

Prisons and probation: Council of Europe/ CEP Mental Health Project



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Design

- Two questionnaires were designed and agreed by the Council of Europe's member states and jurisdictions.
- The questionnaires aimed to elicit government policies and practical approaches to mental health disorders in probation services and in prisons.
- The survey was out in the field for approximately 10 weeks and a number of reminders were sent to non-responders
- The survey closed in July, 2021

Response

	Prisons	Probation Services
Number of Total Returns	<p>Note: Germany sent 10 different responses (out of a possible 16), Spain sent 2</p> <p>Thus, there was a possibility of 67 'Response Units'</p> <p>Data is reported from 42 out of a possible 67 'response units'</p>	<p>Note: Germany sent 11 different responses (out of a possible 16), Belgium sent 3 and Spain sent 2. The UK sent 3/4.</p> <p>Thus, there was a possibility of 67 'Response Units'</p> <p>Data is reported from 46% out of a possible 67 'response units'</p>
% Overall Response	63%	66%

Received no questionnaires

Azerbaijan
Estonia
Liechtenstein
Monaco
North Macedonia
Georgia
Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic
Norway
Ukraine

Received the Probation questionnaires only

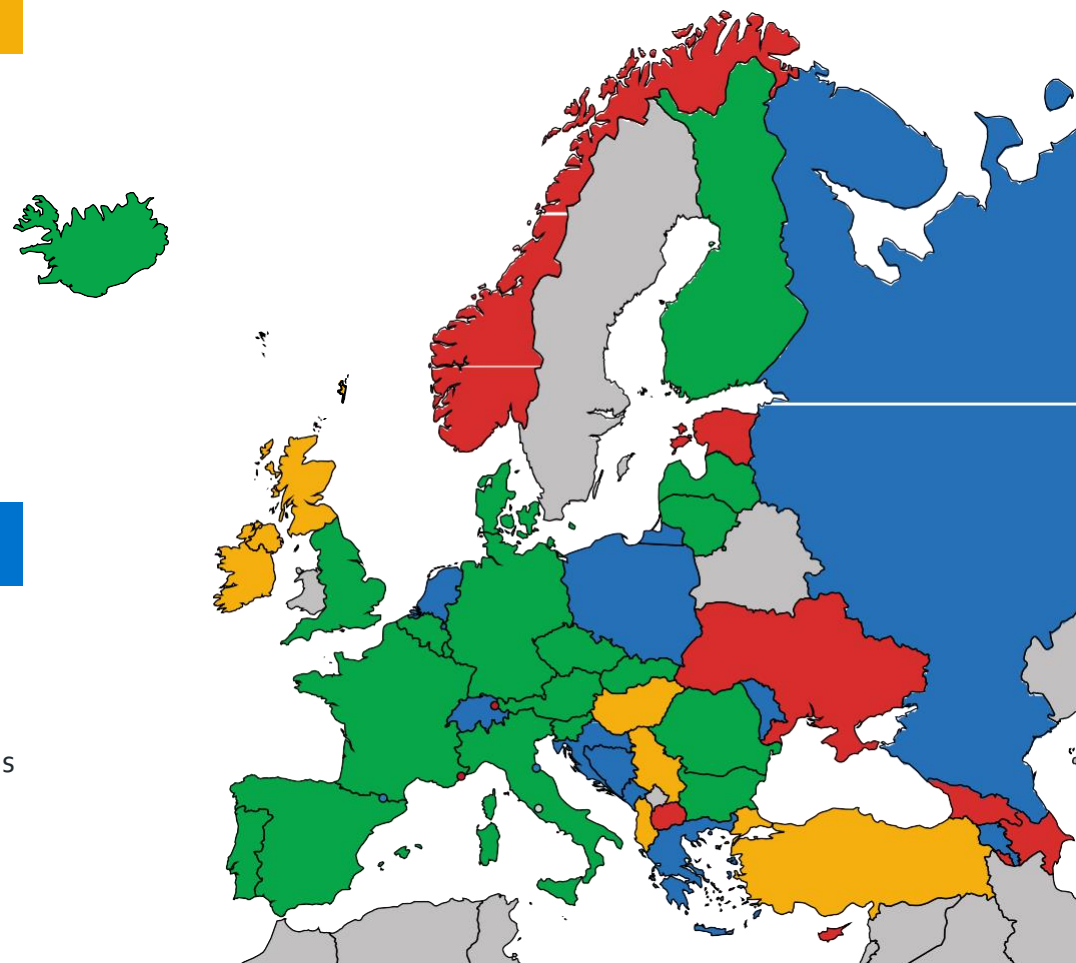
Albania
Hungary
Northern Ireland
Scotland
Serbia
The Republic of Ireland
Turkey

Received both questionnaires

Austria	Italy
Belgium	Latvia
Bulgaria	Lithuania
Czechia	Luxembourg
Denmark	Malta
England	Portugal
Finland	Romania
France	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Iceland	Spain

Received the Prison questionnaires only

Andorra	Russia
Armenia	San Marino
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Switzerland
Croatia	The Netherlands
Greece	
Moldova	
Montenegro	
Poland	



The existence of Government policy for the treatment of prisoners or probationers with mental health disorders.

	Prisons**	Probation*
'Yes, policy exists	39/42 (92,8%)	17/32 (53%)
No, there is no policy		15/32 (47%)

*Countries where Government policy exists in probation include: Austria, Flemish speakers (Belgium), Czech, Finland, Albania, Baden-Wurttemberg (G), Lower Saxony, Malta, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, England, Scotland

** Countries where Government policy exists in prison include: Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzgovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany (all answers), Greece, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxemburg, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovak republic, Spain, Catalonia, Sweden, Switzerland

Receiving mental health awareness training

	Prisons	Probation Services
Number receiving training	31	14
No. of Valid responses	42	39
% 'Yes' training received*	74%	36%
Range	N/A	N/A

Estimation of prevalence in prisons and probation

- The range of prevalence reported in prisons was 0%-80% and in probation 2%-90%.
- In probation, robust research, based on random samples, indicates that the 40% of probation clients experience a mental health disorder yet the median value reported in this survey was 15% clearly an underestimate.
- In prisons the same variation occurred and then the median value was 18%.

Estimating prevalence in probation

- In probation some estimates were based on research (Ireland, Finland, and Sweden). In other countries the response indicated that probation staff undertook assessments that were aggregated into national administrative data (Belgium, England, the majority of the states in Germany, Hungary, Malta, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Scotland, Slovenia and Turkey).
- Only 3 probation services collected prevalence routinely (Catalonia, Northern Ireland and two German states: Berlin and Brandenburg).

Estimating prevalence in prison

- It was not a consensual topic, since it depends on the definition of mental health disorders and disabilities;
- From the 26 responses that were analysed, the range has a large variation, as follows:
 - Andorra- 20%; Armenia- 12%; Bulgaria- 0,36%; Croatia- 10/80%; Czech Republic- 60%; Finland- 65%; France- 6/24%; Greece- 9%; Iceland- 15%; 10%- Lithuania- 10%; Latvia- 38%; Luxemburg- 15%; Malta- 20%; Montenegro- 65%; Portugal- 2%; Romania- 16%; Russia- 8%; San Marino- 0%; Slovenia- 5-13%; Spain- 4%; Spain-Catalonia- 19%; Sweden- 46%; DE- NI- 30%; DE-SH- 20%; England - 78%
- Further research and especially a more objective approach needs to be conducted in order to narrow the differences and to reach a more clear and understandable results.

Who provides care and treatment in prisons and probation?

	Prisons	Probation (n=37 valid responses)
Ministry of Justice	a) 42,8%; b) 73,8%	7 (19%)
Healthcare	a) 14,3%; b) 21 (50%)	32 (86%)
Voluntary sector	b) 4 (9,5%)	10 (28%)
Other	a) 8 (19%); b) 2,3%	8 (22%)

- a) Only institution providing mental health care
- b) Combined with other institution

What is the role of prison/probation services in providing mental health care?

	Prisons	Probation
Valid responses		37
Providing interventions/treatment themselves	35 (83,3%)	5 (14%)
Inviting external services to work on the premises	27 (64,2%)	4 (11%)
Referring people to external services working elsewhere	26 (61,2%)	31 (84%)
Referring people to external services working elsewhere	23 (54,7%)	7 (19%)

Screening for mental health disorders in prison and probation – when does it take place?

When does screening take place in probation?

	Probation
Valid responses	36
Arrest	15 (42%)
Court	34 (94%)
Prison	31 (86%)
Probation	16 (44%)

When does screening for mental health problems take place in prison?

	Prisons
Intake	30 (71,4%)
Admission	34 (80,9%)
Preparation for release	12 (28,5%)
Probation	

Who usually screens for mental health disorders in prison and probation?

	Prison	Probation Services
Valid responses	42	36
Prison Staff	12 (28,5%)	
Probation staff		11 (32%)
Other criminal justice staff	5 (11,9%)	2 (6%)
Nurse	16 (38%)	3 (8%)
General Practitioner	32 (76,2%)	11 (31%)

Examples of screening tools used in probation

- The screening tools used vary greatly and are generally used by the experts often pre-court appearance.
- However, there are two services, which both have in-house psychology teams that use structured screening tools.
- The probation service in Malta uses such the GAD (for generalised anxiety disorders) and the STAX (suitable for assessment of personality disorder).
- The service in Northern Ireland uses the BDI (Beck Depression Inventory) and the PDE (Personality Disorder Examination).

Examples of screening tools used in probation

- Bulgaria makes use of the Hare Psychopathy Checklist, an adapted suicide assessment schedule (PSRAC – Prison Suicide Risk Assessment Schedule) and structured tools to assess the severity of drug and alcohol consumption.
- In Iceland the Mini-Mental State is employed in order to assess symptoms of mental health.
- Spain has access to use of the CAGE (Alcohol consumption), the GHQ-28 (anxiety and depression).
- Otherwise, probation services do not assess mental health disorders themselves

Examples of screening tools used in prison

- Many countries stated that screening for mental health problems are conducted at least once a year.
- Mostly psychiatrists and psychologists screen.
- Armenia has a “Penitentiary Medicine Centre” (SNCO) as an independent body that provides healthcare and screening procedures to all prison population, giving them a reinforced trust and confidence on the quality of their work;
- Austria developed and “Integrated Execution management System” (IVV) that screens and registers information about mental health disorders of the inmates;
- Belgium has a database (DG EPI) where all information are registered and every six-months there’s an update about the situation of inmates, including their legal status.

Examples of screening tools used in prison

- In Finland, there are studies specifically conducted on this subject, and this year another one is being conducted.
- In France a comprehensive survey on the subject is in progress.
- In Italy there are also surveys conducted in different regions, and the results are treated regionally;
- In Portugal there was developed a specific screening and assessment tool that assesses the risk and needs of all inmates, and that helps to inform the design of the individual rehabilitation plans.
- Otherwise, many other prison services have their own internal strategies and some others referred that do not assess mental health disorders themselves

Do the prisons in your country/jurisdiction have special units that provide treatment to detainees with psychiatric mental health disorders?

Prisons	
No of valid responses	42
% stating 'yes'	29 (69%)

Does the service, prison or probation, have any special order/requirements for people with mental health disorders?

	Prisons	Prisons
No of valid responses	42	38
% stating 'yes'	16 (38,1%)	12 (32%)

Probation

- One-third of probation services can obtain orders for the mental health care of clients.
- Countries where this occurs include: Catalonia, England, France, Berlin (G), Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (G), Northern Ireland, Schleswig-Holstein (G), Scotland and Turkey.

Prisons

- A significant number of countries (69%) mentioned that there are special units with specific resources (including physical conditions) adapted to the needs of prisoners with mental health disorders.
- About the same number of countries have special requirements (Law orders, acts, internal guidelines) for treatment of this inmates
- For example, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxemburg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Catalonia, Sweden.

Prisons and probation: the monitoring of suicide

	Prisons	Probation services
No of valid responses	42	38
% stating 'yes'	38 (90%)	5 (13%)

Is there a prison suicide reduction programme established in your country/jurisdiction?

Prisons	
No of valid responses	42
% stating 'yes'	37 (89%)

Probation and prison: gender specific approaches

	Prisons	Probation services
No of valid responses	42	38
% reporting yes and countries listed	20 (47%)	10 out of 38 (26%) Belgium (German speaking); Berlin (Germany); Brandenburg (Germany), Hessen (Germany); Iceland; Italy; Turkey; Northern Ireland; England; Scotland

Examples of gender specific approaches in probation

- Three probation services stated that their approach to women with mental health disorders in the criminal justice system was trauma-informed namely Scotland, England and Northern Ireland.
- In England the CSTR programme is an example of a gender approach to the delivery of mental health treatment requirements in primary care see the link here: [Community Sentence Treatment Requirements | London City Hall](#).

Examples of gender specific approaches in probation

- In Scotland some local authority social work services are developing specific services for woman involved in the criminal justice system. In Northern Ireland, 'gender approaches are always considered with a trauma informed lens in terms of appropriate assessment, intervention and treatment pathways.
- In France research is being undertaken by SPCS by a team in Lille one aspect of which focuses on women leaving detention. In the other 6 countries answering this question all made general statements about how important a gender approach was and that it was used in their services.

Examples of gender specific approaches in prison

- Twenty prison services stated that their approach to women with mental health disorders in the criminal justice system was a practice that they are developing and making investments
- Most countries refer that the specific needs of the inmates, independent of their gender, are taken into account when they are placed in a prison facility, and for that matter they have special concerns.
- In Finland this individualized assessment and approach is in place in several prison establishments.
- In Portugal, there is a “Manual of Good Practices” being developed in order to establish and determine the procedures of assessment, placement and individual care for inmates with specific needs in terms of gender identity or other issues related to gender.

Conclusions

- There was good response to the survey boosted by the returns of 11/16 German states.
- Half the proportion of probation staff received mental health awareness training compared to prison staff (74% vs 37%)
- Training and raising awareness on mental health disorders is provided for all prison staff in many countries (74%)
- Estimates of the prevalence of mental health problems in probation varied from 2% (Slovakia) to 90% (Scotland) with a median of 15%.
- Robust research indicates that the figure is closer to 40% so largely probation services seriously under-estimated the prevalence
- Importance of research on the prevalence of mental health disorders among inmates in order to better acknowledge the specific needs of this population (62% of answers)

Conclusions

- Only 4 jurisdictions collected prevalence data routinely.
- By far the most common model for probation clients to access mental healthcare was through the use of external healthcare agencies (86%), 10% accessed services in the voluntary sector.
- In prison context, we observed and increasing shared responsibilities between MoJ and MoH in the treatment of inmates with mental disorders (66%)
- Screening for mental health disorders was most likely to take place in the court (94%) or in prison (86%). Psychiatrists (61%) and psychologists (61%) were mostly involved although GPs were involved in nearly one-third of cases (30%)

Conclusions

- Most probation responses indicated that the role of probation services was to direct probationers to external services (as above). It should be noted that two countries, Malta and Northern Ireland, used an 'in-house' treatment service run by psychologists. England had a one-off initiative for offenders with a personality disorder.
- Most prison organizations provide treatment themselves, but also invite external services (mainly specialists), as well refers to the health services in the community
- 12 (32%) countries/jurisdictions had specific treatment orders for mental health. In England, there had been concerted efforts to maximise the use of mental health treatment requirements in the CSTR project.

Conclusions

- 5 (14%) of countries jurisdictions monitor suicide rates in probation (Bulgaria, N Ireland, France and Ireland) but provide no data. England provides a website address showing that probation suicides have been examined for a number of years.
- Suicide in prison is a concern of all countries and jurisdictions and it's a very important topic with large positive responses rate (90%).
- Many countries have in place suicide prevention programs inside prison that combine screening for early signs and symptoms of risk of suicide and follow-up of cases of risk
- A small number of probation services work with families (14%) and 27% provide a gender approach to probation which was often trauma-informed.

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