

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PRISON PROGRAMME

Project evaluation



POMPIDOU GROUP

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PRISON PROGRAMME

Project evaluation

Heino Stöver, Independent Expert

The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe or the Pompidou Group.

The reproduction of extracts (up to 500 words) is authorised, except for commercial purposes as long as the integrity of the text is preserved, the excerpt is not used out of context, does not provide incomplete information or does not otherwise mislead the reader as to the nature, scope or content of the text. The source text must always be acknowledged as follows “© Council of Europe, year of the publication”. All other requests concerning the reproduction/translation of all or part of the document, should be addressed to the Directorate of Communications, Council of Europe (F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex or publishing@coe.int).

All other correspondence concerning this document should be addressed to the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, Council of Europe, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex, E-mail: pompidou.group@coe.int.

Cover design and layout: Documents and Publications Production Department (DPDP), Council of Europe

© Council of Europe, November 2022
Printed at the Council of Europe

Contents

ACRONYMS	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION	6
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	7
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	8
EVALUATION FINDINGS	9
Relevance	9
Efficiency	10
Partnerships and co-operation	12
Effectiveness	13
Impact	15
Sustainability	17
Human rights and gender	17
CONCLUSIONS	19
RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED	20
APPENDIX	23
Evaluation tools	23
Desk review list	24
Persons contacted	24

Acronyms

AFEW	Aids Foundation East-West
CJPP	Criminal Justice and Prison Programme
CSO	Civil society organisation
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
GFATM	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HIPP	Health in Prison Programme
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MAT	Medication-assisted treatment
MedNET	Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addictions
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSP	Needle and syringe programme
SUD	Substance use disorder
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

This report evaluates more than 10 years of project implementation within the Criminal Justice and Prison Programme (CJPP) of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe. The implementation of the CJPP commenced in 2010 and is still ongoing. From the beginning of the programme until the finalisation of the most recent, Strengthening Human Rights-Based Responses to Substance Use Disorders in Prisons (in July 2021), the total budget of all projects under the CJPP funded from extra-budgetary resources was €1 175 000. The CJPP has the overall objective of improving health and rehabilitation services for people with substance use disorders (SUDs) who are in contact with the criminal justice system, and fully protecting their human rights.

The CJPP is primarily aimed at governments and their administrations, helping them to develop strategies and rehabilitation measures for the treatment, education or reintegration of people with SUDs. This also includes support for drug policy development, such as policies for alternatives to conviction or punishment. The programme has focused on supporting criminal justice institutions to develop a comprehensive drug treatment system with a broader focus on three interrelated elements: first, enhancing advocacy for human rights and evidence-based health intervention and standards in prisons; second, supporting professional exchanges of good practices across national and regional networks; and third, improving the skills and knowledge of professionals working in or with criminal justice institutions.

This evaluation was commissioned by the Pompidou Group and conducted by an independent evaluator between May and August 2022. The evaluation methodology is based on the analysis of the following evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. In addition, the programme's contribution to partnerships and co-operation, human rights and gender equality was assessed. The evaluation included a desk review of programme documents and semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted online and over the phone with key beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders of the programme.

The CJPP's actions were mostly in line with its mission, although efficiency might have been improved with more analytical and theoretical groundwork before implementing specific project activities. This can be partly attributed to the flexibility of the programme, which has functioned on the basis of urgent needs, especially in the first years of its implementation. The programme succeeded in initiating, maintaining and expanding long-term partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and contributed with various methodologies and different types of activities to increasing the knowledge and skills of various professionals working in the criminal justice and correctional system. While some of the CJPP pilot projects led to the sustainable introduction and strengthening of new treatment programmes (a therapeutic community in the Republic of Moldova and medication-assisted treatment in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), there were examples of activities that were not sustainable or at least could have been more institutionalised (e.g. Family Conference in Ukraine). It is not possible to identify a macro-level impact as most activities were relatively small and measurable indicators of impact were mostly not developed.

Recommendations for future projects address maintaining and expanding relations with the donor community and national partners, developing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, providing further capacity building including the strengthening of sustainable institutional approaches, further specifications of regional strategies, continued co-operation with civil society organisations, the possible creation of projects with indicators that demonstrate measurable impact on the macro-level of society, improvements to project visibility, continuing and expanding the therapeutic community methodology, strengthening comprehensive drug treatment systems, and lessons learned, such as establishing at early project stages memoranda of understanding or agreements with project partners

Introduction

The Criminal Justice and Prison Programme (CJPP) is the umbrella initiative for a series of projects focusing on the treatment and rehabilitation of substance use disorders (SUD) within the criminal justice system. The programme has been implemented in the region of Eastern Europe by the Council of Europe's Pompidou Group since 2012, with an inception/pilot phase in 2010-11, and is currently ongoing. The present evaluation covers the period between 2010 and 2022 and focuses on project activities in the main project countries of the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia as well as those activities with a regional European dimension, namely in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. It should be mentioned that individual project activities were also carried out in Serbia, Armenia and Romania. As these activities date back further, had limited effects and were not continued in later projects, this evaluation focuses on the main project countries mentioned above. In all countries where the CJPP operated the programme has had the overall objective of improving health and rehabilitation services for people with SUD who are in contact with the criminal justice system, and fully protecting their human rights.

These overarching goals were broken down into achievable sub-goals for each project. This includes, for example, supporting medication-assisted therapy (MAT), harm reduction approaches, drug-free treatment services such as therapeutic communities, and drug policy development in the field of criminal justice. The CJPP is primarily aimed at governments and their administrations, helping them to develop strategies and rehabilitation measures for the treatment, education or reintegration of people with SUD. This also includes support for drug policy development such as laws on alternatives to conviction or punishment.

Some of the programme's main achievements are the following: in Georgia, a roadmap for the introduction of a law on alternatives to punishment was developed in co-operation with government institutions. In the Republic of Moldova, together with the Department of Penitentiary Institutions of the Ministry of Justice, the CJPP financed and supported the refurbishment of a prison ward that now accommodates a successful therapeutic community aimed at supporting people with SUDs, to stabilise them and prepare them for release from prison. In Ukraine, drug treatment and prevention tools were developed in juvenile prisons, along with the promotion of MAT in the prison systems here as well as in the Republic of Moldova.

In most countries, the programme helped to initiate a paradigm shift in how SUDs are viewed and how they should be treated – from a punitive perspective whereby drug use is considered a crime that should be punished, to a humanistic view that treats SUDs as a health issue. By presenting SUD to the programme's target population as a social and medical phenomenon (rather than a moral failure), a foundation was laid for systematic change and reform in the countries reached by the CJPP.

Background and context

In order to be able to thematically classify the evaluation of the CJPP, it is necessary to have an overview of the health and social situation of prisoners as well as the problems related to treatment options and the prison system.

The documentation of the programme on health problems in prisons highlights three main issues: SUDs, mental health problems and communicable diseases. These three issues are closely interrelated. Some of the harms associated with drug use in the criminal justice system include: high rates of HIV and viral hepatitis infection (imprisonment is associated with higher rates of blood-borne virus infection among people who inject drugs); restricted access to harm reduction services and treatment for drug dependence and blood-borne/airborne viruses; increased risk of death by drug overdose after release; increased risks of transmission of (prison-acquired) infections; exacerbation of complex and intertwined additional health problems; and increased risks of reoffending after release.

A large proportion of the people who enter criminal justice systems and prisons have a history of drug use and injecting. Many of these individuals continue to use drugs while they are in prison. The prison environment may have a positive impact on some people who use drugs, helping them to stop or reduce their drug use or to use less frequently, but for others prison is an environment where they switch to more harmful patterns of drug use or even initiate their drug use. Because prisons are often overcrowded, stressful, hostile and violent places, they are high-risk environments in which there is an overrepresentation of individuals from poor communities, ethnic and social minorities, and migrants, as well as people who use drugs. Many among the prison population carry a range of health burdens, including after release.

These problems in prisons and the reasons for project interventions in prisons, which are mentioned in the programme documentation, are also confirmed by research as continuing problems.¹

Although these problems related to prison health are true for most – if not all – prison systems in Europe, it can be observed that people in prisons in countries in the Eastern and South-Eastern European regions are underserved compared to wealthier European countries. Many countries in these regions are still going through transformation processes, so that some services that are already well established in some European countries, such as MAT or case-based services that focus on individual and comprehensive treatment plans, are not yet fully established in the Eastern and South-Eastern European regions.

This is also one of the reasons why, according to the programme documentation, most project activities focus on supporting governments and non-state actors in the Eastern and South-Eastern European regions that show interest in developing modern rehabilitation and treatment services for SUDs.

1. UNAIDS (2021), "Update on HIV in prisons and other closed settings", UNAIDS/PCB (49)/21.25.rev1, UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, available at www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB49_HIV_Prisons_Closed_Settings_rev1_EN.pdf, accessed 11 November 2022; Wainwright, V. and Dawson, A. (2022), "The prevalence of comorbid substance use disorders and serious mental illnesses in prisons", *The Lancet* Vol. 7, Issue 6, e492-3, available at [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(22\)00115-3/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(22)00115-3/fulltext), accessed 11 November 2022; Fazel, S., Bromberg, D. and Altice, F. (2022), "HIV, substance use, and mental health care in prisons", *The Lancet* Vol. 9, Issue 9, pp. 694-5, available at [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(22\)00243-7/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(22)00243-7/fulltext), accessed 11 November 2022; Stöver, H. and Teltzrow, R. (2016), *Drug-treatment systems in prisons in Eastern and South-East Europe*, Council of Europe/Pompidou Group, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

Evaluation methodology

The overall purpose of this evaluation is to measure the programme's achievements and identify lessons learned, as well as areas requiring improvements identified during the implementation of the project activities for future programming.

The evaluation is intended, on the one hand, to help the Pompidou Group learn from the CJPP's projects and make desirable adjustments, and overall, improve future programming and planning. On the other hand, the results will also inform the stakeholders (project beneficiaries and donors) of the programme's accomplishments. The evaluation will further offer an opportunity to increase accountability for all stakeholders involved and to identify challenges that may have to be addressed differently in the future.

The evaluation methodology is based on an analysis of the following evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Additionally, the evaluation assessed the programme's contribution to partnerships and co-operation, human rights and gender mainstreaming.

The evaluation was carried out in three phases:

- ▶ first, a desk review was conducted to review programme documentation;
- ▶ second, data were collected through semi-structured qualitative interviews with key programme beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders. The interviews were conducted through video calls and phone calls, and interviewees were informed that they would be anonymised for the final evaluation;
- ▶ the final evaluation then used both the qualitative and quantitative findings as evidence.

In total, almost 30 documents were reviewed, and 21 key programme informants and programme staff were interviewed.

The evaluation had the following limitations:

- ▶ attribution of programme results: all the medium and long-term outcomes of the programme are quite broad and the achievement of the goals is not solely the responsibility of the CJPP. The evaluator defined pointed out the programme's contribution towards achieving the goals;
- ▶ institutional memory of some counterparts: the interviews undertaken during the field phase of the final evaluation indicated that some staff had left or had been relocated, and talks were therefore held with officials who were not fully aware of the context of the programme;
- ▶ sample size: given the time and budget limitations of the final evaluation, it was not feasible to conduct interviews with all direct beneficiaries of the programme. To mitigate this limitation, the evaluator held in-depth interviews with the programme team, relevant government counterparts and local implementing partners to identify the main achievements and challenges faced in the course of implementation.

Evaluation findings

Relevance

In this context, relevance describes the extent to which interventions met the needs of participants and other stakeholders, complemented existing initiatives, and aligned with the Pompidou Group's mandates and policies.

The direction given in the various project documents was largely in line with the priorities affirmed in the Council of Europe's action plans and the national priorities of the co-operating governments.

In most policy documents setting out the national priorities and common objectives of Council of Europe member states on the one hand, and the Council of Europe as an international organisation on the other, there are sections emphasising the importance of improving public health in prisons and bringing prison and criminal justice policies closer to European and international public health, criminal justice and human rights standards. However, these policy target agreements were not always specific enough to mention drug treatment services and drug-related measures. Efforts have been made in the last few years to improve the relevance of the programme for joint action plans between beneficiary countries and the Council of Europe. The aim of improving drug treatment services and/or protecting the health of people with SUDs in detention settings was incorporated in the current action plans for Georgia (2020-2023) and the Republic of Moldova (2021-2024) and is in the works for Ukraine for the next 4-year period (2023-2026).

The programme's relevance for the recipient countries as well as for the Pompidou Group is further confirmed by epidemiological studies related to the spread of blood-borne diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C. Particularly in Eastern Europe, many countries, including the Republic of Moldova and (especially) Ukraine, have higher infection rates compared to other European countries.² The incidence of these diseases is particularly high in prisons, as emphasised in the justifications of the project reports and evaluations. As it is scientifically proven that drug treatment, in particular MAT and harm reduction in combination with social rehabilitation measures, can reduce the spread of HIV and hepatitis C,³ the argumentation in the project documents has a solid foundation.

Another reason for the implementation of the programme is mentioned in some – but not all – project documents: the intention to reduce prison overcrowding (especially in Georgia and Ukraine) and the disproportionate imprisonment of persons with drug addiction problems. According to the programme, this can be achieved by drug policy reforms that aim at creating alternatives to punishment for people who use drugs, and successful drug treatment programmes that have the potential to reduce recidivism. This argument is also conclusive as the literature shows that drug offences are an important cause of prison sentences. Strict drug laws that punish drug use can lead to many people with drug problems being placed in prison.

In fact, the prison population in all project countries had already been greatly reduced before the implementation of the CJPP, so it is no longer accurate to speak of nationwide overcrowding in prison. Nevertheless, there are still individual prisons in the project countries where the maximum capacity is exceeded. Prison reforms aimed at supporting rehabilitation and thus reducing recidivism in the long term may prevent possible overcrowding of prisons in the future.

Finally, increasing relevance of the CJPP for Pompidou Group member states can be noted in recent years. This is exemplified by the addition of a South-East European regional dimension of the programme in 2020 on the request of 10 of the 11 member states from the region; the creation of a "health in prison" dimension within the Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addictions (MedNET) in 2021, as proposed by the participating countries; and the request of several member states (non-beneficiaries of the programme) to make the topic of the treatment and health of people with SUD in prisons part of the next Pompidou Group general work programme (2023-2025).

2. Altice, F.L. et al. (2016), "The perfect storm: incarceration and the high-risk environment perpetuating transmission of HIV, hepatitis C virus, and tuberculosis in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, *The Lancet* 388(10050), pp. 1228-48.

3. *ibid.*

Efficiency

Efficiency describes the extent to which resources and inputs are optimally managed and used.

An analysis of the CJPP budget was only possible on the basis of the project reports, which only give a very rough overview of the costs of individual activities. It can at least be stated that the Republic of Moldova in particular, followed by Ukraine and Georgia, received the largest grants. It can also be concluded that administrative and project co-ordination costs are not excessive compared to direct project costs, that is the investment in the project activities themselves. In the project Supporting Drug Treatment Services in Prisons, the sum of administrative support and administrative fees is about 10%. If the costs of project co-ordination are added, the share of expenditure that did not flow directly into project activities increases to 39%. In the Improving Drug Treatment Systems in Prison project, the share of expenditure for project co-ordination and administrative costs that did not go to project activities was only 30%. In addition, it must be added that the project co-ordinators often acted themselves as experts and moderators in trainings, workshops and conferences. Part of the costs for project co-ordination could also be interpreted as a substantial investment in the activities.

Project name	Duration	Project countries/regions	Overall budget and donor
Treatment and Harm Reduction in Prisons <i>(Inception project)</i>	2010-2011	Republic of Moldova	€75 000 Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg: €50 000, German Foreign Office: €25 000
Preventing Drug Trafficking and Abuse in Prisons	2012-2013	Serbia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Ukraine	€150 000 Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg
Supporting Drug Treatment Services in Prisons	2013-2017	Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Eastern Europe	€250 000 Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg
Criminal Justice Responses to Drug Dependent Prisoners (PCF/PGG)	2015-2017	Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine + regional dimension	€150 000 European Union and Council of Europe joint project
Improving Drug Treatment Systems in Prisons	2016-2018	Ukraine + regional dimension (Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Armenia and Georgia)	€250 000 Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg
Strengthening Human Rights-Based Responses to Substance Use Disorders in Prisons	2019-2021	Eastern Europe, with a focus on the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Romania and Georgia	€300 000 Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg

Building on programme achievements and the importance of technical assistance in the field of drug treatment in prison, the biannual project budget could be renegotiated with the primary donor to increase from €250 000 to €300 000 for the periods 2019-2021 and 2022-2023. Furthermore, apart from the funding listed above, the increasing relevance of the programme for all Pompidou Group member states has allowed, in recent years, for support from the Pompidou Group ordinary budget and other financial contributions (e.g. Norway and Slovenia) for implementation of the general work programme, when needed. Project management costs (i.e. for project managers and project supervisors) and some activities with relevance for multiple countries were covered from additional resources, which increased the ratio of budget used for operational

expenses. This has been possible due to the fact that the programme is designed to also contribute to the overall priorities of the Pompidou Group. For instance:

- ▶ the programme acted as a link between the Pompidou Group and non-member states from Eastern Europe to involve them in drug policy co-operation at European level – all three main beneficiary countries (Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) joined the Pompidou Group for the duration of the programme, and co-operation established within the CJPP likely played a role in this;
- ▶ the extension of the geographical scope of the project, especially with a regional South-East Europe dimension, made the programme relevant for a larger number of Pompidou Group member states.

In the following sections, the efficiency of the project is assessed independently of pure financial figures. For this, the decisions of the programme team and the associated implementation modalities must be examined for efficiency. The questions guiding the analysis here are: were decisions made to save costs? Which actions of the project team contributed to increasing the impacts of activities without increasing costs?

Programme team

CJPP co-ordination has been ensured by the Pompidou Group Secretariat based in Strasbourg. The programme team has consisted of one project manager (external or internal) and one administrative assistant, who helps with the administrative and financial implementation of the programme. The team is supervised by a senior staff member (Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group, or the Deputy Executive Secretary), who acts as a senior adviser of law and takes a lead in the provision of strategic policy guidance to government counterparts.

The co-ordination team was perceived as knowledgeable and very experienced by all national and international interviewees. Furthermore, it was emphasised in the interviews that the programme was conducted professionally, provided the required inputs and responded to requests for information. The programme team also ensured synergies with other Pompidou Group and Council of Europe projects.

Overall, the programme's management structure was effective in reaching sustainable and meaningful results. The roles and responsibilities of the staff were mostly clearly defined. However, sometimes the high time requirements and workload of the supervisors, especially between 2015 and 2018, meant that the project manager had to make strategic decisions on their own without being able to consult a more experienced colleague.

A stronger exchange between the supervisor and the project manager could have increased the quality of project outcomes while being cost efficient with the allocated project funds as the costs for supervisors are not borne by the project but by the Pompidou Group directly. However, in general and especially in favour of the donor, project efficiency was increased by the fact that the Pompidou Group Secretariat, including the supervisors, supported the programme team at no additional cost to the projects. Project management outsourced at the beginning was gradually internalised from 2018 on to ensure better coherence with Council of Europe and Pompidou Group action and optimise the use of resources.

The phases in which new administrative assistants were recruited proved to be problematic, and this occurred several times over the programme's timespan of more than 10 years. The introduction of a new assistant sometimes led to delays in the implementation of project activities and added to the programme team's workload. This is an observation rather than a criticism on the part of the evaluator, as changing responsibilities and staff fluctuations are processes that occur in every organisation and are difficult to prevent.

Co-operation with other organisations

Resources were often maximised by joint implementation with other international organisations, mainly the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) or national and international NGOs such as *Initiativa Positiva* (Republic of Moldova), *Aids Foundation East-West* (AFEW – Ukraine), *Friends of Preluky* (Netherlands), *Public Health Alliance* (Ukraine) or *Phoenix Haga* (Norway). Co-operation with these organisations was characterised by sharing of knowledge, workload and costs. Organisations such as *Phoenix Haga* or *Friends of Preluky* provided their experts for free while the CJPP covered the logistical and organisational costs for workshops or trainings. Costs were sometimes shared with UNODC, for example on a 50:50 basis when two training workshops were held in 2011 and 2012. For four international conferences in 2012, 2015, 2019 and 2021, the CJPP covered participation of a group of international experts while UNODC financed the remaining expenses. Positive side effects are networking effects and the combined persuasive power of different organisations, which can have a positive impact on the focal area of advocacy.

Visibility

The CJPP uses a variety of communication tools to raise awareness of the programme's activities, including social media (Facebook), video productions used as training materials (MAT in prisons, Family Conference) or for advocacy (testimonies of therapeutic community members), and developing and distributing publications (news briefs, articles, press releases, brochures, analytical reports). Visibility was limited to the corporate design (colours and logo) of the Pompidou Group. Recognisable design and communication material setting out a strategy and objectives for the CJPP has not yet been developed. The results of this evaluation are intended to help achieve this.

Timeliness

The CJPP has been revised at various stages, mostly to adapt it to local changes and reforms. On several occasions, projects have had to be extended because of implementation delays. These extensions were communicated and explained to the donors. Delays included factors related to project implementation in the project countries (mainly bureaucratic hurdles) as well as internal factors such as co-ordination processes with Council of Europe departments. In 2020, some project activities had to be rescheduled in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, this was accomplished quickly and resulted in only minor project implementation delays. However, it is only logical that delays in the project process are almost always associated with higher administrative running costs, which reduces the resources available for project activities.

Project approach

When examining the general approach of the project, it should be taken into account that the overall project budget (€250 000 to €300 000 for a two-year cycle) did not allow the implementation of comprehensive projects in each beneficiary country. This has restricted implementation to small-scale pilots and the sometimes scattered use of resources, resulting in reduced measurable long-term effect. However, it is also true that measuring project impact on the macro-level is very difficult and sometimes impossible for regional projects. However, non-measurability does not mean that regional projects do not have long-term impact.

Individual interviewees noted that some project activities could have been made more efficient through more analytical and theoretical groundwork before activity implementation. In the Republic of Moldova, it was not clear to project participants from the beginning how a therapeutic community should function and who would work there with what responsibilities, leading to unnecessary initial friction. In some cases, prison staff were trained who would then not work in the therapeutic community at all, which resulted in an ineffective use of funds. A handbook for the implementation and running of a therapeutic community within the prison was only developed late (2020) in the programme cycle. Earlier development of such a resource would have made training easier both for trainers and trainees. It would also have provided the involved NGOs with a good base from which to argue for the relevance of their work supporting these drug treatment services.

However, the programme's project approach was also described by the interviewees as flexible, organic and responsive. This meant that critical situations could be resolved more quickly, and with fewer bureaucratic processes to be followed than project partners were accustomed to.

Partnerships and co-operation

The Pompidou Group has initiated, maintained and in some cases further developed partnerships with project country governments and other international partners through the CJPP. The programme brought together international experts, key stakeholders and actors at national and local levels, as well as experts from other countries, to share experiences and help develop the skills needed to strengthen public health and human rights in prisons. Feedback from stakeholder interviews shows that, by and large, the CJPP was able to build relevant partnerships with both national and international partners. This was also helped by the fact that individuals in the core programme team were responsible for the CJPP for a very long time, and in one case for the entire duration of the programme. This created close personal and professional relationships with project partners and a high degree of mutual trust.

The Pompidou Group involved national partners in decision-making processes through co-ordination and information meetings, especially with prison authorities and civil society partners. This approach enabled the programme management team to stay in contact with programme stakeholders and was highly conducive in moving the programme forward in a volatile political environment. However, there were also extended periods when it was not possible to reach national counterparts. This had to do with the geographical spread

of the programme across several countries, on the one hand, and the small size of the programme team on the other: communication and travel possibilities were limited. This situation has improved in recent years as the programme team has grown to include two management staff who can share among themselves the task of keeping in touch with national partners. Another factor favouring improved exchange has been the more frequent use of video conferencing to keep in regular contact with partners and experts.

Finally, it should be noted that most of the stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation pointed out that the efficient working relationships of the Pompidou Group and the long-term partnerships with the different national representatives were among the key factors behind the success of the programme.

Effectiveness

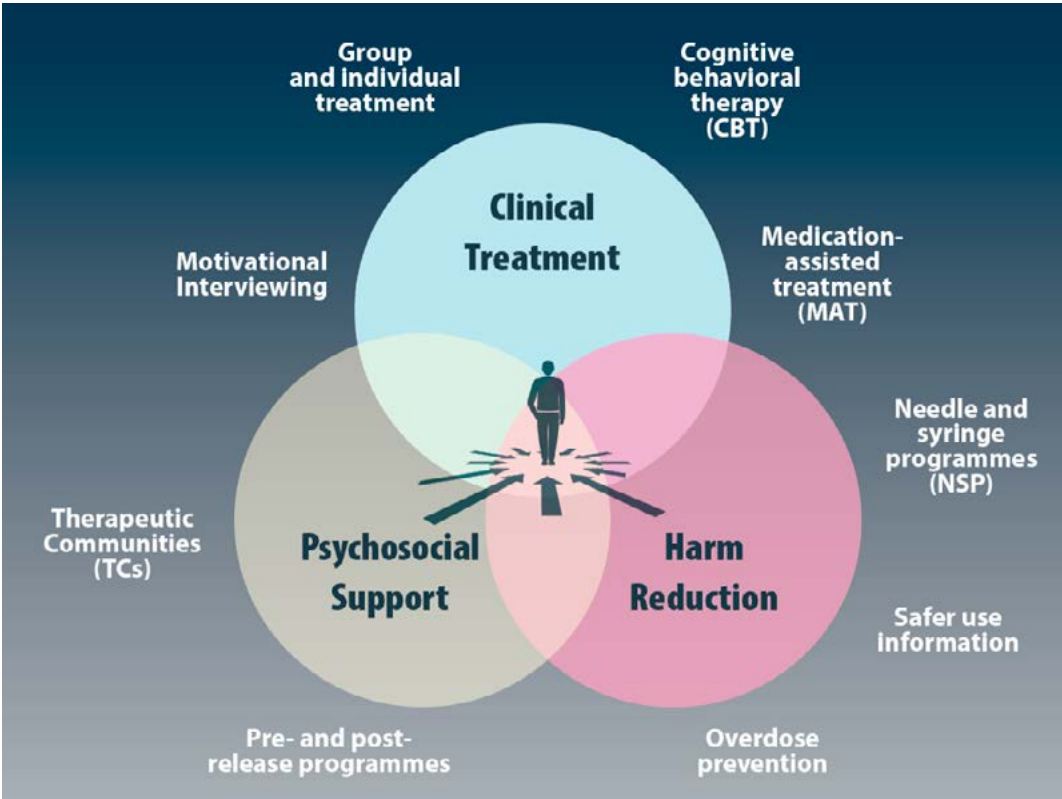
Effectiveness is the extent to which the intended results are achieved at the outcome level.

Programme documents attest to the project’s high effectiveness. Most outputs were produced and expected results achieved. Whether the results described in the project reports were actually fully or partly achieved cannot be determined in this evaluation. This section will therefore only trace the broad lines of the expected results.

Comprehensive drug treatment systems

Starting in 2015, the broad CJPP goal of strengthening so-called “comprehensive drug treatment systems” in the criminal justice system was increasingly communicated by the programme team to its stakeholders. This goal is included in project reports, as confirmed by the interviewed partners of this evaluation. A “comprehensive drug treatment system” is a concept that suggests a framework within which most common SUD treatment interventions can easily co-exist. Combining different treatment services enables criminal justice systems to cover a larger group of patients and provide options for individuals that best match their needs. In addition, different treatment dimensions (i.e. clinical treatment, psychosocial support and harm reduction) complement each other and even work synergistically. This applies also to treatment interventions with different treatment philosophies and goals, such as drug-free treatment programmes (goal: abstinence), MAT (goal: stabilisation of patient) and harm reduction interventions (goal: drug harm reduction).

The concept of a comprehensive drug treatment system is illustrated by the CJPP in the infographic presented below.



Source: Poster published by the Pompidou Group, 2022

The programme contributed to achieving this goal, especially in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, where different in-prison treatment measures were piloted. A major success in this respect is the first in-prison therapeutic community in the Republic of Moldova, which was established and implemented with the help of the CJPP and is still operational today. In addition, in 2022 the model of the therapeutic community became institutionalised as an official programme for all prisons in the country. In the Republic of Moldova, however, other programmes for people with SUDs that pre-dated the CJPP were also supported in the Moldovan prison system. These include MAT and needle and syringe programme (NSPs).

Also, in Ukraine, pilot projects were implemented, one of which has now become the basis for further expansion into other prisons: MAT in a pretrial detention prison in Lviv. Another (initial) success in Ukraine was the introduction of the Family Conference methodology in three juvenile prisons (Melitopol, Kremenchuk and Preluky), which gave imprisoned juveniles the opportunity to re-engage with their families in a constructive and purposeful dialogue. Unfortunately, this methodology could not attain the status of an official programme in all Ukrainian juvenile detention centres, despite scientific and communicative-political monitoring and support by the programme team and international experts.

In Preluky, for example, the juvenile detention centre was closed as the number of juveniles in penal institutions has decreased throughout Ukraine. In Melitopol, the Family Conference project ended as the city was occupied by Russian forces in 2022. In Kremenchuk, the programme was interrupted due to Covid-related restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings, as well as budgetary constraints and difficulties caused by the war. The costs of the Family Conference consist mainly of travel expenses, which are a burden to the parents of detained or imprisoned youth and cannot be covered by the prison administration. In the interviews, it became clear that this aspect was not sufficiently anticipated by the programme team.

Advocacy for prison health and human rights standards

Another overarching goal of the programme was to advocate for drug policies and programmes in the criminal justice system that are based on human rights and public health standards. To achieve this goal, the CJPP promoted regular exchanges between policy makers and practitioners at national and regional levels to inform them of examples for good practice and share experiences of implementing international recommendations for the treatment of incarcerated persons with drug problems. Local NGOs in the target countries received support from the CJPP as well as project partners in order to improve the sustainability of actors in the field.

The general approach in this area was to adapt international health and human rights standards to local conditions and focus areas. The aim was to enable project partners to implement international standards and examples of good practice and to present these findings to decision makers.

Good examples of this approach are the interventions in Georgia with the aim of introducing alternatives to imprisonment in the criminal justice system, and the South-East European co-operation to raise standards for drug treatment and rehabilitation in prisons. Both produced policy guidance in the format of declarations (“Tbilisi Declaration”) and roadmaps for reforms and policy recommendations on improving standards in prisons. In Ukraine, a roadmap for the extension of MAT in prisons was developed. In the evaluation interviews it became clear that these policy guidance activities were mainly developed and studied by medium-level decision makers. Through them, the information was disseminated to the ministerial level.

In the Republic of Moldova, the therapeutic community approach, which is based on rehabilitation and respect, also had an impact on political discussions, according to interviewees. The therapeutic community set up in prison helped reform-oriented decision makers by providing a good example of the effectiveness of rehabilitative measures based on human rights.

Skills and knowledge of professionals

Capacity building in the form of trainings, workshops, seminars and meetings was an important component of all projects under the CJPP. These events were generally highly valued and positively evaluated by the participants. Projects recorded information on the immediate response to capacity-building activities through simple evaluation questionnaires and, where possible, these feedback instruments sometimes recorded newly acquired knowledge and skills. While the projects attempted to revisit training participants after providing support, there was no systematic follow-up to these activities to assess and capture learning effects and other outcomes over time. A more robust approach to evaluating these activities should be adopted in the future in order to assess the activities that yield the greatest benefits. Further, this could make ongoing projects more effective as they can directly react to participants’ needs.

Most capacity-building activities aimed at increasing the knowledge and skills of various professionals working in the criminal justice and correctional systems, as well as NGOs providing services to incarcerated people with SUDs. However, it is not always clear, and could not be sufficiently determined within the framework of this evaluation, whether the trained persons were actually able to apply the expanded knowledge and skills they had learned. Individual interviewees said that some trainees later worked in other areas where what they had learned was less relevant to their daily tasks.

With regard to capacity building, the involvement of numerous agencies and ministries was significant. This encouraged the development of formal and informal networks of individuals, which then helped to facilitate discussion and collaboration between different professional disciplines and agencies.

This was also true at the regional level. National colleagues from different professional backgrounds were regularly invited to international and regional events where they could share their knowledge and skills with professionals from other countries.

Travelling with colleagues, learning from other countries' experiences and spending time together built trust and networks between all participants, including with the programme team. Evaluation interviewees also stressed the importance of investing sufficient time and resources in developing activities that enable trust to be built between representatives of different agencies and nationalities.

A good example of trust-building between different professions is the series of trainings in which prison doctors participated with prison psychologists and prison guards. Participants emphasised that it was crucial for their daily work to learn more about the responsibilities of colleagues from different professions. This trust-building was also achieved through certain types of training organisation: for example, training that required joint travel to a remote hotel, where participants had to spend many hours together outside the classroom in a car, on a train or even on foot. This helped build relationships, understanding and trust. It also helped the programme team, trainers and facilitators to identify the professionals most likely to respond positively to working more closely together.

In terms of content, feedback is mixed: while most feedback cited in the programme documentation showed that trainers provided useful information, some respondents noted that a few international trainers lacked understanding of the local context, which made their advice less useful.

Some respondents also felt that training using video-conferencing technology (introduced as a working method amidst Covid-related restrictions) was less effective than physical meetings in a real space. In particular, they missed the spontaneous interactions of in-person meetings. Other national project partners indicated that regular video conferencing and supervision sessions contributed to more continuous knowledge sharing than in-person training.

Impact

Impacts are the lasting changes that result from an intervention.

The CJPP focused on creating impact on improving public health and human rights through the support of drug treatment programmes and criminal justice policies that also have the potential to reduce prison overcrowding, recidivism and crime.

Project name	Project goal	Expected impact
Treatment and Harm Reduction in Prisons (Inception project)	Reducing drugs-related risks in prisons through awareness raising and capacity building.	Improve the human rights and public health situation in the Republic of Moldova through the prevention of SUDs and transmission of communicable diseases.
Preventing Drug Trafficking and Abuse in Prisons	Reducing drugs-related health and drug trafficking risks, relapses and recidivism in prisons through capacity building and advocacy.	Improve public health and social cohesion in the project area.

Project name	Project goal	Expected impact
Supporting Drug Treatment Services in Prisons	Improving criminal justice responses to drug-dependent offenders in Eastern Europe in order to reduce recidivism. Developing and implementing strategies for drug treatment and social re-insertion of drug-using detainees.	Improve health in penitentiaries with respect to human rights.
Criminal Justice Responses to Drug Dependent Prisoners (PCF/PGG)	Establishing regional co-operation and facilitating the exchange of good practices on tackling prison overcrowding, alternatives to imprisonment, and SUD treatment and rehabilitation.	Contribute to a healthier society and less crime by reducing relapse and recidivism of formerly imprisoned people to reduce prison overcrowding.
Improving Drug Treatment Systems in Prisons	Strengthening comprehensive drug treatment systems including harm reduction in prisons.	Improve human rights and public health through the reduction of drug dependence and drug-related crime.
Strengthening Human Rights-Based Responses to Substance Use Disorders in Prisons	Strengthening drug treatment systems in prisons including medically assisted treatment and drug-free treatment.	Improve human rights and public health through the reduction of drug dependence in Eastern European prisons.

The project goals' relevance to the project countries was clear and easy to establish, but it was not possible to assess the impact of the whole programme because, firstly, most projects within the CJPP did not establish measurable indicators for impact and secondly, because most activities were too limited in scale to be able to create measurable impact on the macro-level. For example, the therapeutic community in the Republic of Moldova hosts only 25 beneficiaries for 6-12 months. The evaluation of the therapeutic community programme shows that the persons who completed the programme stayed away from drugs and prison, yielding great success on an individual level. But as that project has so far only been incorporated in one prison, it would be too farfetched to assume that this will have a measurable impact on public health and recidivism statistics. Nevertheless, interviewees in the Republic of Moldova and in Ukraine said that the CJPP managed to change attitudes towards people with SUD in prisons to the degree that new innovative drug treatment approaches with a rehabilitative focus became more acceptable.

Therefore, it is possible that CJPP projects have also initiated processes that have led to changes and reforms at the macro-level. In Ukraine, for example, following discussions and workshops in the framework of the CJPP (but also supported by other international organisations), MAT became a new official treatment programme in the national prison system and was introduced in additional prisons. Should this reform be further expanded, HIV infections in prisons should also be measurably reduced, thus contributing to improved public health. Unfortunately, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has resulted in slower progress in reforms.

This also applies to Georgia, where the programme attempted to promote policies for alternatives to punishment, with the aim of reducing prison overcrowding and improving the human rights situation of drug-addicted persons in the criminal justice system. According to the interviewees, the project has initiated important, ongoing discussions in the ministries, but these have not yet led to any changes in laws or regulations.

Individual project activities were also implemented in Serbia (one workshop), Armenia (one workshop) and Romania (one training and one international conference). If project activities are carried out very selectively and briefly in different countries, responding to ad hoc or urgent requests made to the Pompidou Group, it is unlikely that impact can be measured.

It is important to highlight that achieving impact on the macro-level of society depends on the joint efforts of member states, all civil society actors and all international agencies – it is not just the programme’s responsibility to reach these impact goals. Furthermore, systemic changes need political support and will. The pilot projects initiated in the various countries worked on a local level. Achieving national institutional change and reform takes time and solid discussions involving many partners.

For this reason, the CJPP has been consistently engaged in international networks of donors and relevant project implementers in the field of SUD and criminal justice. The best-documented case of this international co-operation is that which has taken place under the umbrella of the World Health Organization (WHO). The Pompidou Group is a steering committee member of the WHO Health in Prison Programme (HIPP). Within this network, the Pompidou Group has advocated for an internationally co-ordinated approach that focuses on the rehabilitation and rights of people with SUD in prisons and the wider justice system. Within the framework of WHO HIPP, the Pompidou Group co-operated in particular with the following international organisations: WHO/Europe, UNODC, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), AFEW, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Health Without Barriers.

Sustainability

Sustainability relates to whether and how the outcomes at the programme’s immediate objective level will continue beyond the life and the context of the CJPP.

Drawing on the desk review of documents and interviews with the programme team and partners, the Pompidou Group undertook necessary steps that were under its control and within its mandate to promote sustainable programme outcomes. The CJPP team has used various channels to ensure that its results will be sustained and further developed by partners. A good example of sustainability is the therapeutic community in Moldova – it is still running and there are plans for extension within the prison and the whole prison system.

Indeed, it can be positively emphasised that the therapeutic community was implemented with a strategy aimed at sustainability. For example, in a memorandum of understanding between the Pompidou Group and the Moldovan prison administration, it was stated that both sides would commit to supporting the pilot project over a longer period of time and that the running costs of the therapeutic community would be borne by the Moldovan partners.

However, not all pilot projects of the CJPP became permanent and institutionalised programmes in the project countries as the programme team had hoped. One example is Family Conference, which can no longer be continued in prisons for various reasons, some of which are beyond the scope of the project team’s influence (see section 5.4 on effectiveness).

Some project partner interviewees suggested that the programme should have focused its resources on lasting measures like teacher training and guidebooks in order to create more sustainable results. However, the evaluator notes that the CJPP has done just that, for example with a training video on MAT in prisons, a manual for trainers for therapeutic communities and an e-learning tool for MAT in prisons.

Human rights and gender

Human rights criteria consider the extent to which project activities are guided by human rights standards and principles. Gender criteria consider the gender-specific perspective (gender mainstreaming) and, in particular, equal inclusion and participation as well as the empowerment of women.

The programme documentation emphasises the CJPP’s objective of promoting human rights within the criminal justice system. This aspect will be more central in later project cycles (2018-2021) as an impact claim of the programme than in earlier projects. It could be critically noted at this point that most project activities primarily aim to promote the health of vulnerable populations and the population as a whole, for example through the prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C, and only indirectly address human rights. The programme justifications only address human rights directly in a marginal sense, but the projects are clearly situated in that sphere. With the revision of the Pompidou Group’s statute in 2021, promoting the integration of human rights into all stages of drug policy making became a statutory mission. This may provide the necessary framework for incorporating human rights more directly within the CJPP.

Although there is no specific right to health in the European Convention on Human Rights, European states have committed themselves to ensuring the mental and physical well-being of people in many different

situations. In this context they must, among other things, ensure that people have access to the healthcare they need, have a say in the treatment they receive, and be able to seek redress when mistakes are made.

The programme has a very strong foundation of promoting human rights within the criminal justice system and in doing so, seeks to reach those who face significant disadvantages – prisoners, people in trouble with the law who are struggling with SUD and their social and financial side effects, and their families and the professionals working with them.

The programme addresses, through its project documentation, research papers and training materials, the stigma, discrimination and negative stereotypes that are often barriers to mental health, well-being and access to substance use treatment. In particular, people with SUDs experience various forms of stigma that directly harm their dignity and that can have lasting health effects. In prisons, people who are drug dependent are often stigmatised for their SUDs by both other imprisoned people and prison staff. In the unofficial hierarchies of the prison subculture, they are assigned the lowest status in almost all cases.

The documentation of the most recently completed Strengthening Human Rights-Based Responses to Substance Use Disorder in Prisons project, as well as the CJPP brochure, emphasise that raising awareness among practitioners and policy makers about non-discrimination against people who use drugs and the importance of using human rights-sensitive language when talking about SUDs are important points in project implementation. Working with people who have benefited from treatment programmes, and acknowledging the importance of treatment and rehabilitation for the life of the individual and society as a whole, is vital to the success of such programmes.

Most of the activities under this project targeted a male prison population. Although it was suggested to the project partners that the target group of women should also be included, this suggestion was not considered a priority and was only punctually addressed as there are already many programmes in women's prisons in the project countries. Since other international and local organisations working in the project area in the region focus their activities specifically on the special needs of women, including women with SUDs in prison, the programme team decided not to duplicate the work of other organisations active in this field.

For future CJPP projects it remains important to investigate women's human rights, as women who use drugs often face a double stigma due to their drug use in relation to motherhood and their role in the family, on the one hand, and their incarceration, on the other.

The programme documentation also includes considerations on gender mainstreaming in relation to implementation modalities. It states in some reports that its activities benefited from an overall balanced representation of women and men in project activities. Further, a gender-balanced representation of partner institutions and participation in activities was pursued and, in most cases, successfully achieved.

Conclusions

The following conclusions draw on an analysis of the evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, partnerships and co-operation, and human rights and gender mainstreaming.

Criteria	Conclusions
Relevance	The CJPP's objectives were largely in line with Council of Europe action plans and the priorities of co-operating governments, although these do not always explicitly list specific drug-related topics. Further, public health-related studies confirm the relevance of the activities of the CJPP. Although reducing the number of people with SUDs in prison is relevant, it is no longer accurate to state that the prisons in the project countries are currently acutely overcrowded (as some CJPP reports do). This is not to say, of course, that measures to reduce the numbers of drug-using people in prisons are obsolete. They have a preventive effect and are in line with international experience in this area.
Efficiency	The CJPP was, by and large, efficient. The CJPP team, as part of the Pompidou Group and the Council of Europe as a whole, was perceived by project partners as knowledgeable, highly experienced and effective in achieving sustainable and meaningful results. Some staff turnover created limited implementation friction. Resources were often maximised through co-operation with other organisations and sharing of workload and costs. Even though the programme team ensured that the CJPP was visible, the recognisability of the programme and the reach of its content could be increased even more. Some delays in project implementation may have increased the administrative costs of the project. More analytical and theoretical groundwork before implementing specific project activities might increase the efficiency of the programme.
Partnerships and co-operation	The programme succeeded in initiating, maintaining and expanding long-term partnerships with governments and NGOs. It also created professional networks among its target groups.
Effectiveness	The programme contributed to creating and supporting comprehensive treatment systems in the project countries. The CJPP also helped in promoting European and international prison health and human rights standards. The CJPP contributed with various methodologies and different types of activities to increasing the knowledge and skills of various professionals working in the criminal justice and correctional system, as well as NGOs providing services to incarcerated people with SUDs.
Impact	Although the logical framework applied to the CJPP was coherent in generating wider project impacts at the macro-level of society, it is not possible to clearly identify or measure longer-term impacts of the whole programme. Most projects within the CJPP did not provide measurable indicators of impact. In addition, most activities were too small to have measurable impact at the macro-level, which is to some extent attributable to limited programme funding.
Sustainability	While some of the CJPP pilot projects led to the sustainable introduction and strengthening of new treatment programmes (a therapeutic community in the Republic of Moldova and MAT in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), there were examples of activities that were not sustainable or at least could have been more institutionalised (e.g. Family Conference in Ukraine), if the project and external circumstances had been more favourable.
Human rights and gender	The programme has made a clear commitment to reducing stigma, discrimination and negative stereotypes, which are often barriers to mental health and well-being. In addition, gender mainstreaming has always been taken into account in the planning and implementation of activities. The revised statute of the Pompidou Group adopted in 2021 provides an opportunity to better emphasise the human rights dimension of the CJPP.

Recommendations and lessons learned

Funding and donor relationships

The CJPP should maintain and, where possible, further develop its relations with the donor community and national partners in order to maintain the co-operation network and ongoing long-term activities in the project countries. Although donor diversification is advisable to ensure long-term funding, it also means that the satisfaction of the main donors (e.g. the Fund to Combat Certain Forms of Crime of Luxembourg) with the project results should always be a priority. For example, the CJPP could conduct a stakeholder and donor mapping exercise in each target country for the areas covered by the programme in order to have up-to-date information from all relevant interlocutors at government level, international development actors and civil society organisations (CSOs), as well as to map all potential donors in the region and identify current trends in donor funding in the criminal justice sector.

Monitoring and evaluation

The CJPP should develop a simple but consolidated M&E framework for all projects, with greater attention to selecting appropriate qualitative indicators to better measure results. It is recommended to develop a set of standardised mandatory indicators to be used for different types of activities (policy work, regulatory review, capacity development, awareness raising, etc.). M&E costs should be included in project budgets.

Capacity building

The CJPP should continue to provide comprehensive capacity building that includes an institutional strengthening approach for criminal justice institutions and CSOs, as well as standards for the delivery of training. To date, this has been achieved successfully through the development of more detailed training materials, including handbooks for trainers and project managers, as well as e-learning tools that were made into institutionalised training tools.

Institutionalisation and sustainability

The CJPP should strengthen institutionalisation of project activity pilots by engaging governments to find ways to effectively mainstream and integrate treatment and rehabilitation services into their national programmes. This has already been successfully achieved in the Republic of Moldova with an in-prison therapeutic community. In Ukraine (family conferencing and MAT in prison) and Georgia (alternatives to punishment), successfully tested programmes and strategic roadmaps may still have the potential to be institutionalised, provided the political will exists. To ensure participating stakeholders are fully aware of the pilot projects the Pompidou Group could first present a collection of reports and research about specific pilot projects to all stakeholder institutions and participating persons; secondly, convene a meeting with key national stakeholders and donors to present pilot project results and outline priorities for the future based on the pilot project results; and finally, in future projects, expand participation in future workshops to include a wider pool of relevant decision makers.

The CJPP should keep in mind that investments into the training of prison staff are often not sustainable, as staff are rarely assigned to one specific task, such as supervising a rehabilitation programme for a longer period of time, but are frequently transferred to other prisons or functions. Senior prison staff in the project countries also often retire very early. Training programmes should therefore aim to train trainers or produce training materials that can also be used by new entrants to the prison service. Another possibility to sustain training successes could be to work more closely with local and international institutional training centres or to establish or expand such institutional entities.

Regional planning

The CJPP should further specify its regional strategy for all directly and indirectly involved countries and regions, outlining the objectives, areas and approaches for regional co-operation between target countries, regions and institutions. This includes various networks within the Pompidou Group, in particular MedNET and its activities in the penitentiary system, but also regional programmes of the Council of Europe in the field of criminal justice. This process has already started following the increased interest of Pompidou Group member states and partners in the CJPP.

Co-operation with civil society organisations

From the first project cycle, the CJPP worked closely with CSOs, and should continue to do so to further strengthen criminal justice and crime prevention in the programme area. Throughout the CJPP's history, CSOs have proven to be prolific and professional partners in the delivery of services in prisons. CSOs are also a bridge to services and jobs outside prison to formerly imprisoned people, expanding in practice the span of rehabilitation opportunities.

Impact

In order to create a more measurable impact on the macro-level of society, the CJPP could, in discussion with national stakeholders, identify and introduce a larger programme in one project country. This would then focus on one main impact indicator, for example the number of people who use drugs (in overcrowded prisons) or the total coverage and output of selected services such as MAT in this country. It has to be acknowledged, however, that this largely depends on funding under Council of Europe action plans and other financing schemes, which are rarely available for such specialised topics as the treatment of SUDs within the wider topic of prison health. This recommendation does not mean that a scattering of project funds and activities across different countries and with different thematic focuses is not useful. Especially in regions where several international agencies and local organisations cover similar priority areas, smaller targeted interventions may also be justified. In such cases, however, the CJPP has not been able to produce quantifiable effects.

Visibility

The CJPP could improve its visibility by developing its own recognisable design within the framework of the Pompidou Group's corporate design. Such a design or motif should be easily associated by the viewer with the programme's focus. Investing in a smart communications strategy with clear messages and design can increase the reach of the programme's content and value.

Therapeutic community

The CJPP should continue to provide support to spread the therapeutic community approach in the Eastern European and South-Eastern European regions as a complementary programme to other pharmacological and harm reduction interventions. Care should be taken to ensure that the methodology of the therapeutic community is consistent with international standards of public health and human rights.

Comprehensive drug treatment system

The CJPP is encouraged to continue to invest in and support initiatives aimed at strengthening comprehensive drug treatment systems, which requires persuading prison authorities and working with them to adopt a balanced approach which entails different treatment approaches. An evidence-based approach should always be the guiding principle.

The CJPP should keep in mind the following positive lessons learned from its projects:

Memoranda of understanding or agreements

All project partners involved in collaborations should sign memoranda of understanding or agreements at an early stage of the partnership process that clearly define responsibilities, mutual expectations and arrangements. Beneficiary ownership should also be set out in jointly co-ordinated and approved work plans. In securing partnerships with government, political commitment must be accompanied by early identification of leaders at the implementation level to put commitments into practice and ensure smooth implementation.

Partnership building

The effective involvement and participation of the programme's partners in the entire project cycle from conception to implementation has created a sense of shared responsibility, goodwill and trust. This has contributed to the CJPP gaining legitimacy and momentum and being in a much more favourable position to achieve its objectives.

Capacity building and networking

Capacity building through information sharing, trainings, seminars, workshops or actual participation in consultation processes is essential to meaningfully engage programme partners in the reform process. These can aim at an individual and institutional level as well as on a local and national scale. Training of trainers programmes are an effective strategy to improve the impact of the programme on the ground, but they need appropriate infrastructure and a supportive environment to reach their full potential. Study visits and participation in international conferences for operational level staff of government partners are a good motivator for introducing change and good international practices at the organisational level.

Appendix

Evaluation tools

Semi-structured interviews were based on the following guiding questions, which were then adapted to the local context:

	Key question	Follow-up question
Introduction	Please describe your role with the Criminal Justice and Prison Programme.	How long have you been involved in the programme? What responsibilities did you hold? In which areas did you or your organisation collaborate with the CJPP?
General effectiveness	In your view, please describe the main achievements of the CJPP during its implementation/your involvement. In your opinion, which programme component was the most successful? Please explain your response.	What factors were crucial for achievements and/or failures? What are the major challenges and obstacles that the programme encountered? Was the programme able to cope with them or did they prevent the programme from achieving its intended results? To what extent have your concerns (if any) been sufficiently addressed by the programme? (Probe: What were the key mechanisms used for communication? Were you kept informed on programme progress?)
Output – Skills of professionals	Did the training provided by the programme improve your skills/ the skills of health or prison staff/ policy makers/NGOs or other professionals? How? Can you please provide examples?	What was the situation of health professionals before the programme started? How relevant was the training provided for working with people who are incarcerated and use drugs? Which parts of the training made the biggest contribution to health professionals? What could have been improved/ should be improved?
Output – advocacy	Did the programme reach its target groups and influence decision makers? To what extent was awareness raised among them/the public? Can you please provide examples?	How well were the project results communicated nationally as well as internationally? Were there specific factors that helped in reaching decision makers in particular? What could have been improved/ should be improved?
Output – network	To what extent were contacts and exchanges among professionals and policy makers in the field facilitated? Do you think it helped to strengthen national/international networks? Can you please provide examples?	Did your organisation benefit from the networking opportunities? To what extent? Are you satisfied with the achieved co-operation? What could have been improved/should be improved?
Lessons learned/ Best practices	What were the key lessons from the programme?	What “good practices” could be applied to future projects?
Closing	Is there anything more you would like to add?	

The interview partners in the project countries received a brief prior to the interview. The following text is the information that was sent to the Moldovan interview partners. Similar letters were distributed to Georgian and Ukrainian interview partners, each with a different thematic focus:

About the evaluation: the Pompidou Group is evaluating its Criminal Justice and Prison Programme in order to improve project implementation for its partners and member states including Moldova. To reach this goal, independent evaluators will conduct individual and group interviews via video call. The evaluation is trying to find out about various aspects of the project that have been achieved during the period 2010 to 2022. The information provided in this interview, based upon your experience and your involvement with the project, will help us to better understand the achievements of the project. The results of the evaluation will be shared with the member states of the Pompidou Group including Moldova. All personal information you provide through this interview will, however, remain confidential.

About the Criminal Justice and Prison Programme: the Criminal Justice and Prison Programme (CJPP) is the umbrella initiative for a series of projects focusing on the treatment and rehabilitation of substance use disorders within the criminal justice system. The programme has been implemented by the Council of Europe's Pompidou Group since 2010 and is currently ongoing. The present evaluation covers the period between 2010 and 2022. The programme has the overall objective of improving health services for people who use drugs who are in contact with the criminal justice system, and fully protecting their human rights. This includes, for example, supporting medication-assisted therapy (MAT) and drug-free treatment services such as therapeutic communities, harm reduction measures and rehabilitation programmes in detention. The programme is primarily aimed at governments and professionals, helping them to develop strategies and rehabilitation measures for the treatment, education or reintegration of people who use drugs.

The CJPP has achieved tangible results in many European countries and especially in the Eastern European and Balkan regions. In Moldova, the first prison-based therapeutic community programme was consolidated and extended by providing evidence of its long-term effectiveness, achieving progress in its integration into the national treatment curriculum, and opening up access to people from other custodial settings. Rehabilitative activities attached to the programme were also diversified, in particular with a pre-and post-programme phase, peer-to-peer mentorship and entrepreneurial education. The programme was further showcased as a good practice in the region, inspiring interest from other countries to introduce it in their prisons, and the creation of a handbook for setting up and running therapeutic communities in prison. Workshops and research conducted on the influence of criminal subcultures on the effectiveness of drug treatment options in Moldovan prisons has led to a first discussion of this challenge among prison staff and leadership and to practical recommendations to mitigating this influence on uptake of treatment. Implementation of an interactive online course on delivering MAT in prisons also served the purpose of improving the quality of drug treatment in prisons by enhancing the competences of professionals working with people with opioid use disorders.

Many reforms and improvements that took place in Moldova happened thanks to the dedication and hard work of Moldovan professionals in the prison system, in the administration and in ministries. The programme aimed to support improvements in the prison system and this would not have been possible without its Moldovan partners.

The interviews will be conducted verbally and may be adapted to the interviewees. However, all interviews will follow this general structure: [A shortened version of the questionnaire from above was attached].

Desk review list

Final project reports: 6
Mid-term reports: 3
Evaluations: 1
Research papers: 4
Other project documents, reports and communication: 15

Persons contacted

As part of the evaluation, 21 people were contacted and interviewed. Half of the people (10) contacted were direct project partners of the CJPP in the project countries, including high-level policy makers (2) and other local implementing partners (8). Experts and trainers (5) were also interviewed. Furthermore, 1 person involved in project implementation was also interviewed. As the interview partners were promised anonymity and only a small number of people were interviewed, no detailed information about these individuals is provided here, as the naming of organisations and functions allows conclusions to be drawn about the people.

The Council of Europe's Pompidou Group has been implementing its Criminal Justice and Prison Programme for more than 10 years. Interventions under this programme are centred around three main tasks: the development and improvement of national legal frameworks (policy) and the enhancement of both the professional skills (practice) and knowledge (research) of those working in the criminal justice system. For many years, the Pompidou Group has thus co-operated with national authorities, prison administrations, experts, policy makers and civil society representatives that are all committed to improving access to and quality of treatment for people with drug problems.

This report is the result of an evaluation carried out by an independent expert assessing the programme's impact and taking into account the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of interventions. Based on the analysis, the author further provides recommendations for future action within the framework of the project.

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

