a chance to structure his life, bearing in mind the professional, cultural and social aspects thereof. The ultimate goal is to reintegrate the person into the fabric of society with guaranteed sustainability, which is to say, without any return to criminal behaviour. The programme aims to be a bridge between prison and reintegration into society.

General and operational objectives

### GENERAL OBJECTIVE 1 (PHASES 1, 2 and 3A)

Standardising the personal and vital circumstances of persons taken in

- 1.1. Offering room and board to inmates and former inmates accepted into this programme.
- 1.2. Favouring responsibility in personal attention.
- 1.3. Educating in the sense of responsibility in cohabitation.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVE 2 (PHASES 2, 3)

Achieving the social and professional reintegration of former inmates accepted into this programme

- 2.1. Overcoming personal obstacles that hinder social integration.
- 2.2. Overcoming personal obstacles that hinder professional integration.
- 2.3. Teaching to use free time constructively.
- 2.4. Offering social support for the effective conclusion of the reintegration process.
- 2.5. Developing personal autonomy and encouraging saving.

## TARGET GROUPS

Those leaving prison in Valencia who meet the following criteria:

- Men having served or in the process of serving a sentence.
- Lack of family or social resources.
- Aged between 18 and 55.
- With a preliminary detoxification process if necessary
- Having a realistic level for getting hired or, in any case, the possibility of attaining that level
- Having a resident or work permit (if they are emigrants), or the possibility of obtaining one.
- Intending to settle in Valencia.
- A request on the part of the interested party himself, manifesting his desire to normalise his situation in society.
- Signing of the therapeutic contract and residence standards

## STRATEGY and ACTIVITIES

Two primary characteristics of the programme are: close cooperation with the municipal social services and its function as a resource for the City of Valencia.

Firstly, participants who are facing serious upheaval complete the first two phases of the process in the Urban Therapy Centre, using the residence and activity centre through the PALMER Programme (full version), and once they progress to the socio-professional reintegration phase, they play an active role in the search for employment and appropriate social networks.

There is capacity for 14 people in the Socio-Professional Reintegration flats, which are located in the historical town centre of Valencia, in the neighbourhood known as Barri del Carme. This central setting makes it easy to access the city's resources, given that many of the social services are located in the old town centre.

The Project's participants come mainly from the Picassent Prison (Valencia), via various organisations and bodies; some also come from other detention centres in Spain.

Secondly, the initiative leads to reintegration into the life of the city, since participation in the Project means creating links with the City of Valencia. The person can thus overcome the uprooting that is so typical among this community and which sometimes leads ex-prisoners toward marginal behaviour.

Recognition of individuals' needs usually comes from the prison social workers, the volunteers working there (whether from our association or from others), or from the City of Valencia's municipal social services (the Social Services Centre for the Homeless, known by the Spanish acronym CAST, plays a pertinent role) or from the Addictive Behaviour Units.

Selection of Project participants is made through interviews conducted by the Association's educators. These are held in the prison itself in cases where the person has not yet been released, or in the Obra Mercedaria de Valencia offices if the individual is no longer incarcerated.

While not aiming to describe, it is nevertheless useful to identify some of the typical characteristics presented by the programme's participants, which are used as a starting point for personal contact.

- 1.- Lack of control over his own life
- 2.- Dysfunction in interpersonal relations
- 3.- Lack of prospects for the future
- 4.- Limited capacity to undertake responsibilities
- 5.- Uprootedness.

## METHODOLOGY

The programme's structure has phases that are suitable, bearing in mind not only the needs of the participants, but also the efficacy of the process:

Phase 1: Reception and documentation: This first phase is divided into two sub-phases:

Phase 1A: This is the phase in which the participant gets to know the programme and vice-versa, and in which profiles and motivations are checked.

Phase 1B: This is the phase in which the Association takes in the person and handles all of the documentation formalities as such: During this period, the participant's basic needs are provided for (board and keep, clothing, etc) and his documentation-related procedures undertaken (Employment Office, Social Security, National ID card, etc). During this period, participants are assisted by an educator or volunteer, given the few skills initially at their disposal in these early stages and the disorientation that they feel in the first few days of having to cope with life in the city and bureaucratic formalities.



Phase 2: Phase for case history reconstruction and behaviour normalisation:

It is in the second phase that the participant's background, across all of its various facets, is reconstructed and assessed. By working together in various areas (therapeutic area, health area, penitentiary area, educational/pre-professional area, social area, leisure area) and working through each person's current issues, a treatment plan gets underway, which offers the participant suitable tools for a deep understanding of his own nature and provides him with the resources required, both individually and collectively, to bring about personal change: an attitude change and a behavioural change.

Phase 3: Socio-Professional Reintegration

Phase 3A: Socio-professional reintegration:

In this third phase, when the participant has already acquired sufficient personal resources and is starting to cope in the social sphere, the team of educators focuses strongly on employment and re-socialisation of the participants, insisting on daily and sustained efforts to seek work-related and social-networking resources.

Phase 3B: Autonomy

## SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

### 1. Group therapy activities

- Weekly assembly
- Alcohol groups
- Self-help groups (confrontation)
- Emotional control groups
- Personal history groups
- Communal chores: errands, cooking, cleaning
- Communal breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Social skills course. (pro-social behaviour)
- Values workshop
- Psychodrama group
- Problem-solving group
- Workshop on sexuality and preventing the spread of HIV and other STDs

### 2. Psychological and educational support

- Individual therapy
- Interviews with the educators
- Non-regulated literacy classes
- Introduction to reading workshop
- Relaxation therapies

### 3. Building social resources

- Basic documentation formalities
- Health-care assistance formalities
- Legal assistance formalities

### 4. Building professional resources

This activity is carried out every working day at the activities centre located at Calle Botánico 22, Bajo de Valencia and is directly related to the aim of developing employability. Specifically, the elements to be worked on are:

- Attitudes
- Personal skills
- Professional elements
- Social elements: illnesses, addictions, disabilities

### LEADER and PARTNERS

The project is run by an NGO: 'Obra Mercedaria'

The other partners are: the city of Valencia – public rental housing, social services, leisure activities, the Valencia prison, the Valencia court, RAIS Foundation, INTEGRA State Foundation, Office for Employment, banks

### RESOURCES

#### Human resources

Full-time contracted personnel: 3 educators and a social worker

Volunteers: 28 persons: lawyers, psychologists, magistrates, students, bankers, social workers, IT technician, et al.

#### Material resources:

- Three Reintegration Flats located at Calle Quart nos. 19, 2, 3 and 4, assigned by the City of Valencia (Heritage Department). The flats are fully furnished and include essential household appliances.

- An Activity Centre, 180 square metres of space. Rented premises, fully equipped for use.

- Association headquarters, located at Calle Quart no. 19, 2, allocated by the City of Valencia (Heritage Department).

- Office equipment and record-keeping materials: chairs and tables, cupboards, filing cabinets, computing equipment, photocopier, telephone, etc.

- One utility vehicle for general errands and participant transport.

Vehicle registration number: V-6644-EU

- House offering a quiet haven, located in the town of Segart (Valencia), for free-time outings. Courtesy of the Mercedarian friars.

### RESULTS

Employment: 45% of the programme's participants have become successfully integrated into the labour market and remained in employment since.

Housing: 20% of our participants managed to find independent housing or re-established their social ties so as to move back in with their family or with other people.

Social connections: 64% forged a new social network or rekindled former, pre-prison, social ties, while 36% failed to reach this goal. We are pleased with the results on this especially important issue, as it is one of the basic pillars upon which the reintegration of our participants is built.

Free time and leisure: 51% made good use of their free time, taking up varied and normalised activities, which led to the creation of inter-personal relations and improved self-esteem. This contrasts with the 49% who remained idle or undertook non-group activities, which constitutes an obstacle to their re-socialisation.

Mastering household chores: 74% learned to cope with the tasks associated with running a household, which is very positive for their subsequent adaptation to a fully independent dwelling.

#### EVALUATION

The programme began in 2007. At the end of a year, it had succeeded in achieving the results described above, which were deemed positive for the most part, so efforts were made to renew the project.



# 2

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**Recommendations  
for a local Policy  
for the Prevention  
of Re-offending**

Whereas the first part was devoted more to professionals in the field seeking new solutions for tackling the problem of re-offending, this second part is addressed more particularly to local elected officials as the center of political initiative and decision-making.

In fact, the choice of work on a subject such as the prevention of re-offending is not insignificant, and it is indispensable that the subject be borne by a strong political will to mobilise all available resources. It is the elected officials who have the legitimacy and duty to institute inclusive policies for ensuring the exercise of fundamental rights of every citizen. It is also up to them to carry out pedagogical work with the whole population so that such policies might be conceived with citizen participation.

This is actually what the Forum has called for and promoted since its inception, and this position has been expressed in cities' manifestos.

### **The political stand of 300 local authorities members of the European Forum for Urban Safety**

The European Forum for Urban Safety has worked on security issues at the city level for more than twenty years, and the results of this project come as a continuation and reinforcement of EFUS's work for setting up inclusive security policies.

Created as a platform for exchanges and reflection on the different topics related to urban security, the Forum has managed to integrate the positions of town and regional councillors and of scientists, criminologists or sociologists in its works. For more than twenty years the Forum has endeavoured to reinforce crime prevention policies and promote the role of municipalities in the elaboration of policies at the national and European levels. Starting from the postulate that 'cities help cities', the Forum has, from the very beginning, contributed to stimulating and orienting local, national and Community policies concerning the prevention of urban insecurity and dealing with crime.

The results of years of accumulated experience in this domain have led Forum's local elected officials to adopt a certain number of political stands to reinforce a vision of global security, based on a balanced triple approach of prevention, repression and solidarity.

Social cohesion, essential in setting up comprehensive security policy, goes by way of the shared sense of belonging to a social community. The role of the city and its elected officials is to defend **cities of inclusion**, where diversity makes for richness and where possible conflict must find its solution in policies of prevention, inclusion and conflict resolution; and **tolerant cities**, which educate their citizens on rights, duties and solidarity, and channel violence and fear into motives for self-development, openness to the world and tolerance towards the others.

In the Naples Manifesto<sup>10</sup>, the cities took positions on:

- setting up **effective responses and sanctions that favour inclusion** (*Local authorities must implement programmes to prevent recidivism ; these must be based, in particular, on social development and on conflict resolution through mediation and restoration by offenders*);

10 European Forum for Urban Security, 'Naples Manifesto', 10 December 2000 [http://zaragoza2006.EFUS.org/IMG/pdf/naples\\_pdf/Manifeste\\_VA.pdf](http://zaragoza2006.EFUS.org/IMG/pdf/naples_pdf/Manifeste_VA.pdf)

- **minimal recourse to detention in prison** (*'Prisons are a limited resource; their use must be strictly limited and always justified by clearly defined imperatives based on social consensus. Prison inmates must not be cut off from their communities; they must be detained in locations which are as close as possible to their families and to services which can promote their future reintegration into community life. It is important to facilitate access to prisons to social services and services providing training, education and employment'*);

- **and the development of alternative community service** (*'Local authorities must be involved in developing alternative community service and other sanctions which can reduce recourse to detention in prisons'*).

The same principles were taken up in the Saragossa Manifesto on urban safety and democracy, which was adopted by all the cities of the Forum at the Saragossa Conference held 2-4 November 2006. The 9th recommendation of the Manifesto recalls the strategic role of town elected representatives in the construction of integrated policies: *'Providing a safe environment for their inhabitants, one favouring social cohesion, is the primary duty of elected officials. By means of urban regeneration and reconstruction strategies, by providing basic services in the areas of education, social security and culture, cities have the ability to act on the causes and effects of insecurity. By developing integrated, multisectoral approaches, and with the support of regional, national and European authorities, urban policies are innovative if they do not put security solely in the hands of justice and the police.'*<sup>11</sup>

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11 European Forum for Urban Security, 'Saragossa Manifesto', 2-4 November 2006 [http://zaragoza2006.EFUS.org/rubrique.php?id\\_rubrique=181](http://zaragoza2006.EFUS.org/rubrique.php?id_rubrique=181)

## Recommendations for local elected officials

The following paragraphs attempt then to offer a whole series of arguments to back up the decision to involve local authorities in innovative programmes for the prevention of re-offending. These arguments are based on principles already stated by international and European bodies such as the Council of Europe or the European Union (recommendations from the EQUAL programme for fighting against discrimination in the workplace<sup>12</sup>) as well as on the results of this two-year project, which made the most of both the research carried out on the European and North American continents and experimentations conducted in partner-cities.

### NB!

*All the principles listed apply in particular to young people who have more specific rights in accordance with the fragility of their age and with the aim of supporting them through personalised educational and training programmes.*

*Any case involving young people must include a pluridisciplinary and multi-institutional approach and lie within the framework of social initiatives, in order to ensure lasting, comprehensive care<sup>13</sup>. The institutions involved must work in close collaboration, whilst considering the issue of data protection.*

### **1. Acknowledging the role of cities and reinforcing national as well as European and international support for the development of local actions for the prevention of re-offending in accordance with international conventions defending human rights (UN, CoE, OIJJ)**

The programmes and actions for the prevention of re-offending developed at the local level cannot provide lasting results if they are not supported, financially as much as in legislative terms, by national, European and international authorities.

### **2. Acknowledging that sustainable urban development can only be achieved by starting from a comprehensive vision in which social inclusion policies have their full place**

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12 [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/index\\_fr.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/index_fr.cfm) EQUAL information document, 2007. Offenders and/or inmates belonging to one of the groups targeted by this programme. During the programme's second call, 66 development partnerships worked with (ex-)offenders, 55 of which exclusively. The largest number of activities concerned aid to re-integration and support to inmates after their release from prison.

13 Reference to the recommendations of the Council of Europe. CM/Rec(2008)11



The demand of citizens to see their city enrolled in a dynamic of sustainable urban development can only be satisfied in the framework of a comprehensive perspective, taking economic and social development into account. Economic development goes by way of giving value to human capital, which can only come about in the framework of an effective justice system, in a lawful state guaranteeing fundamental citizens' rights, on a territory where social inclusion policies are considered an investment in human capital and not a burden or expense.

### **3. Building local policies on factual knowledge**

The elected official must be able to get away from political one-upmanship and the media context so as not to undergo momentary pressure in decision-making. The conception and implementation of policies must be based on the results of studies carried out by researchers and scientists and having passed the test of practicability, effectiveness and durability. It is not always easy to get round the electoral stakes to impose a policy based on rigorous studies, which can pay off in the long term.

### **4. Making the entire population aware of the questions of social reintegration of those leaving prison**

It is up to the elected officials to make all citizens aware of the fact that they must feel concerned by the integration of former inmates. It is not simply a matter of highlighting the principle of solidarity on which all social cohesion policy is founded but also emphasising the direct interest the community has in receiving this population correctly, for the repercussions are direct. Successful reintegration within the community amounts to a significant reduction in the risks of re-offending and therefore in the number of victims and offences committed on a certain territory, this reducing the feeling of insecurity.

### **5. Engaging in and organising dialogue and cooperation between the closed world of prison and the city**

To increase the chances of cooperation between the prison system and partners outside prison, it is important to promote exchanges between these two systems.

### **6. Defining the meaning of sanction and putting it into practice**

Sanction as the point of departure for responding to a criminal act must both bring compensation to the victim(s) and accompany the convicted person in the process of appropriating the rules of social behaviour in the community. To be truly effective and produce results, the sanction must occur within the framework of an integrated process, which is the result of the crossing of different domains: social, educational or general public policies.

## **7. Applying the sanction in accordance with human rights and the refusal of discriminations (minorities, gender, religion)**

The mayor is the first guarantor of the respect of citizens' fundamental rights, whether or not they are deprived of freedom. Even though it is true that the mayor's competences do not extend to prison, the fact that he (or she) has and may use the right to inspect facilitates the process of bridging the two worlds along with comprehension of the two types of population, prison and free citizens. The sanction, especially when it occurs within the community as an alternative to imprisonment, must be in accordance with fundamental human rights and differences, whether they be cultural, religious or gender-related. More particularly, the sanction must not eliminate the right to health, education or work.

## **8. Affirming and accepting the fact that prisons and detention must be a last resort for juveniles at odds with the law**

Alternative solutions to detention that encourage social reintegration, focused on the individual and his personal itinerary, must be favoured (specialised educational centres, open detention centres...), whilst also taking the victims' interests into account. Even though local authorities have no say in the definition of the sanction, they have full rights when it comes to implementing alternative sentencing. Acceptance of the principle stated above amounts to considering sentences that will benefit the community as a second chance for the city to socially rehabilitate the individual and ensure common well-being.

## **9. Envisaging and preparing the prevention of re-offending via social reintegration on the first day of detention**

To successfully reintegrate re-offenders, it is indispensable to develop monitoring and management that begin the very moment of arrest and continue throughout incarceration and beyond release. A case-management approach implies cooperation between the different stakeholders, the agencies ensuring respect of the laws, NGOs and private associations, the inmates as well as their families and the victims for the conception, development and setting-up of methods for reintegrating persons sentenced to prison terms. The programme's continuity can therefore be ensured only by direct involvement and constant cooperation between the prison's social services and the city.

## **10. Guaranteeing the right of access to training and work**

All inmates should have the possibility of participating in vocational training or educational programmes that will allow for increasing their employability. Education is a fundamental instrument that must fulfil a double contract: offering opportunities for apprenticeship and imposing the obligation of making up for the consequences of acts committed.

### **11. Reinforcing efforts to mobilise public and private employers and evaluating other forms of job-creation for those leaving prison**

Getting a job as an ex-convict is not only a matter of individual skills but also a question linked to employers' desire to give a job to a person with a long criminal record. Consequently, in the framework of cooperation between the different players in the area of reintegration, it is necessary to pay particular attention to increasing employers' awareness and to mounting public information campaigns in order to heighten recent inmates' chances of finding a job.

### **12. Paying particular attention to other aspects of former inmates' lives to make reintegration successful**

In addition to a job, numerous other factors can have an impact on the success of former inmates' reintegration. Housing, family and taking in children are often determining factors for former inmates, and the reintegration programme must make sure that the person has a roof after being released. Organising round these potential difficulties must be taken care of prior to release and not afterwards.

### **13. Accepting the fact that getting away from crime is a progressive process**

In evaluating the rehabilitation processes of former inmates it is necessary to take into account psychological and sociological studies all of which show that getting away from crime does not happen overnight. What is important to measure is the decrease in the level of seriousness of committed offences, which can be an indicator of success.

### **14. Considering the cost-effectiveness of efforts in prevention of re-offending**

If one considers the economic aspect and social capital involved in efforts for preventing re-offending, it is more interesting for cities to use resources rationally and beforehand to prevent, rather than trying to make good on damages later on. Cities cannot afford to economise on these stakes and must invest in prevention and accompaniment actions for persons who are vulnerable and marginalised, and to do so in order to ensure the well-being of all citizens. For the national, regional and local political decision-makers, integration must not be considered an expense but an investment. In the long term, setting up an accompaniment policy for reintegration will also result in savings on costs apart from the improvement in living standards for all citizens as a whole. The stakes of a reintegration policy are too great for elected officials not to feel concerned and grasp the opportunities that are presented to them.

# CONCLUSION

## Results of the project

Two years for identifying leads for action and trying to set up a project that tackles re-offending may seem short, given the complexity of the task. Nonetheless, the involvement of the three pilot cities, which decided to launch programmes for preventing re-offending, has already produced results that will engender promising dynamics.

Thus, for the three pilot cities — Brasov, Le Havre and Opava —, the first outcome of this project is better knowledge of the problem, which is not usually one of the city's areas of competence. Better apprehension of the stakes also allowed the cities to identify leads for action and translate them into concrete measures on their territory.

In Le Havre, the deputy-mayor in charge of security, Bertrand Binctin, had acknowledged that the city's involvement in a European project, supported by Europe, allowed for gathering round the same table local players who had never previously met, and for setting up partnership agreements for the crossed accompaniment of those leaving prison, in particular as concerns employment and housing.

In Opava, this European project initiated thinking about urban security in the city and the role played by the prevention of re-offending. This reflection led to the definition of a comprehensive security strategy with a specific section on the prevention of re-offending and the signing of a cooperation memorandum between all the players concerned by this topic at the local level.

Finally, enrolment in this European project allowed the city of Brasov to bring together all the local partners on this topic and sign a cooperation protocol for the next three years. The city went beyond the expected results of the project in its planning phase. The deputy-mayor in charge of security, who had involved the city of Brasov in this project, was elected Member of Parliament within the project's lifetime. Even though he is no longer an elected city official, Gabriel Andronache has maintained his full interest in the project, which has breathed new life into local security policies. Thus did he pledge to propose a bill so that the prevention of re-offending come within the competences of local authorities and to make the partnership around this topic obligatory, whilst relying on the Brasov experience as a supporting argument, once the first evaluations are available.

## The role of the local level in a policy for the prevention of re-offending

The experiments begun during the life of the project only start processes, which, to be effective, must be lasting and embedded in the framework of formal partnership, the objective being the social rehabilitation of former inmates in order to ensure the well-being of the whole community in the long run.

Social reintegration — the key element of every policy for the prevention of re-offending — makes sense only in a local context, given that each territory has its specificities and that the responses contributed must take these particularities into account. Nonetheless, local authorities do not have the expertise of all the stakeholders playing a role in the itinerary of someone leaving prison, nor can they settle for unilateral responses whose ineffectiveness need no longer be proved. For all that, they are the first to have to respond to the legitimate demands of the citizens who have given them their mandate.

It is recognised that preparation for returning to life in society must begin before inmates leave the prison environment. Immediately after release, it is first necessary to make sure that the transition between prison and life in the community is facilitated by appropriate support measures. Next, it involves setting up interventions helping the former inmate to consolidate the aptitudes acquired in prison, until the social integration process is successfully completed<sup>14</sup>.

At the moment of being set free, recent inmates must face up to a whole series of problems — social, economic and personal — that forms an obstacle to a way of life in accordance with the law. Amongst these problems, some stem from past experiences of the person in question, others directly associated with the consequences of incarceration and the difficulties of returning to the community.

In addition to the difficulties of transition from imprisonment to freedom there is the stress inherent to supervision within the community. The time spent in prison has collateral effects on former inmates<sup>15</sup>: some of them have lost their subsistence and what they owned; others no longer have housing for themselves and their family; still others have lost contact with friends and acquaintances owing to their incarceration. Finally, it must be emphasised that, during their incarceration, inmates may have experienced problems of mental health or acquired self-defeating tendencies and attitudes. It can be underscored that problems of housing in particular can lead certain young delinquents to lapse back into crime after their release from prison<sup>16</sup>.

After an inmate's return to the community, it is essential to maintain support and continuous supervision and to establish constructive ties between him, his family and the various social services present on the territory.

The efforts begun in prison for studying and treating his criminal behaviour, drug problems and/or alcoholism or parental inadequacies, for example, must also be continued after release. The support in helping the former delinquent to begin or pursue his socialisation process must be envisaged in the long run. Only joint responses can be effective, insofar as persons who commit serious or repeated offences often have multiple needs and

14 Fox, A. 2002 'Aftercare for Drug-Using Prisoners: Lessons from an International Study', *The Probation Journal*, 49, 120-129

15 Idem <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/reports/2005-03-prisoners.html>

16 Arnall, E., S. Eagle, A. Gammampila, S.L. Patel and J. Sadler. 2007. *Housing Needs and Experiences*. London, UK: Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/publications/Resources/Downloads/Accommodation%20Needs%20and%20Experiences%20-%20Summary.pdf>

present several interdependent problems — e.g., drug addiction, school absenteeism or family problems —, which must be dealt with together.

The role incumbent upon elected officials is then to coordinate all the players involved in prevention of re-offending, which also presupposes making the link between social workers inside and outside prison so that there is an accompaniment towards freedom and autonomy and not an unprepared release that will result in a relapse into crime in more than 50% of cases.

The politicians in charge must promote and set up a prevention policy allowing them to better target and supervise this population to prevent re-offending. The re-offending problem being complex, responses must be developed in the framework of a joint, integrated policy that favours the networking of players such as justice, the police, the NGO's, social services and citizens. It is up to the mayor to ensure that the policy be implemented and that this partnership be run and accompanied with a view to building a common culture. It is up to the mayor, through pertinent, transparent information, to carry on a dialogue with his citizens and explain to them the importance of actions for prevention and reduction of re-offending in the common objective of fighting both insecurity and the perpetration of crimes. Local authorities must therefore take on the coordination role in the partnership between the various players concerned, according to each one's competences and roles (city services, NGOs, student associations, inhabitants, justice, police, private sector, education, health...). Country and regional authorities, often the source of financing for carrying out innovative or experimental local actions, must necessarily be associated in this reflection and contribute, on the one hand, to evaluating actions carried out and, on the other, to their transposition and promotion on other territories.

The prevention of re-offending must be developed on the local scale in order to allow for stable, reactive, multidisciplinary policies geared to the neighbourhood. The target public of the local policy for the prevention of re-offending are the repeat-offenders or juveniles confronted with violence and crime on a daily basis. In order to produce results, it is necessary to apply the principle of resilience<sup>17</sup> and set up a progressive strategy for getting away from crime. This local prevention policy must therefore be able to provide timely, satisfying responses for re-offenders or multiple-offenders on the one hand and, on the other, for all citizens. To be effective, the responses proposed by this policy must rely on both the quality of dialogue and coherence, and on police, judicial, social and education measures.

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17 'Resilience' in the sense of the result of multiple processes interrupting negative trajectories and ensuring a return to normal.

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