

Council of Europe conference addresses recruitment, training and professional development of prison and probation staff

Strasbourg, 14.06.2017 – The Council of Europe´s annual Conference of Directors of Prisons and Probation Services will discuss in Lillestrøm (Norway) on 20 and 21 June ways to improve the recruitment, training and professional development of their staff.

Held under the theme "Staff selection, training and development in the 21st century", the conference will allow the directors of European prison and probation services, representatives of international organisations, as well as experts and researchers to exchange information and good practices in the area of staff selection and training.

The meeting will be jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service.

Prison and probation staff face many challenges in their everyday work, for example dealing with a rising variety of categories of offenders with different personal situations and cultural backgrounds, including individuals with mental disorders or addiction problems, foreigners, juveniles, dangerous convicts and violent extremists.

The selection and training of personnel of high professional quality is essential for good prison and probation management and for keeping society safer. However practices in this respect sometimes vary significantly across European countries with regard to selection criteria, duration of training, exit exams, training curricula and professional development prospects for different staff grades.

There is a need to agree on common standards and practices to ensure that personnel is adequately trained and well-resourced, has recognised professional status, and deals with offenders in accordance with high ethical standards.

In addition, the increasing use of information and communication technologies in prisons and for the supervision of offenders in the community requires specific training of staff. Such technologies should not reduce the everyday positive working interaction between staff and offenders and need to be operated in a manner which is both efficient and humane.

Per-Willy Amundsen, Minister of Justice and Public Security of Norway, Jan Kleijssen, Director of Information Society and Action against Crime of the Council of Europe, and Peter Hennephof, General Director of the Custodial Institutions Agency of the Netherlands, will speak at the opening.

Other speakers include Mykola Gnatovskyy, President of the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), Jørgen Brucker, Director, University College at the Norwegian Correctional Service, and Professor Cornelius König, from Saarland University.

The conference is expected to adopt a document containing its key conclusions.

Additional information & Programme

Practical information:

The Conference will be held at the University College of the Norwegian Correctional Service. Only the opening session (9.30 a.m. to 12.15 p.m., 21 June) and the closure (14.45 p.m., 22 June) are open to the media. Accreditation requests should be sent to the following email address before June 19th at 10 am: Fredrik.sjoli@kriminalomsorg.no In your request, please include your name, date of birth, country and the media outlet you are representing. Please bring your press card to the conference.

Press contacts

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