

# RAN P&P

## Ex post paper

24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> February, Stockholm



### Working group meeting - Multi-agency cooperation

The second RAN P&P meeting took place in Stockholm, in close cooperation with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS). The main objective of the meeting was to develop better insight into ways that multi-agency cooperation can be organised around radicalised offenders. Insights were gathered through the presentation of three Member State approaches (Swedish, Belgium and France) and further discussion on key issues.

The meeting, which was attended by close to 30 participants, including 10 local participants from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS) and partner organisations, unmasked a number of problems and challenges related to multi-agency cooperation which practitioners face in their daily work. The complexity of the topic made for an interesting discussion and it is clear that there is no one-size-fits all model, although on some guiding principles there was a high level of agreement .

This ex-post paper will present the main points discussed during the meeting, on the basis of the presentations of the three national approaches (described in detail in annex 1-3). The complexity of the topic has fostered interaction between participants on many aspects of multi-agency cooperation. As introduced in the ex-ante paper, a number of questions were leading during the meeting which will be addressed throughout this ex-post paper.

- Why is there a need for a multi-agency approach from the P&P perspective ?
- What are the main objectives for P&P in these partnerships?
- Who are the actors that P&P need partnerships with?
- What is each partner's role in the cooperation?
- Can different levels of cooperation be distinguished?
- What kind of structures and agreements can be used to establish partnerships?
- How to deal with sharing sensitive information?

### Main issues and challenges

#### **The need for multi-agency cooperation around radicalised offenders**

To start with the need or necessity to create multi-agency cooperation around radicalised offenders, there was a general agreement that this is indeed of vital importance. The main reason behind this is the fact that an offender will, in his or her way through the criminal justice chain, encounter different people and organisations. In some cases, the offender has also been in contact with institutions such as social care, mental health care etc. before being charged or sentenced with a crime. Since many of the sentences for terrorist activities are relatively short (between a couple of weeks up onto 10 years, in some cases not in a closed prison environment but on electronic monitoring), these offenders will come back into society. Prison and Probation services might have little time to actually influence or “treat” the

prisoner which makes multi-agency cooperation important to foster the work that the Prison and Probation service hopefully started and ensure that it continues by other agencies and society. It is the responsibility of different organisations involved (judiciary organisations, prison, probation, police, intelligence services, municipalities, housing associations, social work etc.) to minimise the chance of reoffending and maximize chances to integrate as a non-criminal citizen in society. The same goes in cases where offenders are not charged with/convicted for terrorist activities but are showing signs of radicalised behaviour. To detect and intervene in these cases, multi-agency cooperation bringing together different flows and types of information is crucial.

### **Shared objectives of multi-agency cooperation around radicalised offenders**

The main objective behind the multi-agency partnerships around radicalised offenders is dependent on the general perspective on dealing with regular offenders and/or specific groups of offenders in a specific Member State. Both at the individual level as well as on a more strategic level, partners involved should be aware of the general objective in which they have role based on their professional task (e.g. police and intelligence are concerned with minimising risk, social services will be more concerned about a stable social environment after release). In many cases challenges to multi-agency partnerships develop when organisations within the partnership do not have a clear idea of the shared objective and do not know each other's role and interest in achieving it.

### **Establishing cooperation between prison and probation**

As part of the multi-agency partnership, a cooperation between prison and probation forms a logical basis. However, discussion during the meeting showed that this cooperation does not always exist automatically. Systems vary across EU MS on how prison and probation services are organised. In some cases they are two distinguished entities (Belgium), while in other cases they are under the same centralised agency (Sweden). This has a clear consequence on how information is shared between them and, as mentioned above, some MS themselves recognise the existence of a gap between prison and probation services. In Belgium, for example, the prison system is at national level, while the probation one is a competence of municipalities. A certain degree of sceptic attitude towards cooperation between prison and probation services derive from the concern that sensitive information might be shared beyond probation officers – an issues which could be arranged within an agreed framework.

### **Establishing cooperation between prison, probation and other organisations**

This has resulted as the field where difference between MS are the strongest. In particular, discussion has focused on how prison and probation services prepare radicalised offenders to reintegration into society and to what extent they cooperate with external actors in this regard. As mentioned earlier, probation systems themselves vary significantly across MS, which makes a comparison of multi-agency cooperation approaches even more complicated. Participants unanimously agreed that continuity of the reintegration work done around the offender is important after the conditional release/during probation. Sweden has important examples of effective cooperation at local level with municipalities and social actors (explained in more detail in the annexes); however, this is still not a common practice neither in the whole Sweden nor in all EU MS. Many MS admit experiencing a clear gap between prison and probation services in the first place, which turns in a lack of cooperation with external actors. In this

way, the biggest gap lies exactly where the most important part of the rehabilitation work is done, i.e. in cooperation with external partners.

The lack of a shared rehabilitation model certainly does not help overcoming the issue. In this sense, the majority of participants advanced the idea of an agreement of cooperation, where number of partners and degree of cooperation are defined in advance. As prison and probation systems don't have daily interaction with the inmates under probation/conditional release, these similar agreements would need to include: educational agencies, psychological services, municipalities, probation officers, intelligence officers, housing and employment agencies, healthcare and social practitioners.

A number of specific external organisations were flagged during the meeting, which need attention in future RAN P&P meetings;

- Religious representatives might also play a role in the countering/preventing radicalisation both in prison and after release. The experiences of MS show however different approaches to them. The main question around a cooperation with religious representatives is whether they should be directly employed by prison and probation services (UK) or they should cooperate occasionally as external partners (SE). In particular, SE explained its approach on a dual basis: it does not hamper religious representatives' credibility vis-à-vis prisoners and it is respectful of any ethic issue that could arise. As opposed to this, IT has adopted the role of the 'cultural mediator', as moderate and skilled person helping out with prisoners through counter-narratives.
- Cooperation with the judiciary sector around radicalised offenders is also very important. Of course during remand and trials it is important to share information and to have a well-informed public prosecution and judge with knowledge about radicalisation processes, extremism, risk assessments etc. Also when, as it is the case in some but not all MS, a judiciary decision is needed to resettle a prisoner within the prison structure, good cooperation and sharing of information plays a role.
- International coordination on information sharing: this is a general challenge in the field of CVE. For the prisons and probation sector and professionals there is no sharing of information around offenders across borders e.g. when prisoners transferred from a different country.

### **Lack of information and intelligence-sharing culture**

The overarching issue around multi-agency cooperation in the field of prison and probation is related to the existing culture of classified information. This is particularly true when sensitive information needs to cross the border of a public system to be shared with external private partners. Cooperation with intelligence services is extremely complicated. However, information in possession of intelligence services are indeed extremely important not only for prison officers, but also for probation officers and social actors to know the features of the phenomenon they have to face and consequently to develop a good strategy to counter and halt it. In this regards, the Swedish National Coordinator mentioned that given the importance of information that only intelligence services might have for example on how many people travelled to Syria, they have a discussion with them and reached an agreement defining the structure of this cooperation. SE and FR, supported by other MS, underlined that to improve information sharing with intelligence systems is difficult because it is a matter of cultural change. Even once the information goes beyond the intelligence boundaries and reaches the prison system, it cannot be used in

any formal decision (e.g. profiling or observational assessment), despite being part of the decision process itself. This often leads to some ambiguity in the system, when information which cannot be shared officially are shared anyway via more informal means (i.e. orally).

Sweden has developed an intelligence unit within its own prison system, which allows SPPS to produce its own intelligence (see below). However, intelligence is limited by law in the probation field. Intelligence produced by the intelligence unit is not contained in formal decision, whilst it can inform the settlement decisions of the prisoner within the system. Therefore, the prisoner has access to his own file which is 'free' of intelligence information: if (s)he rejects the resettlement, the decision will be reassigned to the court, but the prisoner cannot access the intelligence file.

## Guiding principles and good practice

From the presentations of the Swedish, Belgian and French approach to multi-agency cooperation as well as discussions during the meeting, the following lessons learned and guiding principles can be distinguished. Most of them would apply in all cases of multi-agency cooperation, some of them are particular for radicalised offenders.

- **Trust and personal relationships**

All participants agreed that trust is a key component of effective multi-agency cooperation. Often trust is build through personal relationships which means that people know each other, know each others work and interests and ask for/give help when needed. The downside of personal relationships appears when people change position or job and new relationships need to be build. When this happens often it will most likely negatively affect the partnership. To be less reliant on personal relationships, cooperation with other agencies in Sweden has become inherent to specific roles/functions.

- **Momentum and political/ government assignment:**

Current events of terrorist attacks in different parts of Europe have created momentum and a high need for more and better multi-agency cooperation. Using this momentum can be helpful to forge stronger partnerships. Also a clear political and/or governmental assignment can offer a good incentive. It would facilitate a better multi-agency cooperation and it would officially pave the way for a culture of information sharing. A formalised agreement would facilitate multi-agency cooperation both between prison and probation and intelligence services and between them and external actors, as mentioned above. Asking for the creation of a social task force of actors involved in the rehabilitation of the prisoner, a similar assignment would facilitate the conclusion of agreements between public and private actors. A similar steering effort has been already shown in some MS (such as SE and FR). An optimal level of multi-agency cooperation can be achieved when it is supported by ministerial agreements, relevant policies and an adequate legislation.

- **The need of information sharing agreements/ frameworks**

Against a strong culture of classified and non-sharable information, it is instead important to distinguish what is a genuinely classified information and what is sensitive, but could be shared with some prudence. For example, as pointed out during the meeting, some classified information could be brought

to a sufficient level of abstraction to make them unclassified. In this way, the information can be shared with other agencies, without endangering the sensitivity of the data initially contained (privacy protection) nor stopping the cooperation among agencies (within an agreed framework). This is for example, the case of medical records: in many MS medical records are not accessible for prison staff either. However, this might be information which filtered of certain specific details could instead be useful also beyond the competencies of the agency which produced them. Another way to overcome this problem, is to define unanimously a need-to-know threshold on the basis of which sensitive information can be shared: for example, source and method of information gathering are not relevant and too sensitive to share and can be disregarded.

- **Developing a shared language/ shared tools**

All member states are in some way developing tools to work with radicalised offenders. Especially risk, need and responsivity assessments are under development that are specifically aimed at radicalised offenders (VERA II, ERP). As a result of this, different categorisation of radicalised offenders are surfacing (e.g. in the Dutch prison in Vught there a distinction of leaders, followers and criminal opportunists is used for this group, in Sweden the SPPS security office talks about ‘transmitters’ and ‘vulnerable recipients’). In the Netherlands an attempt is being made to start using the same assessment tools and terminology in the different organisations working with radicalised offenders, starting within the criminal justice system but with the aim to extend also to NGO’s and other organisations involved. Having different definitions, tools, understanding of risk assessment and categorisation of radicalised offenders can hamper effective sharing and interpreting information between organisations. Therefore it is recommended to develop a shared language and toolset to work with radicalised offenders.

- **Diversity in ways to shape multi-agency cooperation**

There is no one-size-fits all model for multi-agency cooperation and often the model chosen needs to fit in the local context. It is also highly dependent on the criminal justice infrastructure that a member state has in place e.g. whether prison and probation fall under the same ministry, whether both are organised on the national level or on different levels etc. This makes comparison more difficult but offers opportunity to choose between many different ways and models to shape multi-agency cooperation. Different examples that have been introduced during this and other RAN meetings:

- National coordinators office; find a description of the Swedish example in annex 1.
- Safety or info houses; these exist in several MS (Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands) and are information hubs where different agencies come together to discuss specific cases and overall cooperation agreements and processes.
- Joint intelligence centre: find a description of the Swedish example in annex 1.
- Joint (community) intervention team: find a description in the Swedish and French approach in annex 1. and annex 3.
- Joint working group; find a description in the Belgian approach in annex 2.

- **Building on existing multi-agency structures**

In many MS, multi-agency structures are already in place around other types of offenders (e.g. organised crime, gangs, sex offenders). It will save time and resources to investigate whether these structures can also be adapted to work for radicalised offenders. This might imply additional policy, information sharing agreements and training but will build on existing networks and procedures making them quicker to establish.

As an example of good practice, in Sweden a successful multi-agency approach has been designed around organized crime. Joint intelligence centres serve to bring together information from different agencies: information are not made accessible to all the partners involved, but they are shared by representatives of each of the agency of the partnership. This enhances trust and personal relationships, while allowing some room for information sharing. Together with a clear agreement on both the room as well as the boundaries of sharing information, the threshold of multi-agency cooperation has been lowered. This same model is on occasion also used with cases of radicalisation/extremism.

## Annex 1: Introduction to the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS)

Scandinavian countries are traditionally low-imprisonment societies: in Sweden, the time spent in prison and probation system will serve to both provide secure custody and to bring a change in prisoner's life. In fact, the probation population amounts to 13 500 persons, while 4 300 are within the prison system. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS) has undergone several changes: in 2007, it eventually became a single centralised system. The Prison and Probation system in Sweden has its roots in at least four principles/measures which serve the purpose of facilitating the reintegration of the prisoner to a normal life, while ensuring a certain degree of multi-agency cooperation:

- Release measures: these are special actions taken before release to reduce the risk of reoffending and facilitate the inmate's re-integration into society. As in many other EU MS, conditional release is allowed when 2/3 of the sentence has been served. Other release measures include work/education release, treatment homes, extended work release with electronic monitoring;
- Probation: preferred to prison, when possible, as imprisonment complicates the transition to a life in society and is not efficient in countering recidivism. The duration is generally of one year and a probation officer is assigned to each offender in probation: (s)he will also take care of arranging the prisoner's needs when they require the cooperation of social actors;
- Case management: multi-agency cooperation increases, as case management includes not only the coordination of services within the SPPS, but also of all external partners that might serve the objectives of rehabilitation and security;
- Multi-agency cooperation: the SPPS is fully dependent on cooperation with external social partners and agencies to fulfil the rehabilitative mission.

With regard to radicalised offenders, the SPPS is backed by a clear government assignment to:

- Map current structures and methods used to manage radicalised offenders, nationally and internationally;
- Implement relevant methods in the SPPs work, building on existing structures and methods from the outset.

In this regard, information is collected from a wide range of sources: RAN, international forums, Europris and national agencies.

In terms of risk assessment and security, radicalised offenders are provided the same intake assessments as other inmates. Referrals to programs are made as required, based on assessed need and level of risk; programs are not specifically tailored to radicalised offenders, but are rather evidence-based programming, and religious support is always ensured. The placement of radicalised inmates depends upon offender's behavior and needs: in this sense, the intelligence work (identify, monitor and restrict) and the application of dynamic security are of paramount importance. As a general rule, violent extremist offenders are separated from offenders vulnerable to radicalization; when the circumstances require so, the separation of certain offenders is also geographical (across the country). In terms of staff training, two goals are pursued: in the short-term, staff is required to improve their knowledge of the

target group to raise awareness; in the long-term, basic cultural awareness is provided to broaden staff's perspective on extremism.

In the close future, the new national legislation is likely to increase the number of violent extremist offenders in Sweden; in order to keep improving the prison and probation system, the main objectives are:

- Ask for more evidence/research, especially in areas of assessment and intervention/programs;
- Increasingly work with representatives from different religions and clearly define structures for engagement, education and introduction;
- Establish and further develop structures for multi- agency cooperation and cooperation with local communities.

## Examples of multi-agency cooperation in Sweden

### The National Coordinators Office

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The Swedish National Coordinator against violent extremism focuses its work on three variations of extremism: Islamic, far right and far left extremisms. Despite the high number of people travelling to Syria, the number of people travelling has decreased and so has the number of returnees which also includes women and children<sup>1</sup>. The work of the National Coordinator focuses on prevention, mainly within municipalities, supporting cooperation against violent extremism. In this sense, it helps local workers and NGOs of the area to first assess the local situation, in terms of presence of actors who experienced problems with violent extremism; secondly to analyse how they can cooperate and interact with each other; finally, to elaborate an action plan: violent extremism is not just a matter of security in the narrowest meaning of the concept, but it is nowadays a much wider issue where the social actors play a crucial role and need to coordinate with traditional security experts in their fight against violent extremism. In November 2015, for example, an hotline has started, handled by the Swedish Red Cross and targeting defectors, family, friends, colleagues and professionals: it has received a positive response so far. The National Coordinator works with a wide range of actors from education, police, social services till families, to spread evidence-based methods and good practice. When working in prevention, awareness is important as without acknowledging a problem there is no possibility to work on it. The so called Group of Reference therefore include a number of partners which have a broad overview of the situation and make sure all the actors within one municipality are working towards the same direction. However, at the moment being, there is no problem of consensus and momentum, as the problem is clear to all actors involved as shown by the number of people who left Sweden to fight in Syria.

### Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence

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Intelligence and security within the prison is run by SPPS, where intelligence is seen as preventive in ensuring security. For the moment, there are 6 convicted prisoners for terrorist related crimes, of which

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<sup>1</sup> As from the first of April 2016, travelling to Syria will become illegal in Sweden.



only 2 convicted for crimes in Syria. The estimation of radicalised offenders in prison and remand amounts to 40. The security framework is determined by a number of variables:

- Interaction & relationships: attitudes, firmness and fairness, constructive staff-prisoner relationships, activities;
- Awareness & knowledge: staff awareness, prison intelligence, knowledge of prisoners;
- Procedural: policies, instructions, procedures;
- Physical & technical: buildings, perimeter, locks, cameras, alarm systems etc.

In this way, a positive staff-prisoner relationship creates knowledge and awareness, which is key for effective prison intelligence. In turn, intelligence leads to well informed decisions and assessments, important for correct allocation of prisoners.

Prison intelligence, which is delivered by the SPPS itself with no hierarchic relations with the national intelligence services, is key to identify security threats before an event occurs and inform right decisions. However, intelligence delivers probabilities and, despite contributing to reduce the threat, it cannot be 100% sure. Therefore, a decision is always followed by an evaluation in the intelligence cycle.

The approach to violent extremism and radicalization is made of four steps:

- Identification of individuals before and during imprisonment;
- Intelligence assessment via expressions (verbal and behavioural) and background factors;
- Categorisation: for example, transmitters and vulnerable recipients are the most used categories;
- Information sharing leading to action: for partners' to be able to take the needed actions as regards for example allocation;
- Monitoring.

A multi-agency approach on organised crime is in place since 2009 and provides a good example: 12 agencies collaborate together in combating organised crime (police, intelligence, customs, coast guard). Collaboration is enhanced by joint intelligence centres: this cooperation allows to build trust which in turn stimulate more effective information sharing. The multi-agency approach to organised crime tears down barriers to collaboration; thus, the same approach can be used for different purposes. Cooperation is now improved with social services and employment agencies, for examples. Different agencies collaborate differently with each others and generally meet once or twice per week: there is no combined information and they cannot access each others' information, but information is shared by people involved.

Finally, information sharing is regulated by a legal framework which protects privacy and encourages the sharing of information when needed. In addition, sharing of information requires high information security standards, not to undermine the trust built among agencies. On the other side, there are still some barriers on the use of sensitive information. For example, the use of intelligence information in formal decision is difficult, since it would become public. In addition some restrictions are also posed by regulations and law, for example in the case of medical records, and by the lack of clear ownership.

## Local work on probation in Halland Västra Götaland

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The Probation Service is tasked primarily with the supervision of persons conditionally released on probation, with or without community services, intensive supervision with electronic monitoring, work at remand centres and prisons and preparing client social reports. In Sweden, there are 34 probation offices for 12 areas, with around 1400 clients and 1200 employees.

In particular, in the counties of Halland and Västra Götaland, the probation service is working with 46 municipalities, with 4 offices and 120 probation officers. There is a strong coordination with the legal chain, including prosecutor director, chief judge, police chief and probation director: they meet at least twice per half year. Coordination is also ensured with social actors and employment agencies, to ensure a smooth return of the probation client back to society.<sup>2</sup>

Skaraborg is an example of inter-agency cooperation in the county of Västra Götaland. Within the structure of a joint working group 15 municipalities meet together with police, security police, probation services, social workers, following their joint action plan against violent extremism. Cooperation with the National Coordinator is also a common feature. Another examples is Fyrbodal (5 municipalities, probation service and employment agencies).

In Halland, multi-agency cooperation has been carried out for two years and it is formally recognised in an agreement signed by high-level authorities. A good outcome of this cooperation was a conference on exclusion of young people in Halland, which brought together six municipalities, police, security police, labour authorities and emergency services with the Director General and the national coordinator for protecting democracy against violent extremism. The cooperation work is also supported by a joint community intervention team. Most of this work take place in 'case management' (at individual level) where the probation officer assigned to probation clients and works in close cooperation with social actors to ensure its reintegration into society. In two years of cooperation in Halland, probation officers have actually registered a gradual but increasing opening and building of trust between agencies involved.

## EXIT Sweden

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The role of EXIT Sweden is to help violent extremists to exit the Swedish neo-Nazi movements and with the sister organisation Passus to help individuals to leave organised crime. The exit work is carried out by both trained and experienced staff and people who had previous experience in the very same violent and criminal groups. The involvement of the latter is very important at the beginning, to start the process of trust building, beyond providing a concrete example that exit organised crime and violent extremism is actually possible. The approach is strictly individual. There are three main areas of work:

- Individual assessment: who is the client, what is the situation and the background, help him/her to cope with the stress deriving from detaching from the belonging to a group which shaped his/her identity for long time;

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<sup>2</sup> Information are shared only with the consensus of the probation client

- Reduce the distance between the client and the society;
- Work on neutralising the de-humanisation process of the perceived enemy, which are typical patterns of organised crime and violent extremism.

Multi-agency cooperation with social actors is extremely important for EXIT strategies: in addition, cooperation is also occurring with SPPS when needed. In turn, SPPS let 'motivators' to visit prisons to encourage motivational programmes with prisoners.

## Annex 2. The Belgian approach

OCAM and Celex offered two different perspectives to look at the Belgian approach. OCAM is a coordination unit, which determines the level of threat in relation to terrorism and extremism. It is not an intelligence service and it is supported by 7 services (State Security, Military Intelligence Service, Integrated Police Service, Ministry of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Mobility and Customs). These services are required to communicate all the relevant information concerning possible threats. On the other side, Celex is in charge of coordinating the exchange of information between prisons and partners, such as intelligence services and police. It also takes decisions concerning transfers and regime.

The fact that the State Security Department in Belgium is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice facilitates the cooperation between the two services. However, the path towards cooperation has been challenging at the very beginning: it was the result of many signed agreements and protocols. The first step has been a Protocol on training of staff and exchange of information (2006), which has been followed in 2007 by an awareness training of prison governors. In 2015, the Ministerial Action Plan has confirmed the importance of cooperation and widened information exchange and staff training. Information is shared via unclassified bank database which can be accessed by several services, including probation officers.

A plan to counter radicalisation (Plan R) has been in place since 2006: it has introduced a structure to detect early sign of radicalisation, improve the information flux between services and ensure a global and integrated approach through administrative and judicial measures (on both a preventive and repressive level). The overall aim is to reduce the scope and the impact of radicals and extremists. To this end, this structure is composed by Working Groups (Internet, radio/TV, preachers, far right/left extremism, etc.). Since 2015 a new Working Group on prevention is implemented. Another important Working group is on prisons led by State Security: it holds its meeting monthly, where participants exchange information and best practices.

The Action Plan of the Ministry of Justice to counter radicalisation has as main goal to avoid dissemination of radical ideology in prison. De-radicalisation is therefore not the first objective of the plan. It has set up some imprisonment criteria to succeed in the general goal:

- Creation of separate sections, separating leaders and recruiters;
- Standard individual regime with dynamic security;
- Specialised staff;
- Five satellites.

A new Ministerial Note on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) has established new criteria:

- A threat evaluation for each FTF is made by OCAM and it is unclassified. Therefore it will be accessible for all partners on a need-to-know basis;
- The individual threat profile will serve as basis for further action;

Finally, the note also promotes administrative measures at local level and interaction with local authorities, prevention and social workers, employment actors, etc<sup>3</sup>. In the interactions with prisons on FTF, information can be useful to determine the security level, to inform the psychosocial department or the imam. On the other side, the penitentiary institution can send observations and remarks about FTF during detention, which can then be used for a new assessment. For example, behavioural information on prisoner's reaction to certain news (such as the Paris attack in November 2015). Celex and State Security are responsible for the follow up of the FTF during his/her detention.

In conclusion, despite a good level of exchange of information between prisons, police and intelligence services, some room for improvement exists for collaboration with probation services and local actors. Problems still exists as regards privacy issues and ownership.

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<sup>3</sup> Municipalities are financially supported by government to engage prevention workers.

## Annex 3. The French approach

France has presented its approach as a 'multi-disciplinary' rather than a multi-agency approach.

The prison service is organised on three levels and it includes the probation service:

- A national level, which defines strategy and guidelines;
- A regional level, which implements national guidance;
- A local level, where both prison and probation structures are located.

Probation and prison staff are the largest groups of employees: probation officers work in close environment to help inmates to reintegrate in the society through individual monitoring; prison staff are in daily contact with prisoners. In their daily work they are in touch with networks of institutional and community partners.

France is currently coping with new threats from radicalisation and a new pattern of radicalisation in prisons has been observed over the last decade, in particular in overcrowded prisons. This has a deep impact on the management of the prisons, as they are seen as high risk places for vulnerable people. Since October 2014, as a response, France has implemented a mixed system: keeping the dispersal system but introducing separation units (not isolation).

France has a three-step process in place:

- Detection: trained staff are able to detect first sign of early radicalisation, being careful to distinguish religious behaviour from radicalised behaviour. In close environments, this step is supported by the use of detection grids (different ones for police officers, probation officers and managerial staff). The Multidisciplinary Unique Commission (CPU) will decide whether the offender will go in the evaluation unit or under reinforced supervision in classic detention;
- Assessment is needed to reach a correct diagnosis and identify the features of radicalisation. The reports produced in this step also go to the judicial authorities. At this point of the process, the Multidisciplinary Unique Commission (CPU) plays an important role in informing the final decision about the regime of the offender (Special Programme Unit, classical detention or maximum security prison);
- Supervision: cognitive and behavioural approach to accompany the radicalised offenders through the disengagement process, minimising the risk of violence while preserving freedom of thought.

In addition to two evaluation units in Fresnes and Fleury-Merogis, three supervision units of the French penitentiary system are part of a special program for radicalised offenders<sup>4</sup>. Fleury-Merogis and Osny units are dedicated to offenders open to disengagement process and therefore have a collective approach with the following criteria of imprisonment: collective supervision, individual cells, strengthened one-to-one follow up, increased activities, meetings with external actors including formers and victims and supervised by multi-disciplinary teams of educators, psychologists and teachers. Lille-

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<sup>4</sup> This programme resulted as an adaptation of the sexual offenders programme.

Anneoellin is instead reserved for reluctant offenders and those detected to be at risk of violence: supervision is here individual.

Penitentiary intelligence is part of the process of detecting and assessing. It has been established in 2003 as separate intelligence capacity. Its mission is to collect, cross-check and analyse intelligence on targeted offenders (Islamist terrorism, organised crime, extreme nationalists, etc.). Sources are both external (intelligence from police, intelligence services, social media and media) and internal (reporting from prison and probation officers).

Sharing information in the intelligence process is still a challenge, as well as the development of a common culture of information sharing between judicial authorities, police and intelligence services, between open and close environment officers and with healthcare staff.