

Dear guests, thank you for your participation in the 29th Conference of Directors of Prisons and Probation Services of the Council of Europe, which we had the honour to host.

During the past days, a number of topics of utmost importance for prison services and organisations were discussed.

Topics such as the autonomy of prisoners, which is ensured by the possibility of placing them outside prisons in smaller communities such as "Detention Homes" or transitional homes to prepare them for life in freedom.

An idea that is currently being introduced in Bulgaria through the construction of transitional wards or so-called "Halfway house".

The topic of high-risk offenders was also discussed which represent a major challenge for all penitentiary systems. How to treat these offenders and find a balance between preserving their rights and dignity without compromising the security of the detention facilities where they are housed.

I hope that you have made the most of the opportunities to exchange experiences and ideas that this conference has provided.

While this event comes to an end today, we must all remember what we have learnt here and, above all, not forget that it is we who are responsible for ensuring the human rights of people who are held in places of detention, and not forget for a moment that the rule of law and democracy are paramount to the effective performance of our professional duties.

Thank you for being here with us and see you soon!