



European
Commission



REPORT

on the project-
based
collaboration
on preventive work
in prison,
rehabilitation,
reintegration

LED IN 2019

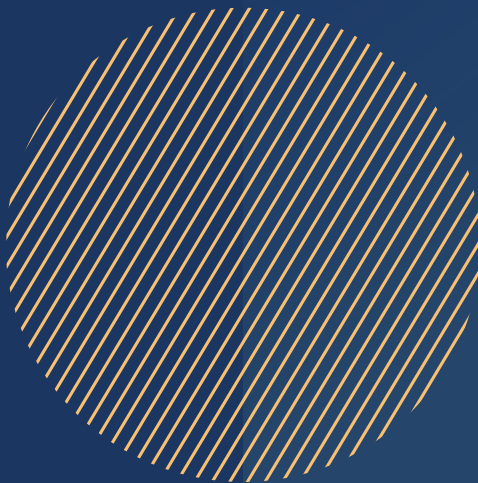


*Migration and
Home Affairs*

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION



General introduction

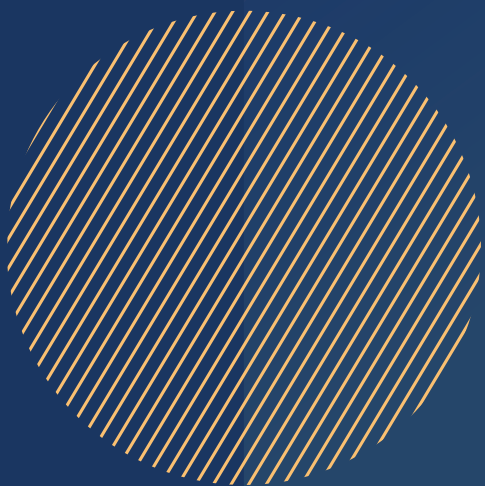
In its final report of 18 May 2018, the high-level Commission expert group on radicalisation (HLCEG-R) recommended creating a new collaborative format: 'project-based collaborations', led by Member States with the support of the Commission.

The purpose and added value of project-based collaborations was to allow like-minded Member States to collaborate through a series of meetings to produce specific deliverables that helped implement better policy responses.

Following input received from the Member States, the Commission organised in 2019 seven projects with various formats: study visits, workshops or combination of study visits and workshops.

Each group working on a project validated a final report with guidance and recommendations.

PRISONS, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION



Project-based collaboration

Prisons, rehabilitation and reintegration Findings & further work

Expert meeting, Brussels 13 March 2019

Study visit, Stockholm 2/3 October 2019

Study visit, Lille/Paris 22/23 October 2019

Under the *project-based collaboration* initiative, in 2019, France and Sweden, with Commission support, led a project on *Radicalisation in prisons, reintegration and rehabilitation*. The project included one expert meeting and two study visits. The expert meeting took place in Brussels on 13 March 2019. The study visits were organised on 2/3 October and 22/23 October, and involved Sweden organising a visit to Hall Prison and Sollentuna Probation Office, and France organising a visit to the prisons in Vendin-le-Vieil and Annoellin.

I. Introduction

The objective of the project was to offer a platform for exchange between national policymakers on how to manage terrorist and extremist offenders during and after their release, with a view to better addressing the specific challenges this specific group poses, including the need to balance risk monitoring and reintegration efforts. The project had the dual goal to get a better overview of existing initiatives and to identify gaps for further work and formulate possible steps forward. This work was carried out against the background of a growing number of terrorist and radicalised offenders that are due to end their prison sentences in the coming years and will need effective rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

II. Participating Member States

France and Sweden led the project and seven Member States participated: Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland and the Netherlands. During the expert meeting, other EU institutions and networks participated (DG JUST, Europris and Europol).

III. Main insights

Expert meeting in Brussels – setting the scene

During the meeting in Brussels, it became clear that a lot of work is already being carried out in the field of radicalisation in prisons, rehabilitation and reintegration. However, it is still a new field; experience is limited and more is needed. Participants generally accepted that rehabilitation should be part of long-term reintegration work, starting in prison and continuing after probation. Participants identified a number of areas in which further work would be useful, such as:

- *further development of risk assessment tools;*
- *a pilot for the use of self-assessment tools;*
- *exploring the scope for a voluntary peer-review mechanism;*
- *exchanging best practice on sharing information between the security sector and social/local sector and*
- *continued exchanges of experience on programmes to manage radicalised offenders in prison and after release, to further increase the effectiveness of these programmes.*

In addition, participants suggested practical steps forward, such as creating a scheme for exchanges between national prison authorities of lists of books/literature that need monitoring, further development of the VERA 2R risk assessment tool by continuing the DARE project and more scope for staff training to increase their knowledge and expertise in dealing with radicalised offenders. Participants also identified a general need to map existing practices (such as rehabilitation programmes, information exchange and available training courses).

Study visit to Sweden – Hall Prison, Sollentuna Probation Office, new research

The expert meeting set the scene for more in-depth study visits to Sweden and France. The study visit to Hall Prison and Sollentuna Probation Office showed the specific Swedish approach to dealing with terrorist and radicalised offenders, which takes an ethical approach and is very much human-rights based. It uses concepts for (general) offender management such as dynamic security, RNR (Risk/Need/Responsivity) and the 'Entre' programme (support programme for leaving criminal groups). An important principle in dealing with radicalised offenders is that all specific approaches should be evidence-based or, if this is not possible, built on established practices for high-risk offenders.

On the second day of the visits, research insights were shared by international researchers and by the Research and Evaluation unit of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, which provides the evidence base for offender management in Sweden. Torre Bjørge shared insights into rehabilitation (on the five dimensions of individual change, the importance of the social environment and the emphasis on de-radicalisation as opposed to mental health and reintegration). Monica Lloyd shared insights into the risk of extremism (on the Structured

Professional Judgement risk assessment method, the importance of protective factors and the importance of direct evidence from offenders as opposed to open source information), which opened up important new avenues for evidence-based research.

Study visit to France – QER, QPR and PAIRS

In France, the focus of the study visit was specifically on programmes for managing terrorist and radicalised offenders in prison and after release brought in by the *Département d'Administration Penitentiaire* in recent years. The *Quartier d'Evaluation de la Radicalisation (QER)* is an assessment programme for terrorist and radicalised offenders who enter prison, the *Quartier de Prise en Charge de la Radicalisation* is a specialised programme for a certain category of medium-risk terrorist offenders and the *Programme d'accueil individualisé et de réaffirmation sociale (PAIRS)* is a specialised reintegration programme for selected terrorist/extremist offenders after their detention period.

These French programmes are focused specifically on Jihadist offenders, because of the distinctive characteristics of this type of extremism. They feature a relatively high number of hours spent per week on individual or group sessions. An important element of the programmes is the work to deconstruct the extremist religious narrative (without seeking to disconnect an offender from their religion), exemplified by the role of the *médiateur du fait religieux* in the QER and QPR programmes, a role that differs to the role of the Muslim chaplain who provides religious care.

The PAIRS programme, run by an NGO, is comprehensive and has a multi-disciplinary set up involving social workers, psychologists/psychiatrists and intercultural mediators. It aims to support ex-offenders during the probation period (and longer) in creating an independent life again. A tailor-made programme is developed, including a wide range of activities such as one-to-one dialogues, group discussions, support in engaging with services and agencies and, if needed, the provision of temporary housing.

Results and follow up

All participants concluded that the study visits and the expert meeting had been very valuable. They also considered it highly useful to make programmes to address radicalisation in prisons and rehabilitate terrorists and radicalised offenders a priority in 2020.

- 1) Considering the urgency of the matter and following the findings of the study visits in Sweden and France, it is suggested that focus is placed on rehabilitation, reintegration and de-radicalisation programmes in prison and after release.
- 2) An important element is continued exchanges between Member States with a view to increasing the effectiveness of rehabilitation, reintegration and de-radicalisation programmes in the light of different approaches, as illustrated by France and Sweden.
- 3) This includes further work on evidence-based research as the basis for programmes, as highlighted at the expert meeting in Brussels and illustrated by the research unit from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

- 4) In this context, specific attention could be paid to risk assessment and management, assessment of individual progress during rehabilitation/reintegration programmes (including self-assessment), information exchange between prison/law enforcement and local government/social sector and the role of religious counselling (both to provide religious care and to deconstruct the extremist narrative).
- 5) The meetings highlighted a number of other topics that merit attention: training for prison and probation staff, exchanges of lists of prison literature and other content that should be monitored, vetting of Imams, identifying radicalisation in prison (of non-terrorist offenders) and the gender dimension.
- 6) In addition, participants considered it useful to map the state of play in Member States and in the EU on topics such as the availability of staff training courses, existing rehabilitation programmes and practices regarding information exchange.

