Supported by the European Union

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Institute of Criminology

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES OF RESTORATION: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, PILOTING REPORT AND EXPANSION ANALYSIS

Margaret Wilson & Caroline Lanskey

University of Cambridge

March 2016

Supported by the European Union

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Institute of Criminology

This report is part of the project "European Communities of Restoration – in prisons and as alternatives to detention" (ECOR) running from 2014-2016 with partners from Austria, Bulgaria. Germany, Hungary, Latvia, and the United Kingdom.

The report contains contributions of the project partners:
Jessica Breuer, Jürgen Schönnagel, Jörg Gritzka, Elena Estatieva, Yuri Kapustin, Verena Kox, Marton Magyari, Csilla Katona, Tobias Merckle, Kristine Vilka, Līga Roķe-Reimate, Rudite Losane.

This publication has been funded with the financial support of the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union (JUST/2014/JPEN/AG). The content is the sole responsibility of the authors and cannot be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

Supported by the European Union

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Institute of Criminology

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

1 European Communities of Restoration

Introduction

This report describes the implementation and evaluation of six innovative rehabilitation programmes piloted for prisoners and/or recently released prisoners in Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, and Latvia. The programmes, implemented under the general heading of European Communities of Restoration (ECOR), are based on the APAC (Association for the Protection and Assistance of Convicts) model developed in Brazil and widely used in South America and internationally.

The ECOR programmes are an unusual phenomenon in Europe, especially post-Soviet Bloc countries. They have been piloted with funding from the European Union in order to determine: 1) whether the APAC model can operate successfully in the European context, 2) what changes and adaptations are necessary to prisons and their environs to enable APAC-based programmes to function, 3) what legislative rules/interpretations facilitate or hinder the implementation of rehabilitation programmes based on the APAC model, and 4) how the programmes are received and perceived by those who facilitate, deliver and participate in them.

This report provides descriptive and evaluative data to inform the above aims. It evaluates the pilot stage of the ECOR programmes run by the six organisations; one in Bulgaria, one in Hungary and two each in Germany, and Latvia. It describes the evaluation methodology and rationale used to gather and analyse the data, and provides detailed descriptions of the individual programmes including early assessments of each programme's effectiveness and impact. It reflects on the collective contributions of the ECOR programmes to date in terms of their theoretical and practical potential for supporting the reintegration of ex-prisoners into society. A discussion of the limitations of the present evaluation, and suggestions for further research are

included. The following section, the expansion analysis, discusses the prospects for sustaining and extending the ECOR programmes across Europe based on the learning from the pilots. It includes recommendations for future practitioners interested in implementing APAC/ECOR based on the lessons learned from this project.

ECOR Implementation Strategy

The APAC model in its original form prescribes a revolutionary operation of prisons where prisoners themselves are included in the day-to-day management and oversight of the prison. It is founded on Christian principles but the programmes are available for all prisoners of any or no faith. Participating prisoners live in separate, residential communities within the prison. They receive healthcare and legal representation in addition to regular therapy sessions, meaningful work opportunities, and initiatives to rebuild prisoners' relationships with their families. Personal and spiritual development are important constituents of the original APAC programme and are achieved by treating prisoners with respect, exploring the harms caused by criminal acts, and encouraging prisoners to take responsibility for their actions. Throughout their sentence prisoners have access to individual counsellors and mentors as well as professional therapists. A key element of the APAC model is the continuation of support for offenders in the communities they are released to after imprisonment. This support includes assistance with skills training and finding employment. Volunteers from local communities play a large part in the running of the programmes; they are trained to run aspects of the programmes in prison and in the community and to provide mentoring support.

Following the APAC model, the ECOR programmes create small communities of prisoners or ex-prisoners who live separately from others. They provide training in educational and vocational skills classes, aim to restore participants' concepts of self-worth, and support them as they prepare

to re-enter the community after release. Within the education curricula are woven individual and group therapy sessions supervised by psychologists and/or social workers. The aim is to enable offenders to contribute positively to society, reunite them with their families (where possible), improve their employability, and reduce recidivism.

All the ECOR programmes have been extended or developed from similar, existing programmes. The six organisations running the programmes have adapted the APAC model to suit the particular legislative and penal context of each country. In Bulgaria an existing building at Vratsa prison has been refurbished to accommodate adult male prisoners in the final, pre-release stage of their programme. Participants will graduate to live and work as a community in open conditions having completed their training in the secure wings of the prison. In Hungary, Prison Fellowship Hungary (PFH) has implemented two new APAC-based programmes; one for women at Pálhalmai prison and one for men at Tiszalöki prison. Both programmes provide separate accommodation for participants within the prisons. In Germany, the Seehaus is an independent, non-custodial residential community for young, male offenders. The young men live in a family setting and participate in a highly structured vocational and personal development programme which is provided for in the State law. The Blue Cross organisation also runs an ECOR programme in Germany. It caters exclusively for adult, male offenders with addiction problems. It runs two prison-based communities in self-contained wings in Brandenburg and Luckau-Duben prisons and provides aftercare support for men released in the state of Brandenburg. In Latvia the Miriam programme operates for adult women prisoners in Ilguciems prison. Here women carry out the usual prison regime's work schedule but they live separately and complete programme elements during the evenings and weekends. The emphasis is on art, culture, and creativity to develop personal responsibility and provide alternatives to a criminal lifestyle. The other Latvian programme is unique in this project as it is situated away from custodial premises offering only aftercare to adult male

ex-prisoners. This programme, Ratnieki, recruits men who have recently left prison and, after providing education and work experience, assists them to find accommodation and employment as they reintegrate into the community.

Implementation began in January 2015 following eight months of preparation. Preparation was different for most sites; for example, finding volunteers or employees to deliver the interventions or negotiating with prison managers/authorities for space or premises separated from other prisoners. Details of the implementation process at each site are included in the project descriptions below.

2 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation of the pilot projects aimed to capture the perceptions and experiences of the people involved in the ECOR programmes from the participants and staff delivering the programmes to senior officials within whose criminal justice jurisdictions the programmes operate. It had a mixed-method design comprising semi-structured interviews with participants, programme staff and managers and senior officials from prisons and justice ministries and surveys of programme participants. It was informed by observations of the programmes in action. The evaluation period ran from January 2015, the time of the ECOR programmes' launch, to February 2016 when the final round of participant surveys took place. Research visits to the ECOR sites were conducted between March and July 2015.

Ethics

The research followed the ethical guidelines of the British Society of Criminology. ECOR partners in each country obtained permissions and prison entry security clearances prior to the site visits and recruited the research participants. Consent from research participants was obtained in advance by the partner organisations who explained the aims of the evaluation, the voluntary nature of participation, and what participation in the research would involve. At the beginning of each interview the researchers re-iterated the aims of the evaluation and conditions of participation including the anonymity of participant contributions.

Data collection

Research samples

INTERVIEWS

To collect a comprehensive range of perspectives on the programmes we aimed to interview at least one person from the following groups: programme

managers, programme staff (volunteers), senior officials from prisons and justice ministries as well as at least two participants on each programme (one experienced, one new to the programme).

SURVEYS

As participants on each programme were few, ranging between 7 to 15 people, we intended to collect responses from the total number of individuals available at two Time points. The actual samples are listed under each project heading.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

To capture as much nuanced data as possible, interviews were semi-structured with interviewees allowed to speak freely. Interview schedules were constructed for each category of respondent. Prison authorities and senior prison managers were interviewed to understand the legislative context within which ECOR programmes operated, their perceptions of NGO-delivered programmes, and their views of the programme content. Programme managers and practitioners were interviewed to gain an insight into the experience of managing and implementing ECOR programmes. Volunteers involved in programme delivery were asked about the voluntary undertaking involved, the level of on-going commitment, and, for new volunteers, their expectations and anticipation of working within prisons. Programme participants were asked about their expectations and experiences of the programmes. Where possible, we interviewed a new and a more experienced programme participant to discover whether their attitudes or aspirations appeared to be any different from each other.

The qualitative interview data were collected by the researchers during site visits that took place between March and July 2015 and lasted from one to three days. The ECOR partners in each country arranged the research visit schedules. They obtained appointments with government/prison authority

personnel, uniformed prison managers, programme participants, and programme staff (paid or unpaid). English was the official language for the evaluation communication and reporting. ECOR partners organised interpreters and document translation where necessary. In Bulgaria, Hungary, and Latvia ECOR translation/interpretation was necessary but not in Germany where all interviews were conducted in German.

Uniformed prison staff, psychologists, social workers, and therapists were all interviewed in private offices or areas at the programme sites. In Bulgaria programme staff and volunteers were interviewed in informal settings. Latvian volunteers for the Miriam programme were interviewed in the prison chapel or their main place of work; for example, the National Library. At the Seehaus in Germany interviews took place in a designated meeting room on site. Interviews with Blue Cross respondents took place in meeting rooms in the prisons and in the home of one of the Blue Cross workers. In Hungary interviews took place in meeting rooms in the prisons and headquarters of the prison administration. All interviews relating to the Ratnieki programme were conducted in the administrative offices. Apart from the staff at the Ratnieki programme, all interviewees were interviewed separately. Sometimes the ECOR partner was present but did not participate except to assist with clarifying questions or answers.

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRES

Three self-administered questionnaires were designed for programme participants. The first was intended to elicit participants' self-perception and ideas of stigma attached to imprisonment (Link et al., 1997).[1] The second sought participants' experience of the ECOR programme they were undertaking. The third questionnaire collected participants' evaluation of the programme. The questionnaires comprised 46, 32, and 33 questions with a Likert scale positive or negative response required on a scale of 1 – 5 (where 1

[1] Derived from Link and colleagues' 1997 investigation into stigma associated with mental illness.

= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree). In relation to their personal life-experience there was a series of questions requiring a simple yes/no answer. Again, a 'don't know' option was provided (see appendices 1, 2, and 3). The questionnaires were translated and distributed at each of two Time points (T1 and T2) to participants by the ECOR partners. The completed questionnaires were sent to the research team for analysis.

There was some variation in the distribution and completion of questionnaires by partner projects, which was linked to the particular composition and structure of the programmes and access to participants. Participants on all programmes were invited to complete the three questionnaires mentioned above. All projects distributed the self-perception and experiences questionnaires during or shortly after the evaluation site visits in July 2016.

Where participant cohorts on the programmes remained largely unchanged over the time of the evaluation, in Bulgaria, Latvia (Miriam and Ratnieki programmes), and in Hungary (Tiszalöki men's prison), participants completed the questionnaires on self-perception and experiences of the programme a second time 5 – 7 months after the completion of the first questionnaires. This allowed for some analysis of personal change over time and of the consistency of participants' experiences of these programmes.

Evaluation questionnaires were distributed to complement the qualitative data collection from the same group of participants during the site visits. As the Seehaus participants only took part in a single round of data collection: they completed the evaluation questionnaires shortly after the site visit. Participants at all the other programmes completed evaluation questionnaires during the second round of data collection.

Table 2.1 presents the total survey responses from programme participants. As shown, the number of respondents who completed questionnaires at Time 2 is much lower than at Time 1. The reasons varied but, overall, this situation reflects the research and evaluation context of prisons (Mullett, 2016). For example, seven women were released from Ilguciems prison between September and December 2015. Additionally, where prison or programme rules are broken, as happened on the Ratnieki programme in Latvia, participants may be expelled.

Participants who completed both surveys were identified in the following programmes Vratsa (Bulgaria) Ratnieki (Latvia) Miriam (Latvia) and Hungary (Tiszalöki men's prison). A different situation arose at Mélykút in Hungary and Brandenberg and Lukau-Duben in Germany where participant questionnaires had no consistent identifying marks between Time 1 and Time 2. We were unable to identify which respondents had completed one or both surveys and further, some programme participants had left and new ones joined. At Mélykút we tentatively identified four of the original respondents.

Although all ECOR programmes had an identifiable start date to comply with the EU funding, they are all designed to accommodate new participants at any stage. This is so that more senior participants can act as encouraging role-models and exert positive peer-pressure on newer individuals. Therefore, the 'snapshot' cross-sectional picture provided by the group data has a meaningful role in describing participants' experiences and evaluation of their respective programmes.

SITE	QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES Time 1 & 2							Total T2
	Time 1 respondents		Time 2 respondents					
	Total received	Date	Same as T1	Missing	reason	New	Date	
Latvia Ratnieki aftercare	13	May-15	11	2	removed	0	Dec-15	11
Latvia Miriam Ilguciems women	15	Sep-15	8	6	released	6	Dec-15	14
Hungary Tiszalöki men	15	Sep-15	15	0	-	0	Feb-16	15
Hungary Mélykút women	9	Sep-15	4	5	unidentifiable	7	Feb-16	11
Bulgaria Vratsa	7	Sep-15	5	2	ejected	3	Dec-15	8
Germany Seehaus	6	Oct-15						0
Germany Blue Cross Brandenburg	9	Jul-15	0	9	unidentifiable	8	Jan-16	8
Germany Blue Cross Lukau-Duben	7	Jul-15	0	7	unidentifiable	4	Jan-16	4

Table 2.1: Questionnaire response rate for each programme

Supplementary data collection methods

The site visits additionally provided informal opportunities for the researchers to see the APAC premises and view some programmes in action. The programme facilities, accommodation, and communal areas were visited where possible. In Bulgaria refurbishing of the separate accommodation outside the secure area of the prison was not complete at the time of the site visit. Additionally, any available documentary information on the ECOR programmes, for example information leaflets and curriculum timetables, were supplementary sources of data.

DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews from each project were analysed thematically to identify the successes and challenges relating to the management and implementation of these alternative models of custody and aftercare. Themes included volunteer participation and any signals of participant change, with particular reference to desistance theories and restorative justice perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Supplementary data drawn from observations and documentary analysis were analysed in relation to the themes derived from the interviews.

The qualitative analysis also considered the feasibility of the ECOR programmes within the existing judicial systems and the likelihood of any change necessary to accommodate wider use of ECOR programmes. This aspect of the evaluation was greatly assisted by the experience gained from earlier APAC-model programmes in each country concerned.

Quantitative data from the participant questionnaires were entered into Excel and SPSS spreadsheets. Descriptive analyses were conducted to identify the level of participant self-perceptions and stigma and their experiences and evaluations of the programme. Where we could confidently identify the same participants on the programmes at Time 1 and Time 2, paired T-Tests were conducted to measure any change over time. Otherwise the data at the two Time points were treated as two cross-sectional illustrations of participants' responses. The two sets of analyses were combined to provide the descriptive and evaluative overview of each programme pilot.

Data presentation

Drawing on the data from these different sources each project evaluation comprises a description of its approaches to recruitment, curriculum and assessment, a summary of participant responses to the programmes, and a perspective of the programme's standing within the national criminal justice system. A summary of the quantitative data on participants' self-perception, experience, and evaluation of the programme is presented for each project. Additionally, a combined analysis of participants' responses across the programmes, based on a pooling of all quantitative data, is presented and analysed in relation to the key aims of the ECOR programme.

Limitations of the evaluation

Due to the short timescales the evaluation was not able to assess the long-term aims of ECOR programmes to rehabilitate offenders, assist them in reintegrating into their families and communities, and equip them for offence-free and useful futures. This would require an evaluation over a period of several years and ideally access to official recidivism data, which is currently not available in all pilot countries.

Further evaluation opportunities

The research instruments, the questionnaires and interview schedules, are a potential future resource for programme evaluation. They can be re-administered when participants complete their respective interventions after the duration of the EU funding. This will provide useful data for evaluating participant change over the longer–term and for assessing the sustainability of the programmes.

3 Project Evaluations

3.1 Bulgaria: Community of Restoration

Introduction

The Community of Restoration (COR) programme in Vratsa prison is delivered by Prison Fellowship, Bulgaria (PFB) to up to 18 adult, male prisoners who are within the last five years of their sentence. COR lasts for between nine and eighteen months comprising three stages with the final stage delivered in open detention. The first stage is preparatory when candidates undertake three modules to learn about empathy, communication skills, and conflict resolution. This is designed to prepare men for community living. Following successful completion of these modules, final selection is made of men who will progress to the COR programme based on the judgement of programme and prison staff.

In Bulgaria, convicted prisoners are incarcerated according to their home locality regardless of their security classification. Therefore prisons hold both convicted and remand offenders and their populations are separated according to both sentence and recidivism status. For example, prisoners convicted for the first time are generally (depending on the offence) housed in open conditions. Prison rules prohibit life-sentenced prisoners from mixing with others and prisoners engaged in prison-run educational programmes may not participate in other, simultaneous programmes. Therefore, these categories of prisoner may not be candidates for the COR programme. Additionally, sex-offenders and men with active drug or alcohol addiction are considered unsuitable by PFB.

Contingent on their legal status prisoners are housed according to their physical and mental health, work opportunities, and the availability of specialised training programmes. In Vratsa prison 70% of the population is classed as recidivists and classified as 'strict' detention. Prisoners capable of

work are expected to do so and, although they receive payment, they also reduce their sentence by working. For every two days' work they receive three days' remission.

COR participants are not housed separately from other inmates within the prison during the first phase of COR and they do not undertake regular prison work. The second stage is educational and may take place in secure containment or within open detention[2]. Here men gain recognised qualifications in subjects such as landscape gardening. During the final stage, prisoners live in open detention in a purpose-made community building outside the main prison complex but within the campus. (The prison's own open accommodation is in Vratsa town some distance away). The availability of the COR premises was facilitated by the ECOR project. There the focus is vocational training, working towards a national qualification in landscape gardening, and preparation for re-entry into the community. Participants must past a series of tests at the end of each stage before they can proceed to the next. They receive a participation certificate in recognition of their achievement. The prison personnel then take responsibility for finding employment for released prisoners.

[2] The place of containment depends on the men's sentence-length and status. Men with long sentences are not permitted in open conditions and so continue their educational courses within the secure perimeter. Men with short sentences may progress to open conditions immediately.

Data collection

Table 3.1 presents a summary of data collection methods.

Prisoners	Interviews with two COR programme participants at 5months into the programme. One had served 3 of 3.5 years and the other 2.2 years of a 4.5 year sentence Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) and evaluation questionnaires (x1) distributed at Time 1 (Sept. 2015) n=7; Time 2 (Dec. 2015) n=8
COR staff and volunteers	Interviews with: programme leader Two psychologists Salaried landscape gardening teacher.
Vratsa Prison	Group meeting with Prison Director. Interviews with: the Head of Security and Deputy Chief Social Worker. Tour of prison. Tour of ECOR site.
Table 3.1: Data Collection, Bulgarian Evaluation	

Three COR programme staff were interviewed outside the prison. All began volunteering for COR in February and March 2015; one was very experienced at working with rehabilitation programmes in prisons but two had little or none. All three were young women, the two inexperienced women were psychologists and the more experienced woman taught landscape gardening. All the women were familiar with the ECOR project and the landscape gardener had previously worked on other programmes run by PFB. One of the psychologists was the co-leader of COR. Their level of commitment was high; the co-leader worked two 8.5 hour days a week and the psychologist two 7 hour days. The gardening teacher had previously worked between 4 and 8 hours per day for five days a week however she had not been into the prison since February 2015 as the course participants had not reached the final, open stage of COR. She expected to recommence as soon as they moved into the community house and planned to work a maximum of 4 hours per day five days a week.

Two COR participants, were selected by the programme director from men who volunteered to be interviewed; one had served three years of a 3.5 year sentence, the other two years and two months of a 4.5 year sentence. Their offences were not disclosed. Both men were enthusiastic about the interviews and willingly answered questions. The interviews lasting approximately 45 minutes each were conducted in a private room within the secure part of the prison. Each interview's aim was to elicit participant's expectations of the COR programme, their understanding of community, and some sense of their self-perception and confidence in the future. Their views were positive on the whole projecting an optimistic view of life after release.

Seven COR clients (100% of participants at Time 1) completed two self-administered questionnaires supervised by the practitioner partner in September 2015. Questions were written in English and translated into Bulgarian by the practitioner partner and a COR colleague. The first questionnaire was intended to obtain an understanding of clients' self-perception and self-worth, the second to ascertain their experience of the programme so far. In December 2015, three months later, the self-perception and experience questionnaires were distributed a second time together with a third questionnaire that sought participants' evaluation of the programme. Eight men completed the questionnaires at Time 2, including 5 who had completed the Time 1 surveys.

The following sections provide information on the management, recruitment, curriculum, and assessment of the programme. Participants' responses and evaluations of the programme follow. Finally, prison managers' broader perspectives of the programme are presented.

Programme management

A Coordination Board, comprising members of the prison management and PFB management, is responsible for implementing and overseeing the COR programme within the prison. Vratsa prison staff deal with all recommendations for the programme, security, sentence planning, risk assessments, and employment matters. PFB supervise the day-to-day delivery of all programme elements, recruit and train the volunteers, provide guidance and instruction manuals for practitioners, and manage participants' progress reports. The programme delivery team, a mixture of PFB volunteers and professional practitioners, is entirely external to the prison staff. Additionally, paid practitioners deliver some modules within the programme, usually those leading to recognised national qualifications such as NAVET mentioned below. More advanced participants also assist in programme delivery for the newer prisoners using the principle of leading by example and positive peer pressure to encourage them. COR programme staff and volunteers do not have access to prison records. However, a good collaborative arrangement means that essential information may be available if required. Similarly, prison staff have no access to COR records and all programme discussion, interviews, and classes are confidential.[3]

Recruitment

All potential candidates volunteer for the programme and the Coordination Board makes the final selection of participants. As mentioned above, life-sentenced prisoners, sex-offenders, those with active drug or alcohol addiction, and prisoners engaged in prison-run educational programmes are not eligible. There is also a vocational school at Vratsa prison where inmates study the national educational curriculum. These prisoners are not allowed to mix with others and cannot participate in the COR until they have completed their course. Candidates' security status must be 'strict' or 'common' which equates to medium or open detention categories so that they can progress

[3] A standard exception is information relating to prisoners harming themselves or others or threats to security.

from the closed to the open stages of the COR programme. Recidivism risk must be no higher than medium, as assessed by prison staff. Although non-Bulgarian nationals may apply, all candidates must have sufficient Bulgarian language and literacy to participate in all programme elements. PFB professionals, using in-house-designed measures, assess applicants to ensure they have the minimum skills necessary for reading, writing, mathematics, and thinking and reasoning.

Curriculum

Once prisoners have been approved for the COR programme they begin a process of intensive instruction in communication skills, conflict resolution, and social skills. This phase lasts for an average of four months and is designed to improve prisoners' ability to live within a community, respect themselves and each other, and conform to the programme principles. The principle aim of this first stage is to improve participants' socio-psychological competence and prepare them for the second, mainly educational, phase. Only when this stage has been completed successfully can men proceed further. As some may not be permitted to live in open conditions they undertake their educational modules within secure areas.

The second stage comprises the programme's main educational phase and provides the classes required to deliver vocational/educational qualifications. A computer skills component is compulsory. Life skills training, which comprises 24% of the curriculum, is aimed at equipping prisoners with motivation for maintaining employment and managing basic budgeting. This stage is intense as participants undertake daily theory and practical classes. There are 100 hours theory and 200 hours practical instruction in landscape gardening leading to a recognised professional qualification. Participants are tested and assessed by external specialists from the relevant partner organisations. Men receive a pass certificate from the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET). PFB also have a cooperative

contract with the Federation of Scientific Technical Unions in Bulgaria (FNTS) for providing educational programmes and vocational training in prisons.

The psychologists are heavily involved in the first two stages of COR where the participants are more classroom-based. Given the low literacy levels, both said they were keen to make the programme as accessible as possible and the co-leader said they had temporarily lowered the written test standard (the maximum score is 50, the pass level should be 20, but most only achieved between 2-10 points). They said they interviewed COR candidates to get to know them better and find out about their families, histories, and to check their eligibility but prison staff had already assessed security and risk factors.

The COR programme's third stage requires that individual participant's detention status be 'common' (or open) as they will live full-time outside the prison complex in open conditions. There are two roll-calls; one at 9.30pm and one at 6.00am. Between these hours Bulgarian law requires that all prisoners are accounted for and locked up, otherwise they are free to come and go. Within the separate building prisoners become more self-sufficient as they are responsible for their own cleaning, cooking, and general maintenance. During this phase they may be able to work outside the prison; prison staff source outside employment. Additionally, participants who are not yet allowed to live in open conditions may fulfil responsibilities such as teaching non-COR programme prisoners basic computer literacy or assisting in the prison library. Meaningful labour is perceived as valuable and therapeutic and art/craft therapy is also available.

In Bulgaria prisoners have the right to see psychologists and social workers at any time. Until now prisoners within the open regime have had difficulty accessing such help because the prison only has one psychologist and social worker who work within the building. At the time of the evaluation site visit, the COR participants had access to group-based psychological and

sociological interactions. Individual sessions with COR participants would be offered following the move to the new community house.

Overall, participants complete 48 hours' foundational teaching for acclimatisation and preparation, 36 hours learning communication skills, and 36 hours learning methods of conflict resolution. As well as theory and practical sessions on landscape gardening, there are 150 hours of computer skills, 36 hours devoted to life skills and motivation and 36 hours on managing and maintaining a career.

Throughout, daily teaching is delivered in a variety of formats; lecturing to the whole group, role-play, non-didactic mixed groups for discussion, individual attention, vignettes, large group discussions, and demonstration. Additionally, during the final, open phase there are weekly counselling and group therapy sessions, and monthly family counselling when families agree to participate. There is continuous emphasis on community living, abiding by standards agreed by the group, positive peer culture, and helping/encouraging each other. The tutor/client ratio is 2:12 during the first stage and 1:12 for education. When the men are in open conditions they have a 1:2 ratio. Participants continue with individual and group therapy sessions throughout and support each other through organising social events or planning special occasions for public holidays. As the programme develops, final-stage participants will be encouraged to support prisoners through their first stages helping to develop the organisational culture and mutual support that is central to COR.

Alongside formal qualifications the staff discussed their broader aims for the programme. For example, the overarching goal of the gardening teacher was to inspire the prisoners, help them discover a profitable hobby (as many come from rural, small-holding backgrounds), equip them for employment, support them in achieving tangible results and self-respect, and, essentially, lead crime-free lives in the future.

Relationships between staff and the prisoners were considered to be very positive. One of the interviewed psychologists had had one month's work experience in a prison during her psychology degree and recalled enjoying her first experience of prisons. The other, whose first prison experience was Vratsa, remembered the men's strong reaction to seeing a woman; screaming and bar-rattling. However, both reported enjoying their time in Vratsa and seeing how the men looked forward to the programme sessions. Additionally, other prisoners were now used to them and, with a view to being future COR candidates, were calm whenever they were inside Vratsa.

Assessment

Participants are set achievement targets and progress is assessed and tested by in-house measures and external examinations. Records of achievement are maintained together with attendance registers and reports from psychologists, counsellors, and social workers. There are weekly COR staff meetings, frequently held via Skype because several volunteers live 2 hours' travel away, where each individual's progress is monitored. All COR staff keep written records and these provide comparisons between participant's past and current attitudes and behaviour.

A certificate, awarded for completion of each training module, formally recognises participants' involvement and achievement of the required skills. The completion certificate from each stage is noted in prisoners' official prison records. These are then available for use in decision-making relevant to release dates.

Participants, tutors, and practitioners supply feedback to monitor implementation and facilitate any adjustments to the programme during the pilot stage. Participants will also complete before/after questionnaires to assess any changes in attitudes or behaviour that can act as a proxy measure for reoffending following their release. Additionally, communication with

prison officers and other prison staff will be used to monitor and assess participants' progress.

Behaviour is the overarching indicator of change together with evidence of changed thinking patterns. Although their target is to give prisoners hope and equip them to make better choices in the future, one psychologist said that she did not expect to "entirely change the person". Conversely, she knew that behavioural changes were happening as "some tell me they already put things they learn into their everyday life and that is good". The same woman said that thinking patterns are more difficult to detect but she often saw this revealed in 'games'. For example, solving the problem of six people crossing a river on a raft only capable of transporting four people at a time. She said that, at the beginning, men thought selfishly but later they began to put others, especially the weakest, first. The other psychologist observed more future-orientated thinking and formulating definite plans. Behavioural changes were revealed in less infantilised conduct such as "being spoilt by their mother" (in other words expecting to be indulged or to have bad behaviour overlooked) and becoming calmer, less aggressive but more assertive, less inclined to insult other prisoners, and more inclined to help or protect them.

The gardening teacher explained how assessment was based on a well-organised and close working relationship with offenders; "I see them individually […] to assess motivation, interest, experience. […] I can tell who are better than others after a while. […] Sometimes they want to swap groups – they discuss it – and the majority rules (they think)". She consistently referred to keeping the work interesting as she said the men often began without the ability to focus and concentrate for long and she was aware of work-shy tendencies. Although she taught theory and had written tests to assess progress, men's behaviour was her best indication of change. They became more attentive to tasks, showed initiative, made sensible suggestions to do with work, and worked more collaboratively as time passed. The area

around the prison's exterior wall was testament to past prisoners' work as the land had obviously been cleared and landscaped with grassed sections and newly planted flower and shrub beds; as the teacher said, "other prisoners see it and the men feel proud of their achievement".

There is no set merit/demerit system operated by any COR staff that we interviewed. The gardening teacher allowed the day's group leader to maintain order by imposing 'silly' punishments like singing a song but otherwise there is no protocol. At the time of the site visit the expulsion of programme participants had not been necessary and the only likelihood of it occurring was thought to be infringement of prison rules or violence. However, at the Time 2 survey, three months later, two men had been returned to the prison (see below).

Participant experiences of the programme

INTERVIEW DATA

The two COR participants who were interviewed saw the course as a means to help them change their attitudes and behaviour. One interviewee was a Muslim who felt that he was different from other participants and hoped to benefit from learning better communication skills. His response to the Christian influence was "I believe in God and God is love." The other was keen to acquire new vocational skills. As there is no opportunity for COR participants to engage in prison work they do not earn money or sentence remission. Therefore, many inmates mocked this interviewee at first but he said that after five months on COR many now envied him and wanted to apply. Both rated the COR teaching of life skills and provision of learning opportunities as important and were confident that they would find accommodation and employment once released. One hoped to be running his own business with the landscape gardening qualifications he would achieve and be "making money honestly".

An atmosphere of encouragement from staff and peers was important to both men and one commented that prison guards were unhelpful although he liked his section chief. They seemed slightly detached from their peers on the wings as one man said he probably only had any kind of understanding with about ten out of 100. They viewed teamwork as important but thought that other people should look after themselves.

The man with only six months' sentence remaining already saw himself as changed and reflected on his selfish attitudes being responsible for his imprisonment. The other said he had lost his angry feelings and become more relaxed and confident.

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Results from the surveys at Time 1 showed that the seven COR clients generally felt safe and respected with supportive staff and peers that they got on with. However, two individuals responded that they were under-occupied, sometimes bored, and did not feel valued by staff. One of these respondents subsequently left the programme and the other's responses were more positive at the Time 2 survey. Additionally, at Time 1 the prisoners had only completed either six or seven weeks in the programme and this short timespan in such a changed regime may have been reflected in these negative responses. On the other hand, 100% men agreed with the statement that they had a daily routine and got on with their peers. Additionally, all seven agreed that the rules were fair and that they were trusted to make their own decisions.

Opinions about the atmosphere were positive with 86% (N= 6) reporting a good team spirit, and 71% (N=5) saying they had made friends. Most men (N= 5) felt that they were being taught to deal with stressful situations (the other two did not know) and 71% (N= 5) said they rarely felt stressed. Views on privacy were mixed: 3 out of the 7 felt they had enough privacy and 4 would have liked more. Only one man answered that he did not enjoy the

work. Five men (71%) felt that staff were in control, but several participants were unsure of how they were viewed by staff and only two agreed that they felt valued. Three men thought that their problems were not dealt with promptly and there were mixed views of the extent to which they felt the staff understood them with just two agreeing and three saying they were unsure.

Questions on self-perception produced quite negative answers. Most men had experienced some form of rejection or discrimination as a result of previous imprisonment or substance abuse. Three men thought that people were uncomfortable around them when they found out that they had been in prison, three had been hurt by their friends after a prison sentence, and three said they avoided people because they would look down on them. More general questions about attitudes towards ex-prisoners showed that clients believed that others would not trust them (86%), did not value them as human beings (100%), and thought they were less intelligent than others (71%).

When asked about future employment prospects all were prepared to apply for a job where their history of prison would be questioned but only two (29%) would apply if they knew the employer did not like employing ex-prisoners. However, clients' perceptions of problems were positive as only two men said they had money problems and none foresaw problems with substances, relationships, or accommodation. Nonetheless, three men (43%) thought they may have difficulty avoiding crime.

By Time 2 the original Vratsa participants had been in the programme's final phase for five months spending most of that time in the newly refurbished open premises. Another three men, who had been there for three months, had also joined them. Two men had dropped out and returned to the main prison and did not complete Time 2 questionnaires. One of these men had found it difficult to cope with the intensified vigilance of the uniformed prison officers (who were concerned about security in the open conditions and increased

their frequency of inspections) and requested his return to the secure area.[4] The other man had attempted to import the prison sub-culture of bullying and offender hierarchy, which is strictly forbidden. His behaviour had made some other participants feel unsafe. He was dealt with according to the programme rules and collective decision-making that regulate behaviour by: first, mediation by programme staff; second, a written warning; and finally, by expulsion from the programme.

The second round of questionnaires yielded similarly positive data overall although there was no significant change in the reported levels of stigma. Nevertheless, some statements relating to human worth, such as ex-prisoners being looked down upon, were improved. This is a target area that APAC-based programmes address. Conversely, statements related to community contexts, such as ex-prisoners being feared or making an unsuitable spouse, worsened slightly. This may suggest that further community activities, another aspect of prisoner rehabilitation that the APAC methodology includes, would be beneficial. However, given the small sample size and absence of statistically significant changes further evaluation data will be important to collect prior to making any major policy changes.

Figure 3.1 presents the remaining participants' (N=5) experience at Time 1 and Time 2. In the interpretation of these findings it is relevant to note that the sample is very small because only respondents' with answers at both Time points are counted in the analysis. As can be seen, the majority of changes are in a positive direction but some indicate lower agreement with the statements given in the questionnaires. However, no changes in the Vratsa quantitative data are statistically significant.[5]

[4] As a result of the participant's discomfort programme staff, during their regular meetings with prison managers, requested that officers reduce this intensity. The Director authorised fewer inspections in line with the frequency inside the secure parts of the prison.

[5] The threshold for statistical significance here was taken as $p < 0.1$ because of the small sample.

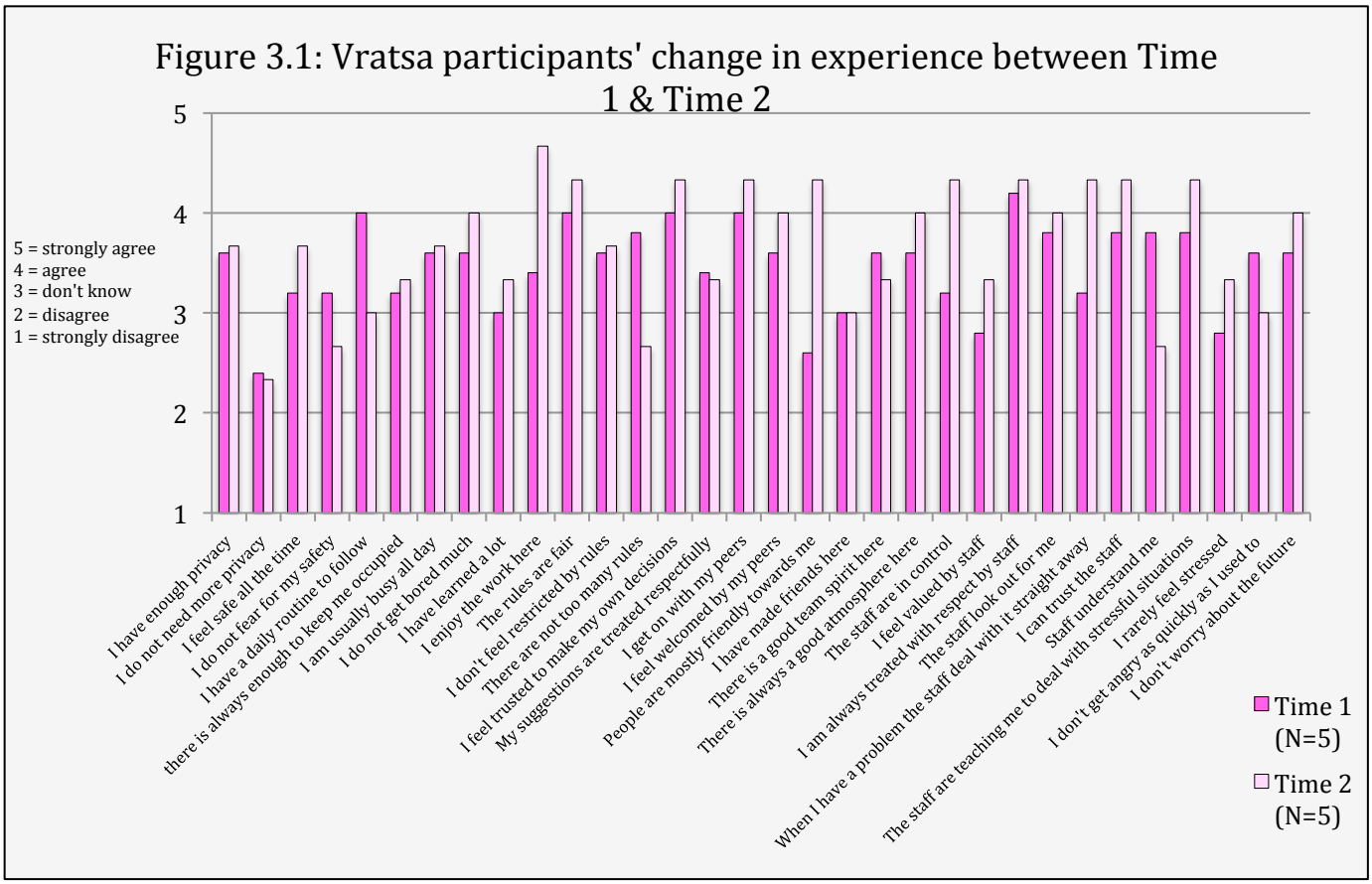
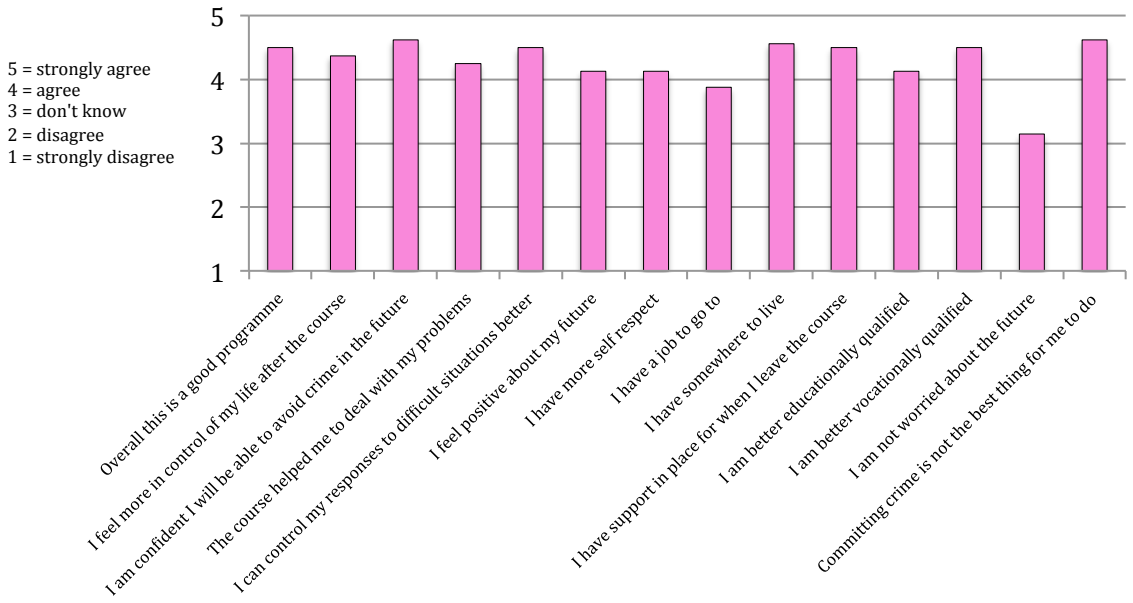


Figure 3.2 shows the remaining and newly integrated men's evaluation of the programme elements. All responses are better than 'don't know' with most agreeing that they are confident they can avoid crime and that it is not a good way of life. Concern about the future produced the lowest agreement but this likely reveals participants' fears prompted by their proximity to release and some degree of forward thinking.

Figure 3.2: Vratsa participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=8)



ECOR, Vratsa prison and the Bulgarian criminal justice system

Vratsa's prison Director said that he had been impressed by PFB's work within his prison to date. His budget made the provision of services difficult so he was pleased to have the COR programme available and did his best to cooperate with it.

The deputy head of social work was familiar with the APAC model of rehabilitation and knew that it was the basis of PFB's work in Vratsa prison. She had had three years' experience of rehabilitation programmes and preparing prisoners for life after release and considered them to be very important. However, there is no provision in Bulgaria for any kind of aftercare because, as she said, "Prison only works 'to the door'". She acknowledged the prisoners' enthusiasm for COR but was cautious about

extending the programme further into the prison estate until the pilot concluded.

She had no concerns about volunteers working within the prison and providing services for prisoners. Based on over ten years' experience of volunteers she said that she trusted them and encouraged their contribution to the prison's work. The prison management makes all final decisions concerning volunteers and had actively recruited them from colleges and universities recommending them to PFB. She was conscious that the concept of volunteers working in prisons was unusual and hoped there would be no negative reactions from outside. Her own initial response to people wanting to work with prisoners had been sceptical but her views had changed on seeing what she perceived as the valuable contribution the volunteers made. Her main concern with the COR programme was the consistency of implementation and whether there would be any waning enthusiasm from volunteer staff.

The deputy head said the COR was well designed and was working well. Prison staff were positive about the programme and had seen that participants had more self-confidence within the secure regime. Furthermore, they appreciated having help with looking after prisoners. However, she was less sure about how participants would progress once they were living communally in open conditions and eventually when they were released. All COR 'graduates' would be risk assessed by the prison psychologist before they were released.

The head of security was a very experienced prison officer having worked in Vratsa prison for 22 years. He was also familiar with PFB's earlier programme, Adaptation Environment, and understood the aims of the ECOR project. His reaction to the COR programme was that, for the first time, he was *sure* it would work. Although he welcomed rehabilitative efforts and recognised that PFB's original programmes were good proposals, he had been

convinced they would have no effect. His change of mind was based on the ten years' collaboration between Vratsa prison and PFB. He was very conscious of the systems in other jurisdictions, such as Scandinavia, and thought that COR would work well in Bulgaria.

The security head said that he hoped COR participants would take responsibility for themselves and use their time in prison to learn how to work and live without reoffending after release. He and the prison guards noticed visible differences in COR participants and major improvements in their behaviour. This was seen in an attitude of trying to please and producing better quality work. They became more careful of their surroundings and seemed to value themselves more. He quoted the example of the COR community house and said its refurbishment was better quality than some staff homes.

Despite welcoming the COR programme, security guards periodically check the whereabouts of participants as a part of their safety routine. (Although, see above for when COR participants did move to open conditions). The security head is also involved in the selection and assessment of COR candidates to ensure that none pose any risk. He mentioned the forthcoming move to the community building and the possibility that men could abscond. However, PFB programme participants have never run away before.

Summary

The COR programme at Vratsa prison derives from the Adaptation Environment (AE) course which had been well established for several years. Therefore, prison staff and PFB volunteers had achieved a collaborative relationship. This collaboration was the basis for COR's implementation and the provision by the prison director of a building outside the secure complex for use as the programme's final, open phase. The training and socialisation stages of COR were implemented in January 2015 when 17 applicants were

selected. To facilitate the extended programme PFB recruited additional volunteer staff.

As no prisoners undertaking any kind of vocational, educational, or rehabilitative programmes are paid for work, many prefer to be paid and earn remission. However, according to one COR participant, prisoners now see the COR participants as privileged because they live separately in a building with higher specifications than exist in the prison. The new building, the community house, was occupied from July 2015. It had been renovated by prisoners and at the site visit awaited final fixtures and furnishings.

Prison staff were originally quite sceptical about having unpaid personnel working with prisoners but experience had taught them that PFB volunteers acted competently and professionally. Furthermore, they witnessed positive changes in prisoners' behaviour when engaged with the AE and, subsequently, the COR programme. Their observations are supported by the research evaluation, which has found that participants also expressed overall positive views of the programme at both data collection Time points.

3.2 Germany: Blue Cross

Introduction

The Blue Cross in Germany (der Blaues Kreuz in Deutschland e.V.) is a Christian charity which supports people out of addiction. It runs two self-help groups for prisoners whose offending is linked to drug or alcohol addiction in the German state of Brandenburg, one in Brandenburg prison and the other in Luckau-Duben prison. The prison projects are well-established: the one in Brandenburg prison has been running since 1990 and the one in Luckau-Duben prison since 2006. Their existence is formally recognised in state legislation (BbgJVollzG 24.04.13, § 23, Section 7 § 46 and 48; Section 8 §50 and 52).

The Blue Cross programme is available for up to 15 men at Brandenburg prison and 13 men at Luckau-Duben prison. Each prison has allocated a wing to the Blue Cross project. Apart from regular prison work, activities, and meals, the participants do not mix with other prisoners. They live on a separate wing within each prison and have a programme of special activities designed to help them address their addiction and prepare for life after release. Volunteers primarily run the programme many of whom have successfully overcome drug or alcohol addictions themselves.[6]

ECOR funding has enabled the Blue Cross to extend its support for programme participants after release from prison. They have recruited a full-time paid member of staff who, with the support of Blue Cross volunteers, provides intensive follow-up support for men released from prison to help them to live independently. The support is tailored to individual needs and can include help with finding employment; for example, writing applications or accompanying a person to job interviews; advice and emotional support for appointments with authorities, such as probation meetings; help with finding accommodation; advice on debt management; training in the use of

[6] For a full description of the Blue Cross prison projects see the ECOR Groundwork Report, Wilson & Lanskey, 2015.

technology such as the internet and mobile phones; help with gaining a driving licence (a pre-requisite for many jobs in Germany); and support with everyday tasks such as ironing shirts for work. The Blue Cross workers help the men to establish social networks drawing, in particular, on support from church communities. There is also the possibility for the men to become Blue Cross volunteers themselves and help to run self-help groups in the community.

The Blue Cross sees the transition from prison to life in the community as a critical period for the programme participants and a time when they are particularly vulnerable, "From the experience that we have made in 24 years in the RG [residential group] "addiction-free life", the transition from prison life to everyday life in freedom is a crucial period for the life foreseen to be free of crime and in satisfied abstinence" (Blue Cross ECOR strategy document). They emphasise the importance of continuing in the community the trusting relationships between Blue Cross participants and staff that have developed in prison as "Breaks in relationships cause breaks in development. This creates a very high risk for a social and addiction relapse" (Blue Cross Manager).

Data collection

The Blue Cross evaluation took place between July 21st and 22nd 2015. During this time there were 18 men in the prison residential groups, eleven in Brandenburg and seven in Luckau-Duben prisons. The length of time men had been in the groups ranged from five and a half months to almost four and a half years. The length of time spent on the programme was approximately 17 months. Additionally, there was one man who had been released that was receiving aftercare support from the Blue Cross. Qualitative and quantitative data on the Blue Cross work in prison and in the community were collected through interviews and questionnaire surveys of the ECOR cohort of prisoners, interviews and informal conversations with Blue Cross staff and volunteers, participant observations of prison life, and documentary analysis

of Blue Cross publications (see Table 3.2). These data are presented collectively in the following sections and in the discussion of the project's effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Prisoners	Interview with Blue Cross participant reaching end of prison programme (Tobias)[7] Interview with Blue Cross participant who had recently started ECOR programme (Udo) Interview with man recently released from prison (Joachim) Focus group discussion with prisoners at Brandenburg Prison Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) and evaluation (x1) questionnaires distributed at Time 1 (July 2015) Brandenburg n=9; Luckau-Duben n=7; Time 2 (Jan. 2016) Brandenburg n=8; Luckau-Duben n=4
Blue Cross staff and volunteers	Interviews with: Head of Blue Cross; ECOR staff member, Volunteer
Prison Authorities	Interview with Director, Luckau-Duben prison
Brandenburg prison Luckau-Duben prison	Observational tour Observational tour
Blue Cross publications	Research Strategy Curriculum document

Table 3.2: Data collection, Blue Cross

Recruitment

To be accepted onto the programme, Blue Cross staff emphasised the importance of men's expressed commitment to break their addiction habit, live with others, be completely honest about themselves, and to keep confidential their knowledge about other programme participants. Therefore, the men who joined the programme were already disposed to leading a life free of addiction and offending, and to accept the Blue Cross approach.

The men interviewed expressed their motivation in terms of a desire to change either for one's own sake or for the sake of others:

> I wanted to do something different because of my children.

[7] Pseudonyms are used to protect the anonymity of the participants

> I was drug and alcohol dependent and I said to myself I must change. I thought I would try it out.

This desire to change was associated with a search to understand their behaviour and to find a way to come to terms with their offence:

> The knowledge of what I had done weighed down heavily on me […]. It was important for me to understand what I had done.

> It is important for me to be dry, to be content with myself, to be happy.

The experience of the prison residential groups

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

The questionnaire responses from Blue Cross participants in Brandenburg and Luckau-Duben prisons indicated positive views overall about their experience of the programme at Time 1 and Time 2 (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4). From both prisons there was general agreement amongst participants about the warmth of the welcome they received when they joined the programme, how much they had learnt, and about levels of support, privacy, safety, and control within the prison. There were lower, more variable ratings between Time 1 and Time 2 of the atmosphere on the residential wings, peer relations, and the respect with which they felt their suggestions were noted; also at Luckau-Duben participant stress levels.

Figure 3.3: Brandenberg participants' experience at Time 1 & Time 2

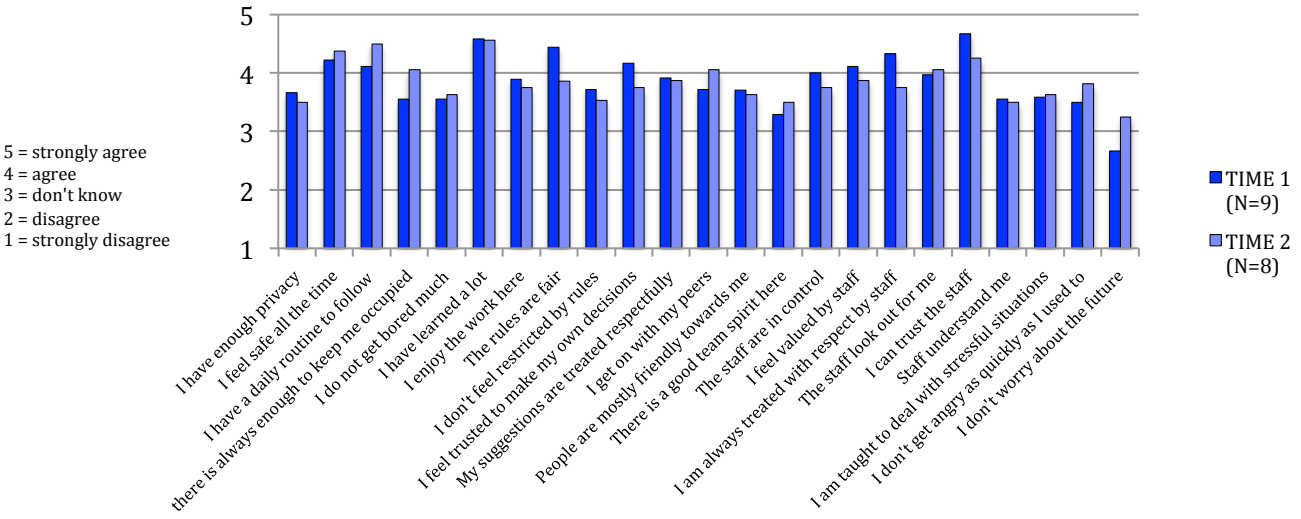
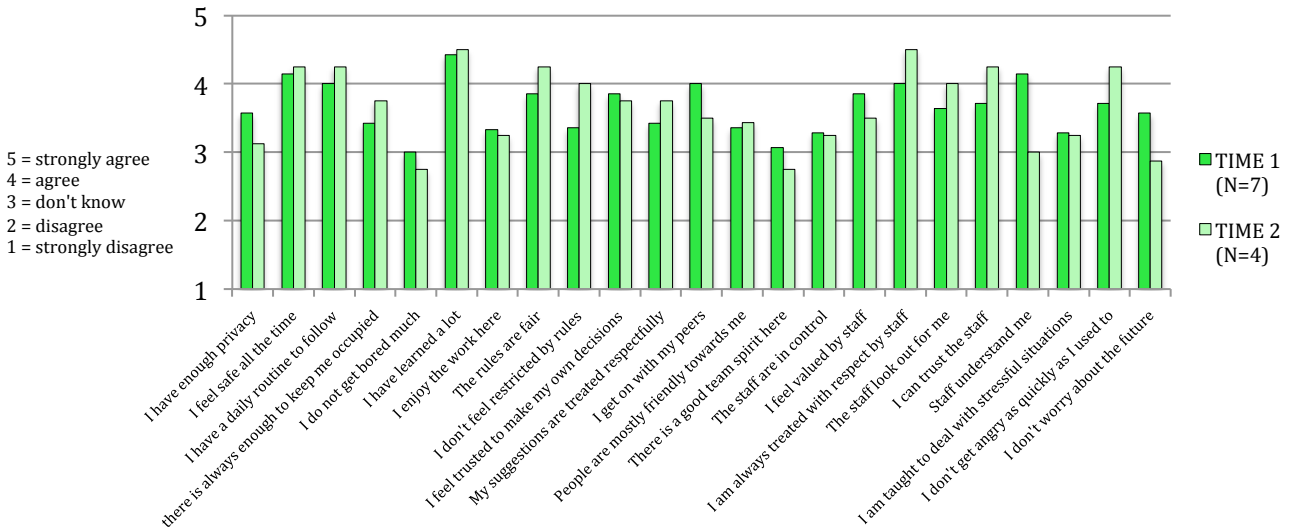


Figure 3.4: Lukau-Duben participants' experience at Time 1 & Time 2



Nevertheless, the men's evaluation of the programmes at both prisons (Figures 3.5 and 3.6) confirmed their generally positive perceptions of the ECOR initiative. All agreed or strongly agreed that the programme was good overall. The men in both groups agreed that they felt more in control of their lives and that the course had helped them to deal with their problems. They identified some uncertainty about the future and employment prospects which suggests a realistic perspective of the challenges they will face on leaving the protected environment of the Blue Cross prison wing.

Figure 3.5: Brandenberg participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=8)

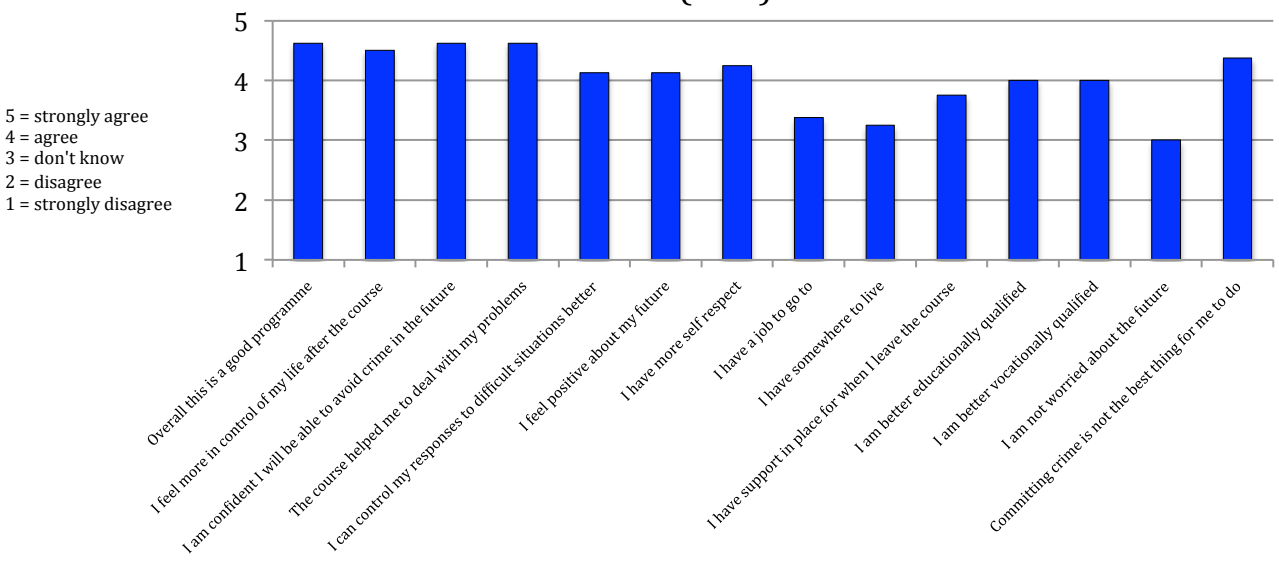
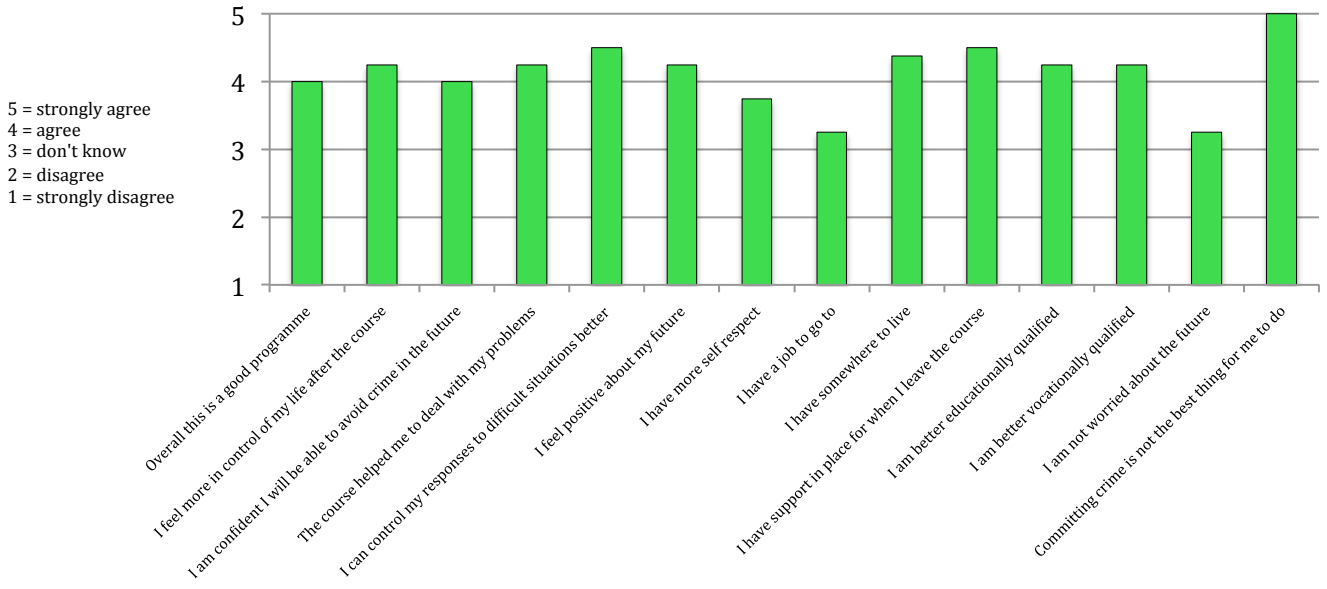


Figure 3.6: Lukau-Duben participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=4)



INTERVIEW DATA

Our interviews with participants added qualitative insights into the experience of the Blue Cross programmes. Tobias had completed seven years of a twelve year sentence and was now in open prison. He had spent two years and three months on the Blue Cross wing at Brandenburg prison. He described the programme as "hard but warm-hearted". He said the experience of participating was personally challenging but he was continuously supported by others, "It can be dispiriting, but everyone is pulled and pushed along the way […]".

Part of the challenge was about being honest and thereby showing oneself to be vulnerable. Udo, a recent participant of the programme in the closed prison acknowledged, "It was hard to talk about your feelings. In the rest of prison you cannot show feelings otherwise you are seen to be weak. You have to trust the others and allow yourself to be seen to be vulnerable ".

The pivotal importance of individual Blue Cross leaders was emphasised by the men interviewed:

> These courses would not function without the two leaders.

Tobias said the authority of the leaders gave him confidence that he would succeed, "I knew that I would come good". In both prisons, good relationships and close liaison with prison staff were important for the successful running of the programme. For example, for some of the activities in Brandenburg prison, such as access to the library or cooking in the kitchen, the men were dependent on the prison liaison officer. If she was not available, then the activities could not take place.

However, the independence of the Blue Cross workers from the prison authorities was important as the men felt they could express their feelings openly without worrying that it might have negative consequences for their release date, "I found the opportunity to be open about my fears, to discuss the possibility of relapse was refreshing". The Blue Cross workers explained that if a prisoner spoke about the pressure of addiction to prison staff, this would be noted as a 'risk factor' for future offending and might suggest he was not ready to be released. In contrast, the Blue Cross leader said they were "pleased that they are talking about the dangers, it means they are being honest and understand the difficulties ahead".

Christian faith is fundamental to the motivation of the programme leaders and volunteers. Participants are taught Christian principles through Bible study. The Blue Cross staff consider that faith makes the process of recovery from addiction easier, but that recovery is possible without faith. It was evident that the Christian foundation to the Blue Cross work was relevant for some but not all of the participants. Udo was not religious but Tobias, as a

practising Christian, said that the religious dimension of the programme was important to him.

In terms of the content of the programme, the interviewees said they valued the Blue Cross philosophy that there was a solution to everything. It provided hope for even the most difficult of problems such as large debts accrued as a result of drug use. Such debts can be developed in prison and represent an additional obstacle for the men who will be expected to repay them on release.

The opportunity for family contact was highly regarded. As well as telephone access, the Blue Cross arranged regular visiting times for families. They came onto the wing in Brandenburg prison and to the visiting rooms in Luckau-Duben. Some participants, however, had been rejected by their families as a result of their offending. Restorative work was attempted but this could be an uncertain and lengthy process. In one case, a participant wanted to reconcile with his mother. He first made contact with his sister and she came to the family meetings at the prison. He then asked how his mother was and had the opportunity to talk to his mother on the telephone. In another case, the family were still not ready to make contact:

> He had lost everything and his children wanted nothing to do with him. He wrote to his son but he did not want to have contact. We will try again in a couple of years
>
> (Blue Cross worker).

The experience of living closely with others could be difficult:

> The hardest thing is that everyone has different interests, sentences, backgrounds. You have to get used to everyone.
>
> (programme participant)

There could be tensions amongst men over the upkeep of the residential area but "you can't avoid others, they are always there so you have to find a

solution". However communal living was seen as part of the process of recovery, participants had to learn to get on with others, "It is difficult to learn together. I am training for the outside […] if I can get on with people in here, then [...] I can learn to solve problems with others". Peer support was also significant:

> I have learnt that not all men are horrible. I have learnt to have empathy. I can trust others
>
> (programme participant).

Ultimately, however, the men interviewed were clear that they had to be the author of their own solutions, "I realise that I have to solve the problems myself […] the group help but everyone must simply do it themselves." Participants had a clear perception that change was a gradual and lengthy process:

> It's a 10 year long project – I was an alcoholic for 15 years, it takes a while to get out of that.
>
> (programme participant)

The men's future aspirations were linked to staying free from addiction, "I hope to be a happy dry alcoholic in five years and in ten years too. I feel I can achieve that". Their vision of the future was of being socially accepted and integrated with a partner, family, home, and job. Tobias was contemplating setting up a Blue-Cross self-help group in the community for working executives and managers. Some knew their family would support them on release. Others were aware that they would need external help finding accommodation and employment.

The experience of Blue Cross support after release from prison

At the time of the evaluation, in addition to the follow-up support the Blue Cross was providing to Tobias in the open prison, Blue Cross workers were

also helping Joachim, who had been released from Luckau-Duben prison seven months previously. Joachim had left home at the age of 15 and his relationships with his family were strained. He recognised that he needed to be somewhere "where I could get help" post-release and moved to an area close to the Blue Cross staff.

Both Tobias and Joachim talked about the stress of establishing a life in the community. The first two weeks were particularly difficult for Joachim, "it is quite difficult to stand on your own two feet". He did not have much money and he said it was difficult to find a job as he had had no training. He had a relapse after he was released but had subsequently been more active about seeking help, "I can go to people, talk to them about problems". The Blue Cross had assisted him to find a flat and to get a job as a waiter in a local pub. He worked during the week and every other weekend. The employer knew of Joachim's past, which was important as one day a woman he had known prior to his prison sentence entered the pub. As Joachim noted, "the past can always catch up with you".

As well as accommodation and employment, the Blue Cross helped Joachim to establish a regular routine and lifestyle. He began work in the afternoon and, at first, he struggled during the mornings as he had been used to rising early in prison and did not know how to occupy himself. He was invited to join members of the local church community, who met early every morning, to do some practical tasks.

The Blue Cross workers were the first people Joachim would call when he got into difficulties or when he did not know how to do something such as ironing. They provided emotional support, for instance; going with him to a family funeral; or practical advice such as what to do when he locked himself out of his flat. They encouraged him to him to keep pets, 3 birds and a cat, for companionship when he was at home. Without their support, Joachim

thought he would not have been able to establish a new life, away from the 'false friends' of the past:

> I believe if it were not for the Blue Cross I would be back in my old world […] it was important not to go back there.'

In marked contrast to the monthly contact with probation services, Joachim was in contact with Blue Cross workers every day or every other day, "when I notice that I am alone". The support he received from the Blue Cross workers was unconditional and would continue until Joachim felt he no longer needed it.

The Blue Cross and the criminal justice system in the state of Brandenburg

Leadership of the Blue Cross programme is critical to its effective implementation. The head of the Blue Cross in Brandenburg state has developed a national reputation for successful work with addicts and has established a long and trusting relationship with the Brandenburg Ministry of Justice. He is held in high regard by the prison authorities and, most importantly, amongst the men who participate in the programme.

The effectiveness of the Blue Cross programme depends in no small part on supportive infrastructures within the prison and the community. For example, the Blue Cross programme is enshrined in legislation in Brandenburg so that it retains some level of permanency and stability despite changing prison directors. The support of authorities, from the senior officials in the Ministry of Justice to the prison directors allowing the programme to be run in their prison, and the prison officers working on the ground, are all essential to the successful operation of the Blue Cross programme. It takes time to build and maintain a trusting relationship with those in authority and for the authorities to accept the confidentiality of the discussions between Blue Cross workers and programme participants. In Brandenburg prison the

Blue Cross has had a presence over 24 years**.** They have worked in Luckau-Duben prison for 10 years.

The synergy between the Blue Cross philosophy and the state policy and approach to working with offenders is also critical to the programme. Brandenburg state penal system is oriented around a treatment model which suits the Blue Cross approach. This is evident at Luckau-Duben prison where the Blue Cross programme is part of the broader vision of the prison director. A psychologist by training, he has facilitated the establishment of three in prison 'community groups' of which one is the Blue Cross addiction programme. The other two programmes work with violent offenders and men on life sentences. Prisoners have to demonstrate motivation to change in order to join any of these community groups who live on dedicated wings with their doors open at all times. In contrast, those who do not put themselves forward remain in their cells for longer periods. The value of communal living, according to the prison director is the opportunity for discussion:

> We noticed that the prisoners in the community groups talked about the discussions they had with each other afterwards, but when they lived separately, they went back to their cells, and there wasn't the same discussion.

The co-operation of prison staff is also important for the effective implementation of the programme. Prison officer attitudes towards prisoners may be different within the prison staff and some have been cautious about the alternative approach of the Blue Cross. In Brandenburg families are allowed onto the wing. In Luckau-Duben prison staff were concerned about the risks involved and so the men go to the visiting area to meet their families. The Blue Cross staff have keys to move around Luckau-Duben prison. They are currently negotiating for permission to carry prison officer 'phones. They would then be able to receive telephone calls from outside, thereby providing

continuous support for Blue Cross participants in the community when they are inside the prison.

Summary

The Blue Cross approach has strong resonances with the APAC model. It is a faith-based programme that operates in prison and after release. It establishes a community of people who have pledged to address their addiction. It requires commitment to participate and perseverance to continue; to live and work through personal challenges with others. The Blue Cross organisation is primarily staffed by volunteers who visit participants in prison and deliver group sessions or faith-based activities. This is similar to the APAC concept of 'recuperandos' where programme participants are viewed as people 'recovering' from addiction. It aims to strengthen or re-establish participants' relationships with their families and provides ongoing support following release from prison.

The Blue Cross methodology contrasts with the APAC approach because participants do not earn their way to a higher status in comparison to their peers. Although there is assessment of progress, there is no hierarchical division based on compliant behaviour amongst the participants. The programme does not specifically address work skills, education, or healthcare as the prisons provide these.

In assessing the effectiveness of the Blue Cross programme, it is important to consider the extent to which its approach aligns with theories of desistance and of restorative justice, and, practically, how the management and resourcing of the programme ensures its successful implementation.

Theoretically, there is much that is similar between the Blue Cross approach and knowledge about desistance; it helps to build social capital, encourages a sense of personal agency, and provides opportunities for restoration and 'generativity'. Desistance theories emphasise the importance of social capital

(see for example, Farrall, 2002) for pathways out of offending. Social networks generate the social bonds that facilitate social integration, they open up practical opportunities for people to find accommodation and employment, and provide emotional support during times of difficulty. For many people leaving prison their families provide this form of support (Lösel et al, 2012). The Blue Cross programme helps participants to restore their existing support and social networks and in some cases aids them to cultivate completely new community ties.

The effectiveness of the Blue Cross ECOR programme depends on a completely honest and trusting relationship between the participant and the Blue Cross workers. The programme structure, with its combined in-prison and after-release support, enables the development of such long-term trusting relationships. The focus of this support on helping individuals to sustain an independent lifestyle, and the insistence in the Blue Cross approach on the individual taking personal responsibility for their future lifestyle, aligns with narrative theories of desistance. These identify the importance of a sense of personal agency, and the related concepts of 'self-mastery', ' personal achievement', and 'empowerment', in establishing a lifestyle free from offending.

The emphasis on restoring relationships and repairing harm is an equally important aspect of the Blue Cross model. These are important opportunities for 'generativity', for participants to 'make good' (Maruna, 2001) the harm they have caused by helping others both in prison and in community self-help groups. Blue Cross work with participants' families potentially makes an important contribution to the process of restoring the harm to immediate family members caused by their addiction and offending.

Nevertheless, there are some systemic barriers to establishing a new lifestyle that Blue Cross participants face. As noted above, prisoners are wary of disclosing to prison authorities the personal challenges they encounter in

breaking their addiction from fear that they will not be considered ready for release. Similarly, if a prisoner has no family support, this is counted as a 'risk factor' for future offending as the prisoner may declare himself homeless on release. A man's progression towards release may be delayed if the prison authority has such concerns. Therefore, official acknowledgement of the Blue Cross programme's competency and the sufficiency of its alternative support in the community are critical in such cases.

Having no driving licence can hamper the search for employment in the community. Many employers in Germany require their employees to hold a driving licence, but former addicts must prove that they are clean for a year after release from prison before they can obtain one. Learning to drive is an expensive process and the theory exam may only be taken three times before having to pay for more lessons to re-take it. There is currently no training provided by prison or probation authorities for the driving theory examination so this is something the Blue Cross participants must achieve alone.

The effectiveness of the Blue Cross work after prison is also dependent on the active support of local communities. The willingness of employers and local social groups to accept the Blue Cross participants is critical for their eventual social integration. The organisation has been highly effective at developing links with local employers and local church groups who provide opportunities and social support for the Blue Cross participants after release from prison.

Any measure of the Blue Cross programme's impact should consider its individualised approach and the breadth of its remit. That is, the extent to which it helps participants break their addictive habits and re-integrate with their families and broader society after release from prison. It ought also to acknowledge the variation in the support types offered by the Blue Cross, depending on people's personal circumstances. Although all participants take

part in group activities and receive mentoring support both in prison and after release, the nature and length of support provided is tailored to individual need. Tobias, for example, will be provided accommodation by his family on his release, whereas Joachim needed help to find his.

Breaking a habit of addiction is a long-term process, which may involve relapses and may vary in length according to the individual. This poses challenges for any measurement of success as the Blue Cross leader explains:

> How do you know when someone has successfully conquered their addition? If someone has a relapse after five years, do you discount the first 4 years that the person stayed clean? We say success is every day that someone is clean.

Therefore, it may be more useful to think in terms of short, intermediate, and long-term indicators of success. Short-term measures include participation in the programme, disclosing one's problems and feelings, and making progress on the prison course. Medium term goals concern the restoration of family relationships, establishment of community support networks, and developing skills for independent living. The long-term goal is full re-integration into society and an alcohol/drug free life-style.

PROGRESS ON THE PRISON PROGRAMMES

A stated desire to change is a pre-requisite for joining the Blue Cross programme. Therefore, those men who participate in the programme have already indicated their potential to succeed on it. Hence, they are a select sub-group of prisoners, with addiction related offending, who have arguably taken 'the first step' towards a life free from addiction prior to joining. Nonetheless, the programme is extremely challenging and the communal approach does not suit everyone. The programme managers' view is that of every ten people who attend the course, three clearly change, the progress of four is uncertain, and three do not succeed.

PROGRESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Blue Cross aftercare support is still at a very early stage. Nevertheless, Joachim's story is informative. The Blue Cross is providing an intensity of support that probation services cannot offer. It is consistent, unconditional, and focused on helping him to be self-sufficient. This is work in progress. Joachim makes clear that his success in the first seven months after release, in establishing and maintaining his new lifestyle, is due to the help he has received from the Blue Cross. The support to maintain this lifestyle and the work to repair his family relationships is on-going.

Since the ECOR funding has been provided, eight participants have been released from closed prison conditions. In addition to Tobias, in the open prison, and Joachim, who is receiving the aftercare support, three others have moved away, either with their families or to new cities for a fresh start. Two are no longer in contact and one has returned to addiction therapy.

There are no formal follow-up data for Blue Cross programme completers; of whom there are approximately 50 to date. Information about past participants comes from community reunions and informal contacts. Ten men keep in fairly regular contact and have not gone back into prison nor have they had relapses with drugs or alcohol. There are a further five men the Blue Cross leaders hear about from time to time. The others are not in contact.

The ECOR funded work of the Blue Cross is still in its early stages. A full-time employee is now in place supported by volunteer workers. The long-term vision for aftercare provision involves setting up accommodation and communities with support from the local government. This evaluation has identified promising results from the existing aftercare provision. To understand more fully the long-term impact of the programme, a longitudinal study, which followed men through their time on the course and afterwards,

would be useful. We also recommend a systematic means of collecting data on those who have completed the prison programmes.

3.3 Germany: Seehaus e.V

Seehaus site, Leonberg

Introduction

The Seehaus at Leonberg is a residential community that provides a 'free' form of detention ('juvenile prison in free forms') for up to 15 young men with custodial sentences. The state of Baden–Württemberg, with its openly Christian orientation, is a receptive context for the Seehaus and the community is one of two value-based projects that are supported by the state Ministry of Justice.

The Seehaus community is structured around family living. Young men live together with a resident family during their stay. As well as a full programme of educational, vocational, personal development, pastoral, sporting, and social activities, they participate in the upkeep and daily tasks involved in running the community. There is a hierarchical system of rewards and sanctions linked to assessments of young people's progress during their stay.[8]

[8] For a full description of the Seehaus programme please see the ECOR Groundwork Report, Wilson & Lanskey, 2015.

The Seehaus is run by a core of salaried staff, house parents, teachers, and social workers, who are supported by about 90 volunteers. Some volunteer posts are offered as internships to young students. The role of house parents is particularly intensive. Although the young men sleep in their own quarters away from the family, they spend time during the day with the house parents and their children and eat all their meals together. The house parents offer support and guidance and are involved in monitoring and assessing the young person's contribution to the community.

During the week, a typical day runs from 6.30am to 10.00pm; the regime is relaxed a little at weekends with later starts and finishes to the day. The range of activities available depends to some extent on the young person's offence and on their level within the merit and reward system. For example, if a young person's offending was related to an addiction they would be required to attend the Addiction group, whereas others would have the choice whether or not to attend. Similarly, all young people are required to attend all the vocational training at the beginning of their stay. As they progress through the merit system they can chose which vocational training they receive.

The six-level merit system is a key feature of the Seehaus community. It determines the activities a young person takes part in, the extent of their contact with their families, and their ability to contribute to the decisions within the community. It also gives some young people responsibility over others. Young people's behaviour is assessed daily in all their activities; in their work, school, sport, and contribution to circle discussions. The criteria for assessment include punctuality, respect for rules, social behaviour, motivation, pace and quality of work, cleanliness, independent working, collaboration, and quality of homework. These assessments are used in decisions about progression within the hierarchy, which are taken by staff and young people at the highest level of merit. Communication of progress is

mostly conducted through individual conversations with the houseparent. The young people have a copy of their individual development plan and review their progress with their houseparent.

With the ECOR funding, the Seehaus has extended its recruitment work in local prisons and set up an addiction self-help group within the Seehaus community. These activities are integral to the whole Seehaus programme.

This evaluation considers the overall experience of young people in the Seehaus of which these new and extended activities form a part. It describes the key features of the Seehaus community and regime through the eyes of the young people and staff interviewed as a part of the research.

Data collection

The Seehaus site visit took place between July 23rd and 24th 2015. At that time there were 7 young men on the ECOR enhanced Seehaus programme ranging in age from 17 to 22 years. Qualitative and quantitative data on the work of the community were collected via interviews and questionnaires to the ECOR cohort of young people, interviews and informal conversations with Seehaus staff and volunteers, participant observations of the life at the Seehaus, documentary analysis of Seehaus publications, and an interview with a senior official responsible for juvenile prisons within the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Justice (see table 3.3). These data are presented collectively in the following description of the recruitment and implementation processes of the programme and a discussion of its effectiveness and impact.

Young people resident at the Seehaus	Interviews with 5 out of the 7 young people. Self-perception (x1) programme experience (x1) and evaluation questionnaires (x1) distributed at Time 1 (June 2015) completed by 6 of the 7 young people.
Seehaus staff and volunteers	Interviews with one house parent and former prison volunteer Participant observations of interactions between young people and staff at one mealtime. Informal conversations with leader of addiction group Tour of Seehaus site and interview with Director of Seehaus.
Seehaus publications	Documentary analysis of Seehaus publications detailing curriculum, aims and objectives of the programme.
Baden –Württemberg Ministry of Justice	Interview with ministry official with responsibility for Seehaus.

Table 3.3: Data Collection at the Seehaus

Recruitment to the Seehaus

The Seehaus programme is open to all young males sentenced to custody; ideally for at least a year (so that their stay long enough to make it worthwhile) and who are not convicted of a serious offence such as murder or a sexual offence (which might present a risk to others in the community).

Seehaus volunteers run social activities such as table tennis in two remand prisons for juveniles. During the visits the volunteers hand out leaflets and talk to young people about the Seehaus as an alternative place of residence during their custodial sentence. Staff visit the main juvenile prison in Adelsheim every week to introduce the programme to all newcomers who might be eligible. Prison staff may also suggest young people who might be interested. Initially, there is a discussion with a Seehaus representative who asks the young person about their motivation to join the Seehaus and what they want to achieve there. If the young person seems eligible for Seehaus, a request is made to the prison staff and subsequently to the prison governor for a transfer.

MOTIVATIONS TO JOIN

Seehaus interviewees said they became aware of the programme through meeting the Seehaus volunteers in prison or seeing a film about the Seehaus on the television. One young person saw a friend on the television programme and was encouraged to apply. They expressed a range of motivations for joining the programme, such as to be closer to family or girlfriends, or to be in a community that offered them a better chance to progress in their lives. Several young men saw the Seehaus as a means to escape the difficult environment in the juvenile prison. They did not want to be part of that culture of fighting and aggression:

> There is a dominant subculture which encourages you to become more criminal.
>
> (programme participant)

They felt that the provision of care was inadequate:

> I was in pain one day and asked to see the doctor. It was on a Friday and I was told I had to wait until Monday.
>
> (programme participant)

The prospect of an environment that was structured, that offered a chance for change, and that provided better vocational training than the prison were further reasons given for the decision to apply. For some of these young men, family and friends outside were also an important consideration. The location of Seehaus enabled them to be closer to the people they cared about outside. Likewise, they were aware that their families worried less about them being at the Seehaus than in prison and the opportunities at the Seehaus provided them with a means "to make my family proud".

Seehaus community life

On arrival at the Seehaus, a young person is allocated to a family group (which includes the house family and other young people) and given a

personalised programme of activities. They are allocated a mentor, a more senior member of the young people's hierarchy, who shows them around, offers advice, and monitors their actions. Several young men described their arrival at the Seehaus as overwhelming. They appreciated the contrast to the prison they had come from, the visible absence of security such as no bars on the windows, and the physical freedom they had to move around. Some mentioned culture shock as it was different from anything they had ever experienced before:

> 'When I arrived there was a sign which had 'Welcome Peter' on it. I thought 'what is happening?' I had never been welcomed anywhere before'
>
> (programme participant).

The friendliness and humanity of the community and the family-oriented living was striking, "I was a person in a family not a number like in prison".

Young men's relationships within the community were fundamental to how well they integrated. Some developed good friendships with the other young people and found their mutual support helpful, "When someone has a problem they mention it and the others discuss it and offer advice" but there could be tensions, "There are some differences amongst the group [...] some who are not honest, who only look after themselves".

The young people's views of volunteers and staff on the site were largely positive. They were impressed by the level of support they received from some:

> I have never met anyone who has so much time for you. When you have a problem he looks out how to help, he suggests what to do
>
> (programme participant).

The expertise of volunteers and staff was important. Some young people found it easier to talk to certain people more than others and they appreciated

those staff they thought took time to understand their perspective; people who were not only caring in their approach but were expert at handling conflict, "The best people deal directly with the problem, and give tips, like a 'best friend.'"

The regime was described as 'heavy', 'hard', 'tiring', and 'requiring endurance' by the participants in the study. Some also found the lack of private space challenging. Seehaus staff said that the regime was designed to be intensive so that full advantage was taken of the young people's time in the community. This assisted young people to become used to the demands of a working lifestyle and also promoted sleep at the end of the day. Not all young men who start at the Seehaus remain there for the duration of their sentence. Without high levels of motivation, stamina, and acceptance of the community rules, they may be returned to the prison:

> One young person didn't co-operate, he did nothing we said to him. For him the life was too strenuous [...] he kept oversleeping. He had no motivation and went back
>
> (Seehaus staff member)

The ministerial official noted that, from a political perspective, it was considered useful that the regime was experienced as hard, this avoided potential criticisms that young people were receiving a 'soft' custodial sentence.

Curriculum

RESTORATIVE DISCUSSIONS

Every week there is a youth circle, a restorative discussion held by the houseparent. These are one-to-one restorative conversations that attempt to engage the young person directly with their offence, "I approach the discussions from a personal perspective: 'how would you feel if it was your sister affected?'" (houseparent). There are also weekly Seehaus circles; group sessions with all the participants and staff. These are described as more

confrontational in tone. In these discussion sessions individual young people describe their former lifestyles including their offending behaviour and receive reactions, comments, and advice from others in the group. The young people rated these group and individual restorative sessions highly. The survey evaluation completed by 6 of the 7 young men on the programme at the time rated them on average as 4 out of 5.

ADDICTION COUNSELLING

The newly established addiction counselling group is run by a member of the Blue Cross organisation, which has expertise in supporting people out of drug or alcohol addiction. The staff group leader, who has personal experience of overcoming addiction, spoke of the importance of addressing the person's addiction as their offending is likely to be related to it. The approach is similar to that adopted in the restorative groups. The group leader talked about the need for 'tough love'; an approach that challenges people about their lifestyle. Young people who attended the drug addiction group spoke positively in their interviews about this programme component.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The Christian element of the community was received more readily by some participants than others. Several said that they had a Christian background even if they were not practising Christians themselves and were comfortable with the Christian principles on which the community was run. There were others who said they found the religious element 'a bit too much'. They thought that that there was scope for recognising and celebrating the strengths of other cultures and religions more. Although young people could choose whether or not to attend the religious activities and to take part in classes on ethics instead, some young men indicated their reluctance to miss the social dimension of the religious activities.

CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE'S FAMILIES

For many of the young men in the study, contact with their families and/or friends was highly important. The further up the merit system a young person was, the greater the level and freedom of contact they could have. Some expressed a wish for more opportunities for contact with family and friends during the early stages of the programme (when they were by default on the lower levels of the merit system) so that close relationships could be maintained. Staff were aware of the young peoples' views, "some don't like it because they don't have as much opportunity to telephone" (houseparent). Staff stated the need to balance outside contact with opportunities to establish relationships with people in the Seehaus community.

The young people's family involvement was an important component of the planning for their release. A social worker from the Seehaus visits the family 1 or 2 times during a young person's residency and family members are invited to take part in 'release circles' as a young man approaches the end of their stay. This combined support from family, friends, and Seehaus staff could work well. The vocational training at the Seehaus had enabled one young man to secure an apprenticeship that his friend had found for him.

Assessment

MERIT SYSTEM

Young people in the upper levels of the hierarchy and those new to the community accepted the system better than those who had been there for a while but had not progressed as much as they had hoped. Within the first group, there were aspirations to move up the hierarchy and to gain more freedoms particularly for family contact. In the more disillusioned group, some had become dispirited and had given up trying to progress further, "I could only get so far with the system […]. I knew I would never get further". They also said it could be difficult to accept the authority of people they did not get on with although a couple of young people presented this as a

learning point, "I've learned respect for people that I do not like". These comments reflect the view of the Seehaus management who argued that it was beneficial for young people to learn how to accept authority from those they viewed as more inexperienced as this was a situation they would likely encounter when they started work. When discussing what they would change about the Seehaus the young peoples' suggestions included a more democratic structure so that "everyone has a say in the decision making" rather than solely those in the higher merit levels.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The regular assessments of the young person's behaviour and participation in community activities linked to the merit system could be indicators of a young person's personal development; hard work, punctuality, and team work were all cited as evidence of a young person's progress. Other indicators of progress were discussed in terms of visible expressions of remorse, 'tears' in circle discussions, questions such as 'what can I do?', ' how can I make things different?'.

The young men spoke of their progress at the Seehaus in terms of their personal learning and the development of academic/vocational knowledge. The quantitative data confirm (see Figure 3.7) that the young people rated the learning opportunities very highly overall. Personal learning came from organised discussion activities such as the discussion circles, but also in the day-to-day communal living with young people, staff, and volunteers eating and working together. Young people talked about learning how to deal with their own problems, and gaining a deeper understanding of their offending behaviour. They spoke of learning how to be patient, how to take on personal responsibility, how to manage their anger, and how to deal with conflict.

The young people clearly valued the education provision provided at the Seehaus. Several had dropped out from school and the Seehaus provided an opportunity to complete their education. They spoke very positively about

the vocational training they received even if they did not necessarily intend to pursue a career in the field. Some found the practical teaching of abstract subjects such as Maths particularly helpful and spoke highly of their teachers, "I have so much to thank them for." Some had developed close relationships that they envisaged would outlast their stay at the Seehaus, "My teachers have said I can always drop in, make something for myself as a hobby."

Two young men who were due to leave the programme shortly, spoke of the help they had received from their Seehaus families in finding and applying for jobs. One young man contrasted the support from the Seehaus with the disinterested and unsympathetic support he experienced from the state probation service.

The Seehaus provides a wide variety of aftercare for the young men when they leave the site. Some have only loose contact with staff and volunteers, others having regular meetings with aftercare staff, and others live in one of the two aftercare communities that have been established. These communities provide longer term support for those who need it.

Young People's Experience of the Programme

Figures 3.7 and 3.8 below show the young people's collective responses to the Seehaus programme. The data show that the young people at the Seehaus are very positive about their learning, safety and, the caring approach of staff. As the qualitative data also indicate, they were less content with the levels of privacy they have and their relationships with other young people. Nevertheless the young people's evaluation of the programme content aligns with their overall positive views of the learning experience at the Seehaus and their generally optimistic views about the future.

Figure 3.7: Seehaus particpants' experience at Time 1 (N=6)

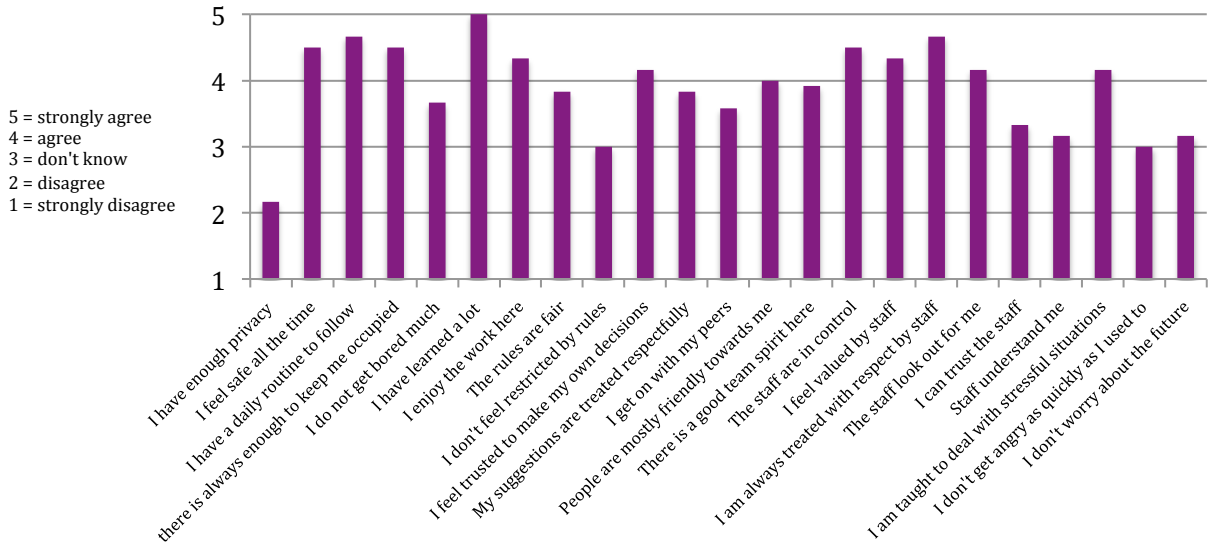
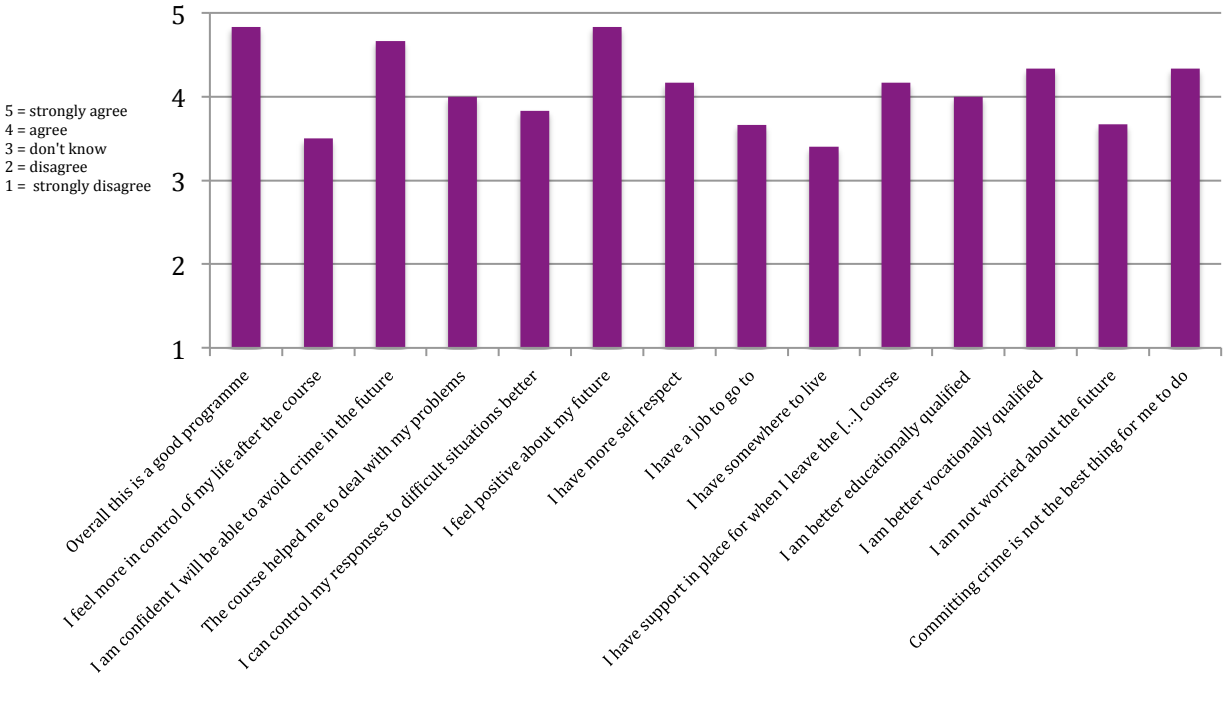


Figure 3.8: Seehaus participants' evaluation of programme at Time 1 (N=6)



The Seehaus and the Youth Justice system in Baden-Württemberg

The close working relationship between the Seehaus director and the Ministry of Justice has been established over the past 15 years. The ministry official with responsibility for these projects has a professional and academic interest in alternatives to detention for young people. The original decision in 2003 to support the two projects was viewed as politically 'courageous' because there was not much public will at that time to reform youth detention. However, the theoretical argument for such value-driven communities was considered to be strong because if someone lives by the values of all the main religions they will be less likely to offend; ''offending always has something to do with values" (Ministry official).

The financial support from the Ministry covers the project running costs as well as contributing a payment for each young person who attends. This financial strategy ensures that the quality of Seehaus provision is not affected by fluctuations in the resident population. The close working relationship between the Seehaus and the Ministry ensures the successful working of the programme.

Summary

The Seehaus is a well-established example of the APAC model in Europe. It has applied the APAC principles of community, family, and education to the German youth justice context. It is the only ECOR project that works with young people and it is salient to consider age-specific issues in the application of the APAC model. The Seehaus programme differs in two principle ways from the original Brazilian approach. First, its training and education programme is directly oriented towards gaining vocational qualifications that will prepare young people for further study or apprenticeships in Germany. There is an established vocational pathway in the German education system

and the Seehaus vocational training programme offers a route to re/enter that pathway. The second difference is that young people join a family within an established community rather than living independently together and regulating themselves. The upper levels of the hierarchical reward system, however, offer the possibility of contributing to communal decision-making although the adults retain overall control. There are traces of the German protestant work ethic in the Seehaus model, with its demanding programme of work, sport, and leisure. Additionally, as with many of the ECOR projects, Foucauldian disciplinary techniques of internalisation that aim to instil self-discipline and community's values (Foucault, 1977) can be detected.

In evaluating the Seehaus model we consider both its function as a form of detention as well as its contribution to the desistance of individual young people. It offers an alternative form of detention which is more humane, principled, and dignified than many state forms of young people's incarceration. Set alongside more traditional forms of youth detention within Germany and across Europe, the Seehaus approach is radically different. Hancock & Jewkes (2011) amongst others have noted the importance of the physical environment for well-being and for the indirect messages conveyed about the institutional concern for those who have to live and work there. The open site of the Seehaus, with its notable absence of external security, its modern and traditional buildings, outdoor wooden sculptures, crèche and farm animals, creates the impression of a place of education rather than a place of detention, and is a physical expression of the values of trust, care, and family life on which the Seehaus community is founded.

The Seehaus is a community underpinned by a strong commitment to improving the lives of the young men who reside there. Young people are moving through a period of transition and will require different levels of guidance and space to regulate themselves in the liminal space between childhood and adulthood. The Seehaus programme may not suit everyone but the data from this evaluation suggest it represents a radical improvement

to the living conditions and learning opportunities for young people with custodial sentences in Baden-Württemberg. All the young people were clear of the benefits of the programme in comparison to their previous experiences in the juvenile prison system.

The extent to which the programme is successful from the perspective of supporting the process of desistance will depend in part on the strength of affiliation the young people develop to the Seehaus community and the extent to which they internalise its core values. The qualitative and quantitative data suggest that many of the young people take on and accept these values while they are in the community. The qualitative data also indicated that there was less sense of affiliation in those young people on the lower levels of the merit/reward hierarchy and from those who struggled with the demanding nature of the programme, the intensity of communal living, and the absence of private personal spaces.

One of the limitations of the current evaluation is that while it captures the views of the young people as they experience the programme it does not capture its outcomes in the longer-term. It is therefore not possible to assess from this evaluation how these young people's experiences of the present will affect their attitudes and actions in the future. It is possible that some of the expressions of discomfort with the experience are part of the process of reintegrative shaming associated with restorative justice processes (Braithwaite, 1979) and will result in positive outcomes in the future. This signals the importance of a longer follow-up evaluation in order to identify the long-term effects of the Seehaus experience.

It is also possible that young people who are not so engaged with the community may become disaffected and leave. It is relevant therefore to reflect on their experiences to understand how they may come to feel a greater sense of inclusion. To address the potential disillusionment of young people at the lower end of the community hierarchy, it may be useful to

consider whether there is value in separating the merit system from the process of communal decision-making so that all young people feel that their voices are being heard and acknowledged. It may also be helpful to reflect on how the religious and cultural heritage of the young people who join the community can be acknowledged and celebrated so that their cultural identity is distinguished from their criminal identity. For those young people who find it hard to adjust to the intensity of community living it may be worth reflecting on what safe, independent spaces could be created so that young people have opportunities to reflect and recoup privately.

It is important to consider too the wider social impact of the Seehaus programme's existence and its requirements for social support to integrate young people into the community. The programme provides educational opportunities for its volunteers to learn and understand the experiences and lives of young people who have been convicted of serious offences. The requests for support from outside its community convey a social message that there is a need to actively support young people leaving prison so that they can lead successful and fulfilling lives. This requires active social acceptance of young people in the form of opportunities for employment and accommodation. It also requires provision of emotional and social support recognising the hardships and traumas that many young people have previously experienced.

The Seehaus aftercare support programme is an important feature for further evaluation in the future. Data from the Seehaus since its inception show that between 2003 and 2013, 60% of young people completed the programme and 99% of those young men secured employment or a trade apprenticeship. Re-incarceration for this group has been around 25% three years after release.

Success in the recruitment to the Seehaus programme depends on sufficient numbers of eligible young men, effective publicity so that the young people are aware of its existence, and on the relationships young people have with

the Seehaus staff and volunteers they meet in prison. As well as the official support from the Baden-Württemberg ministry of justice, there needs to be active support for the programme from within the young people prisons; from the prison governors, senior and middle managers, and prison officers working on the wings. They should have sufficient knowledge of the programme, what it offers and the types of young people for whom it might be suited, and positive perceptions of its impact. The views of the young men who leave the programme early and return to prison will also have an impact.

The Seehaus community relies on full time staff and volunteers and there is a high level of commitment from those who work there. Young people valued the personal skills of some staff and volunteers who knew how best to relate to them and offer advice and guidance. Feeling that they were understood, and that others knew how to support them effectively, was influential in shaping a young person's sense of affiliation to the community. It was clearly important that volunteers and professionals alike had the skills and knowledge to be able to work with and support young people effectively during their time at the Seehaus and afterwards in the community.

The Seehaus holds a niche position within the Baden-Württemberg youth justice system. Its vocational programme complements a parallel 'juvenile prison in free form' which focuses more on academic education. The financial and political support from the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Justice and the close working relationship with ministerial officials is critical to the continuation of the community.

The Seehaus retains political support because the programme is so intensive. It appeases those critics who may see a residential community as a 'soft option' for those sentenced to custody. The Ministry of Justice does not foresee an expansion of the programme within the state of Baden-Württemberg because few young people are sent to prison and amongst those who are, there will only be some for whom the programme is relevant.

Nevertheless its contribution to the state Ministry of Justice youth justice strategy is held in high regard.

3.4 Hungary

Introduction

Prison Fellowship, Hungary (PFH), affiliated to Prison Fellowship International, is a Christian organisation that was established in 1992. PFH runs programmes for prisoners and their families in Hungary. It provides two restorative justice programmes for prisoners the 'Sycamore Tree' project and its extension 'Building Bridges'. PFH holds a Bible competition in prisons each year and also runs the 'Angel Tree' programme, a summer camp for prisoners' children.

PFH established the first APAC-based programme in 2008 in Balassagyarmat prison. It ran with 24 prisoners who lived in a separate section of the prison. They had a weekly timetable which comprised; Monday – film and discussion; Tuesday – group problem-solving discussion; Wednesday – guest speakers; Thursday: bible study and prayer; Friday: personal time; Saturday: visits twice a month. One of these was a family visit. The family visit was organised by the prison chaplain and comprised a prayer meeting, singing, and eating together. In the evenings the prisoners sang, prayed, and read the Bible together. The response to the programme was very positive. In 2010 the President of Hungary visited the APAC site and was impressed with its results; only two from 50 participants have re-offended during the past 5 years.

The Hungarian Prison Administration is, as a result, openly supportive of APAC programmes. In January 2015 the government introduced new penal legislation that emphasised the importance of rehabilitation. APAC-based programmes are seen as contributing to this rehabilitation initiative.

As a part of the ECOR project, PFH have set up two new APAC-based sites, one in Pálhalmai Mélykút women's prison and one in Tiszalöki Maximum Security Men's Prison, Emleklap.

Data collection

The observation of the ECOR programmes in Hungary took place between July 15th and July 16th 2015, three months after their start. Qualitative and quantitative data from the programmes were collected via interviews and questionnaires administered to the ECOR cohort of prisoners, interviews with prison directors, chaplains, and officers, discussions with senior officials at the Hungarian Ministry of Justice, interviews and informal conversations with PFH staff and volunteers, tours of each prison, and documentary analysis of publications on the programmes (see table 3.4). These data are presented collectively in the following evaluation.

Prisoner Interviews and Questionnaires	Interview with two women participants of APAC programme at Mélykút prison Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) and evaluation questionnaires (x1) distributed at Time 1 (July 2015) n=8; Time 2 (Feb. 2016) n=11 Interviews with two male participants of APAC programme at Tiszalöki prison Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) and evaluation questionnaires (x1) distributed at Time 1 (July 2015) n=13; Time 2 (Feb. 2016) n=15
Staff Interviews	Interview with course director at Mélykút Interview with Chaplain at Tiszalöki prison. Interviews and discussion with the two PFH co-ordinators supporting the APAC programmes
Prison Authorities Interviews	Discussions with directors Mélykút and Tiszalöki prisons Discussion with Head of Mélykút prison. Interview with Senior Prison Officer at Tiszalöki prison. Group meeting with senior officials from Hungarian Ministry of Justice.
Observations	Tour of Mélykút prison including APAC site. Tour of Tiszalöki prison including APAC site.
Documentary analysis	Mélykút APAC prison rules and timetable. Tiszalöki APAC Powerpoint presentation.

Table 3.4: Data Collection, Hungarian Evaluation

Pálhalmai Országos Büntetés-végrehaajtási Intézet, Mélykút objektum, women's prison

Overview

Mélykút women's prison is situated on a large, rural site alongside two men's prisons. It houses around 333 women and is substantially over its capacity of 160 women. The ECOR programme was introduced at the women's prison at the request of its director and the prison chaplain. The preparatory phase took place at the end of 2014 and the programme was launched in January 2015. It took nearly three months to prepare the ECOR community rooms. These are situated on the ground floor at the end of a residential block. It comprises 6 double cells and a communal living room with a table and easy chairs. There was a celebratory ceremony to open the site officially in April 2015.

Recruitment

The prison administration and prison chaplain selected the first women for the programme based on criteria recommended by PFH. "We sent them the characteristics of the ideal person for the ECOR site". The criteria specified women with the potential to succeed on the programme as having demonstrated a willingness to change, strong family links, and a clear religious orientation. The programme's Christian foundations are viewed as particularly important and two hours each day are devoted to prayer. Nine women started the programme. They were all first time offenders and had sentences of approximately four years. At the time of the evaluation visit there were twelve women on the course with a waiting-list of five. Participants have a say in who can join the programme.

Curriculum

The women on the ECOR programme live in dedicated rooms away from other prisoners. As well as the ECOR activities they participate in the routine

work activities of the prison; usually in the prison laundry. The day starts at 6.00am and the cells are opened at 7.00am. In contrast to other inmates, ECOR participants can be outside their cells at any time. There are 20 minutes for breakfast at 8.10am and lunch is between 12 and 12.30pm. Dinner is at 5pm. All their meals are served in the community room. The cells are closed for the night at 7.45pm and the electricity is turned off at 10.00 pm.

APAC activities take place following breakfast and in the afternoons between 2pm and 5pm. There is a strong religious component to the programme. The women have daily religious devotions and communal worship every Tuesday and Sunday. They may also leave the prison to attend religious events, such as Christian festivals. The women's families are also invited to a four hour-long family service of worship. The programme does not specifically involve work, education, or healthcare as these are the prison's responsibilities.

The prison director highlighted the importance of building family contact for ECOR participants:

> We implemented the ECOR site here in Pálhalmai because family relations are very important for women. Praying is not always enough. You have to run special events for the family to support the relationships between the ECOR women and their families.

Staff /Volunteers

The ECOR activities at Mélykút are run by PFH workers, the prison chaplain, and a social worker who is on the prison staff. There was training for all staff in January 2015. Staffing resources are tight as the ECOR programme is one of several run by PFH. The prison chaplain is responsible for two other prisons and lives more than 60 km from the site. PFH are planning to recruit volunteers who will regularly support the programme. There has been some voluntary input from one of the PFH Board members who is a guitar player and performed at the first APAC concert.

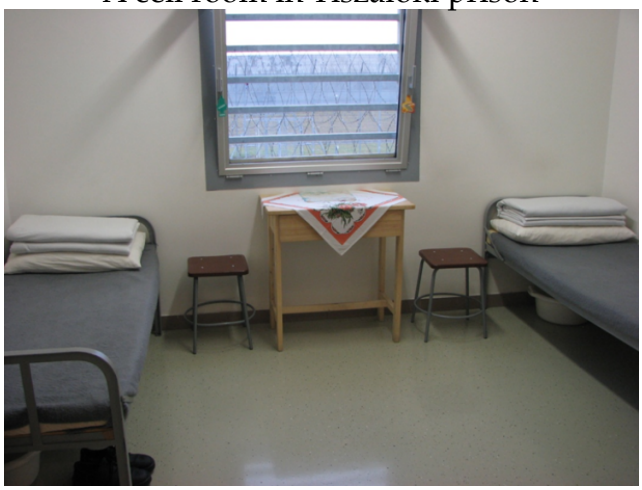
Tiszalöki - Maximum Security Prison Emleklap

Overview

The Maximum Security Prison Emleklap is situated in North-East Hungary. It is a modern prison built in 2004 as a result of a private public partnership (PPP). The contract specifies a maximum number of 770 prisoner places at any one time. Consequently, there will be no overcrowding. At the time of the visit there were 767 prisoners.

The ECOR programme was set up at the request of the prison director in January 2015. In February men moved into the ECOR wing and, after a period of acclimatisation during which the men could choose to leave, an opening ceremony was held on April 26th 2015.

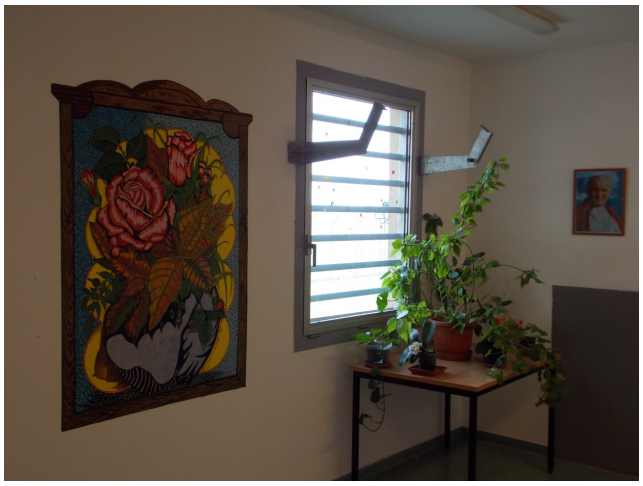
A cell room in Tiszalöki prison



At the time of the research visit 15 men were participating in the programme. They lived on a self-contained wing and living conditions were the same as in other parts of the prison. Each cell had one or two beds and a private bathroom. There were basic furnishings and a television. The men ate their meals together in a communal dining room. There were plans to establish a

kitchen where the men would cook their own meals but, at the time, they received the same food as other inmates.

The APAC/ECOR community room



Recruitment

Programme participants were selected to take part in the programme by the prison chaplain. The aim was to have first time offenders (apart from two men). Participants demonstrated a strong engagement with work and education, and had close family links. They were also assessed in relation to their religious devotion and by prison officers in terms of their overall compliance with the prison regime. Three participants were over retirement age to ensure that there was always someone older on the wing, "it is very important to have older prisoners on wing" (Prison Chaplain) There is one family in the group (a father and two sons) and one participant with high status in the gypsy community.

Curriculum

The men wake at 5.30am and usually work until 9.30am. Between 9.30am and 11.00am participants sometimes choose their own activities and on other days

take part in ECOR activities. The wing closes for lunch and in the afternoons there may be ECOR activities with volunteers and other group activities. The cells are closed at 6.30pm for the night.

Many ECOR activities are oriented around religious study. They include an English lesson in which the Bible is studied, Bible study, and musical activities such as choir singing and playing music. These activities are open to other prisoners and 15 men from other wings regularly take part. The aim is to maintain integration between ECOR prisoners and the wider prisoner community. Other activities that take place during communal times include table tennis, music, reading newspapers, reading religious books, and chess.

Strengthening family links is an important objective of the programme. ECOR participants have extra contact time with their families compared with other prisoners. Family meetings, within the context of religious ceremonies, were a feature of the prison programme prior to the ECOR course and take place in the prison theatre room. They have included art exhibitions, theatre performances, and readings from religious literature.

SPECIAL EVENTS

There have been a number of special events associated with the programme. It opened with an inter-denominational opening ceremony with local churches (Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran) represented. In December 2015 'Kursio', a three day intensive religious course focusing on inner change, took place. Released prisoners from the first APAC pilot have also visited ECOR participants to talk about their experiences.

Aftercare

The prison chaplain and PFH workers are in the process of establishing links with pastors and local church communities where prisoners will be released. Many of the families have no connections with local religious communities

and the programme aims to "help the family to step over the threshold into the church" (Chaplain). The purpose is to encourage the prisoner and his family to become part of a local church. An outside event was organised for four of the ECOR programme participants who are Roman Catholics; ninety-five visitors attended.

Programme principles

The programme emphasises the inter-relationship between personal and group responsibility. The participants must follow the prison and community rules. Group autonomy is encouraged and the ECOR participants are responsible for ensuring that everyone complies, "If someone does something that is not right, they tell him that's not how to behave" (Chaplain). The men are encouraged to use their skills in the group. One was a leather worker and is now making leather crosses. Another can read English and delivers the English Bible classes.

The programme strategy is to gradually give the men more autonomy as they demonstrate their ability to behave responsibly "drop by drop […] not to give them everything at beginning" (Chaplain) and so that the programme does not alienate the other prisoners. "We still have to set up a kitchen but we don't want to set it up yet, we don't want there to be envy from others" (Chaplain).

Staff and volunteers

The prison chaplain plays a key role in the daily running of the programme. Her office is near the entrance to the ECOR wing. It is a large room with space for a table and is used for individual pastoral care and for conflict resolution. It is also a place for ECOR residents to meet men from other prisons. PFH staff visit the ECOR programme every two weeks to deliver activities.

The prison chaplain has arranged for volunteers from local churches to visit programme participants. The three cities surrounding the prison are strong bases for the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran churches. There are currently 12 volunteers formally assisting with the programme and five who regularly attend. The volunteers work in pairs running activities, such as Bible studies, and attend religious worship every two weeks. They sometimes make specialist contributions as recently when a volunteer played the trumpet in a religious service.

Participants' Experiences of the Programmes

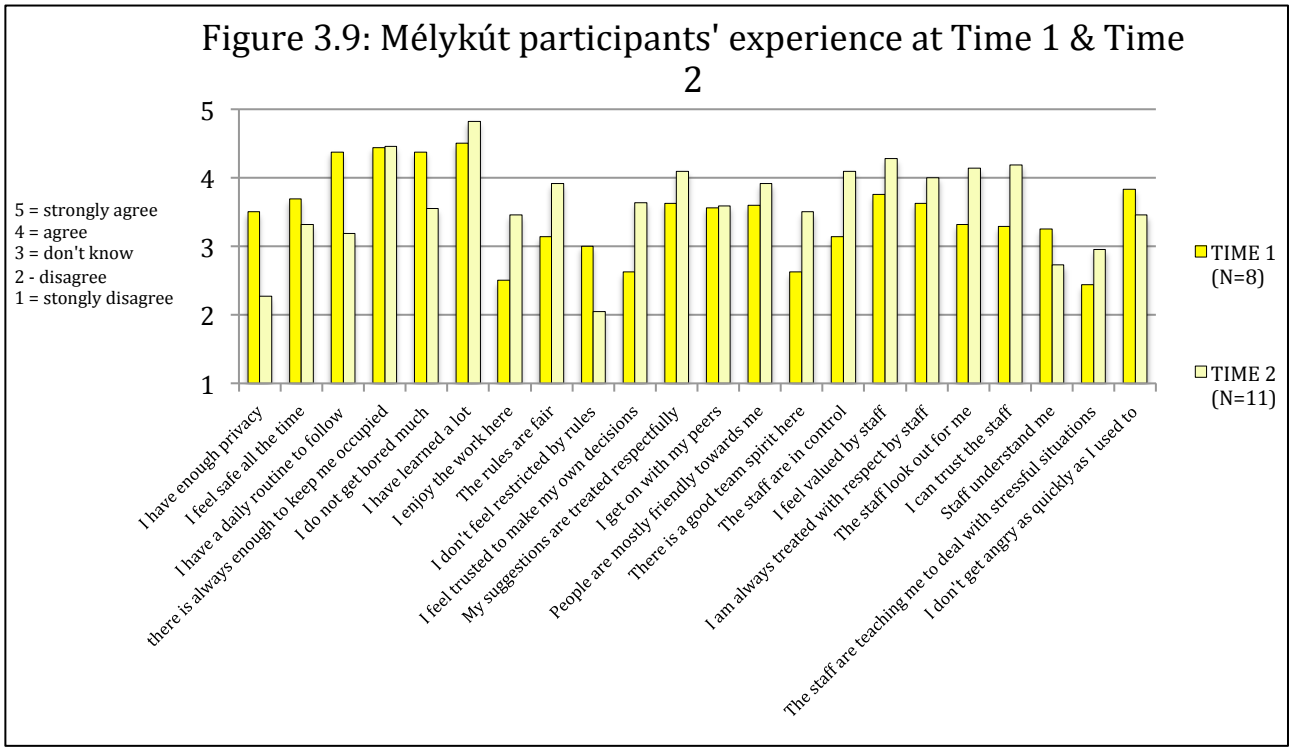
Data from participants were collected through questionnaires distributed to all programme members at two time points, July 2015 and February 2016, and through interviews with two prisoners at each prison. The qualitative and quantitative data from participants at Mélykút and Tiszalöki prisons are presented in the following sections.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

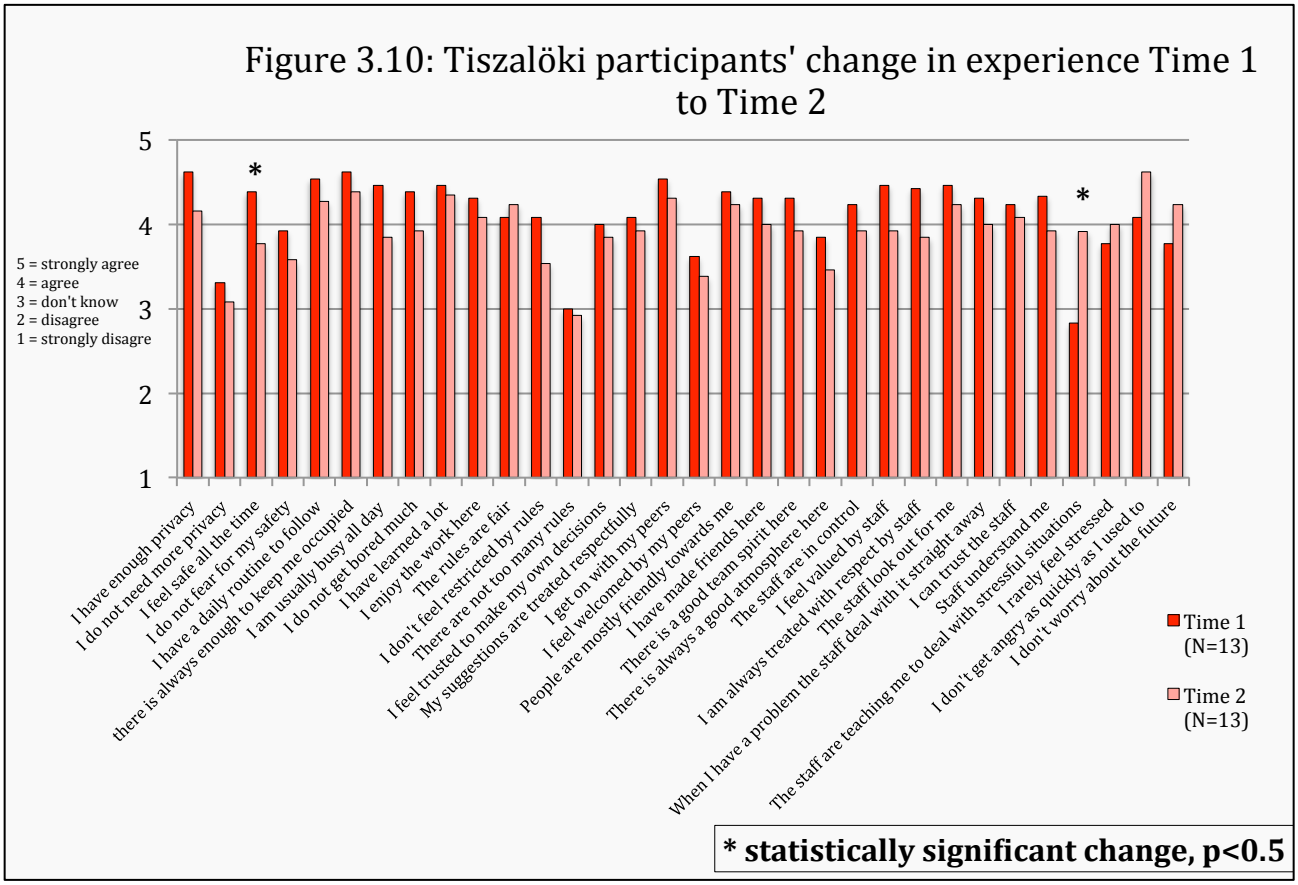
Overall the participants at each prison valued the ECOR programmes highly as Figures 3.09 and 3.10 demonstrate. Both sets of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the programme was good overall. This view was supported by the prison authorities. In both prisons ECOR participants had been given a period of two months during which they could decide whether or not to stay on the ECOR wing. No one chose to leave. 'It surprised us. We were not expecting that no one would want to leave' (Chaplain).

At Mélykút we found some indications of stress and tensions related to community living in the women's prison and there had been some turnover of participants between Time 1 and Time 2. Levels of trust were higher but there were some negative views about the lack of privacy and regulations of the programme. Research suggests that the impact of imprisonment is particularly difficult for women (see for example, Heidensohn & Gelsthorpe,

2007) and the broader conditions of overcrowding at Mélykút may have contributed to the comparatively less positive women's prison experiences. As can be seen in Figure 3.9 Mélykút participants' experience did grow more positive over time. However, we were unable to analyse these changes to assess whether they were due to programme influences because we could not be confident that respondents were the same at both Time points.



As there was an identifiable cohort of participants on the Tiszalöki programme who completed questionnaires at Time 1 and Time 2, paired T-Tests were conducted to identify any change in their levels of stigma and experience of the programme over time. There was a statistically significant drop in participants' feelings of safety, which would merit further investigation, and a significant increase in participants' learning from staff on how to deal with stressful situations. Otherwise there were few variations in the men's scores on these measures between Time 1 and Time 2 (see Figure 3.10).



In their evaluations participants on both programme expressed positive attitudes towards the staff and ECOR volunteers (see Figures 3.11 and 3.12). They were equally positive about their future prospects with regard to employment and accommodation opportunities and confident about their ability not to re-offend. Contact with families was rated as very important by ECOR programme participants. Most of the women were mothers and several of the men had children. For many the prison was situated far from their homes and families might have to travel up to 200 km for visits.

However, there were opportunities for regular telephone contact. The course administrator at the women's prison reinforced the importance of family contact for the women, "Everything comes from the family, and everything goes back to the family. If things are OK there, then the prisoner is happy with herself."

Figure 3.11: Mélykút participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=11)

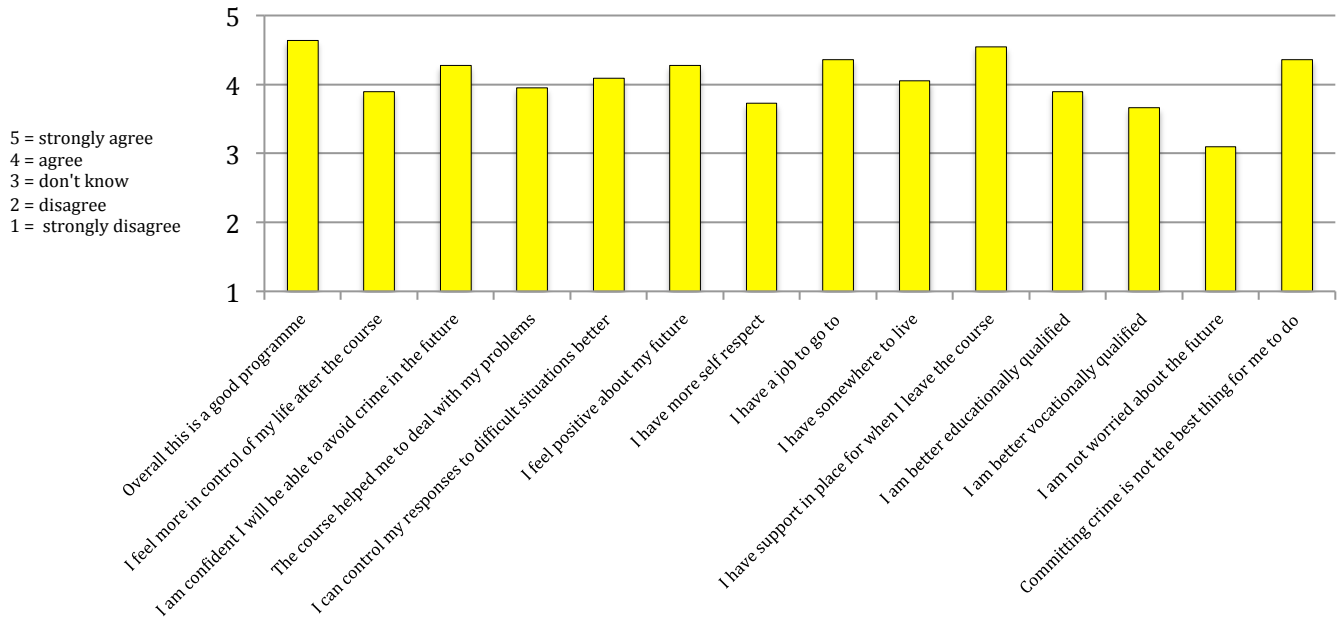
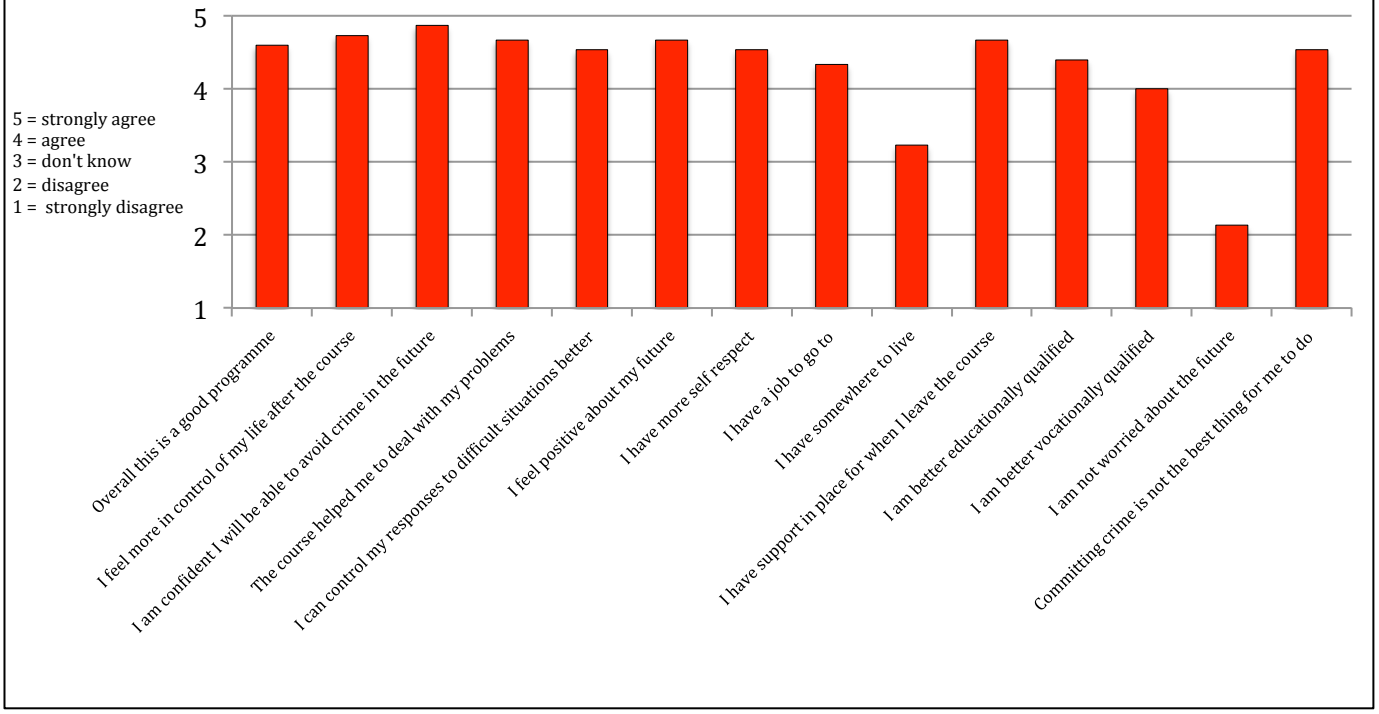


Figure 3.12: Tiszalöki participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=15)



MÉLYKÚT PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

The two women interviewees at Mélykút prison said they felt privileged to be a part of the programme. They told of the importance of the ECOR community's peacefulness, "I wanted to join because we knew that it would be a peaceful place." This was in contrast to the rest of the prison where televisions would be on and up to 16 women could be sharing a room, "In my first cell there was so much noise: television, radio, arguments all around me". The women said they had found life difficult in the noisy and overcrowded conditions, "before ECOR started, my prayer was to save me from the overcrowded cell where I lived and the behaviour of other prisoners".

The opportunity to practise their faith with like-minded others was also very important, "I am with people who understand me and we can practise our faith together." The silence and space for prayer were important for their well-being, "I feel peaceful in my mind. It is like the sand has settled in the water".

The women also emphasised the importance of contact with their family:

> I can meet three times more with my family than the other inmates. This is the most important aspect.

Their aspirations on the programme centred around their faith and community living:

> I would like to develop connection with my God, the knowledge about the Bible, and to live together better in the ECOR site.

Their hopes for their future life after prison focused on their return to their families and friends; one woman said, "First I will spend time with grandchild and teach her to draw. I can't wait for this. I also have a lot of artist friends so I can be active artistically too."

TISZALÖKI PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

The comments from the two Tiszalöki ECOR participants interviewed indicated that they too saw the programme as a sanctuary where they could practice their faith in peace:

> I was looking for a group I could survive this terrible life with.

> I was always ashamed because when I was reading the bible everyone shouted at me. I asked God in my prayers to put me in a community where I could practise my religion.

The men valued the greater freedom they had to move around the wing and the kinder treatment they said they received from prison staff. They appreciated too the strong and peaceful community spirit on the wing, "We resolve conflicts by talking, elsewhere in the prison they resolve by conflicts by fighting – we use the bible to resolve the problems."

As with the women, the men had greater opportunities to have contact with their family, "My sons are living with my Mum […] on the APAC unit, I can see them two times a month for 90 minutes". They also declared an improved sense of well-being in the community:

> In my earlier life I was always aggressive and violent. Then I became depressed in prison. I hated everyone in prison. I feel now like I can change and I can start feeling love towards other people, which was impossible for me in the past.

Their aspirations were expressed in terms of living their faith and helping others:

> I would like to follow God and Jesus and if he accepts us we need to accept the others even in the hard times outside.

> After my release I would like to be a volunteer of a charity organisation who helps, starving children.

> I have a farm. I will continue my work there […]. Through agriculture, through nature, you can help people in need, people who are hungry and thirsty, you can show them through these things about God.

Summary

The PFH ECOR programmes are very much in their early stages. The prison programmes are newly established and the post-release provision is still to be implemented at Mélykút and is in its infancy at Tiszalöki. The programmes follow the APAC model to the extent that there is a residential group who live together according to Christian principles. The women and men participants exhibit an active faith and in the view of the prison authorities have demonstrated a preparedness for change.

The programme views links with families as very important and religious activities with them take place in each prison. Tiszalöki has plans for a major communal family worship event similar to the APAC 'Deliverance through Christ' workshop. The ECOR programmes do not run a formal merit system based on behaviour but in Tiszalöki greater privileges are being introduced gradually as the men demonstrate their collective responsibility. The use of volunteers in the programme is a core objective. At Tiszalöki there are active links with local church communities and volunteers from these communities support ECOR activities in the prison. A network of volunteers is still to be established at Mélykút.

Support from the Hungarian government, prison directors, and prison chaplains is critical to the PFH programmes' success. The prison authorities view the programme as a part of the religious structure within the Hungarian prison system. The positive legacy of the first Kurzio programme and the strong religious orientation of the prison service have created a sympathetic environment for APAC-based programmes.

The recent legislative initiative of the Hungarian government to increase probationary provision for prisoners is also beneficial. As official resources are limited (at Tiszalöki the prison officers have probation responsibility for approximately 150 prisoners each) the ECOR programmes are seen as an important contributor to this probation provision.

Under new legislation female and low-risk male prisoners may be released from prison early and spend the rest of their sentence under electronic supervision at home. This will aid the rehabilitative work planned at Mélykút. However, a remaining difficulty for the re-integration of prisoners with long sentences in Hungary is that they are often housed a long way from their homes. The PFH staff consider that their rehabilitation prospects would be aided if they were moved to a local prison for the last two years of their sentence so that they can begin to establish links with their local communities before release.

To increase the programme's effectiveness, more volunteers are needed to support the work of PFH and prison staff at Mélykút prison. In the long-term social support networks are necessary within the communities where the APAC participants will live following their release. A potentially strong source of volunteer support comes from past APAC programme participants. The value of ex-participants as volunteers is seen as twofold; first, they can serve as role models for current participants, and secondly they may have an opportunity to 'make good' the harm their offending caused by 'giving something back' to the community. Such 'generativity' is acknowledged as an important part of the desistance process (Maruna, 2001). However, one challenge facing the recruitment of such volunteers is the policy that ex-prisoners must wait two years before they can return to prison in supporting roles. Consequently, any involvement in less than two years is at the discretion of the prison director.

In both prisons the participants are carefully selected by the prison chaplains and staff for their potential to succeed on the programme. They are a particular sub-set of the prison population who have demonstrated an active religious belief and compliance with the prison system.

The descriptive evidence of the ECOR programmes' initial impact suggests that both have been well received. There are as yet no formal or systematic measures of progress but at Tiszalöki initial signs of change in the men on the ECOR programme have been noted by the prison staff:

> We can't talk about long-term outcomes or results but the attitude and behaviour towards us and prison administration and towards society is totally different
>
> (prison officer).

The care with which the ECOR participants in both prisons look after their environment is a further indication to prison staff of the early success of the programmes.

Whilst these initial indications are promising, a further evaluation will be needed to assess the long-term impact of the programmes on the men and women's lives after their release. A current challenge facing the ECOR staff in the women's prison is that prisoners' release dates are not announced and women may leave the programme at short notice. Two women have already left the programme. PFH are in contact with one but have temporarily lost contact with the other. However, all women have to return to the prison to receive their release papers, which provides an opportunity to regain contact. In the near future it will be possible to measure the re-offending rates of ECOR participants as the Hungarian ministry of justice has introduced a centralised computer database of the prison population. Any former APAC/ECOR participants re-entering the prison system will be recorded on the central database.

Re-offending rates are just one measure of the programmes' potential future impact. It will also be important to understand the extent to which the programme is able to support people on their release from prison through the establishment of community support networks. Of equal significance is the present contribution that the ECOR programmes make to participants' well-being through humane living conditions, a peaceful and open environment, and frequent family contact.

3.5 Latvia: Miriam

Introduction

The Miriam programme is delivered in Ilguciems prison in Riga; this is the only women's prison in Latvia. The programme usually lasts for up to three years and is organised within an educational framework beginning in September with a summer break during July and August. The programme is unique in the Latvian prison system as participants live separately from other inmates. The programme was conceived and developed by the prison chaplain within Ilguciems and tailored to the particular requirements of the women inmates. Its inspiration is the APAC methodology whereby participants are valued as human beings who are encouraged to raise their aspirations beyond crime. This has resulted in a programme that is dedicated to providing a cultural education as a means of improving women's self worth and promoting a desire for them to contribute positively to the community. The women are housed separately from other inmates, however, they are still required to work within the prison regime and so work alongside the general prison population and eat their lunch with them. At all other times they are segregated.

The core concept of Miriam is to encourage self-education, a work ethic, and creative thinking within and guided by Christian moral values. All programme elements are compulsory and run in conjunction with obligatory prison work meaning that they are held in the evenings and at weekends. Since its creation in 2002 Miriam has been embedded within the prison administration and programme activities and included in a legal contract. The Head of the State Prison Department set up a selection commission and this commission oversees the acceptance of women into the programme. Miriam is open to women with any type of offending history although convictions for

fraud may lead to exclusion.[9] The prison authorities fully support Miriam but they do not provide any financial assistance. Most of the volunteer teachers supply any raw materials required and give their services freely. Monies are earned through fund-raising and charitable donations. Additionally, art and craft work produced by Miriam participants may be sold.

Although the programme has a strong Christian ethos and is managed by the prison chaplain, Latvian law separates the church and state providing freedom of thought and religion for all citizens. Therefore, Miriam's secular emphasis on rehabilitation aims to use Christian values to change criminal thinking and thus enable the successful reintegration of participants after their release. It is the perception of reduced recidivism that led the Latvian prison authority to embrace and support Miriam.[10]

Prisoners are often marginalised individuals and programme staff consciously promote attitudes of equality and personal value. A key programme component is the separate living conditions. This aims to counteract any prison hierarchy and foster the ability to live communally. Participants are expected to keep the living and communal areas clean and tidy thus learning to consider other people's environments. Furthermore, prison norms of behaviour and language are prohibited and positive peer pressure is promoted. For example, swearing and prison argot is forbidden, as is carelessness with property or door slamming. Women who have been in the programme longer are expected to model these values for newcomers.

When women complete the programme they are usually close to release. Most programme completers will be released during the summer break between July and August; women who are continuing after the break have free time.

[9] Unfortunately a Miriam 'graduate' used her experience of the programme to present herself as representing a charitable body and defraud several people. Therefore women with such offending histories are very carefully scrutinised before admission.
[10] Currently no official reoffending statistics are assessed and produced in Latvia. However, as Ilguciems is the only women's prison, recidivists would eventually become known.

Women in their second year are frequently appointed to positions of responsibility within the normal prison routine. If aftercare is considered necessary, it is provided by the Latvian probation service. This is not linked to prison release as Latvian law separates custodial management from probation or parole. Occasionally Prison Fellowship, Latvia (a non governmental organisation) provides aftercare assistance to Miriam 'graduates'.

The ECOR project has enabled the provision of an additional course element delivered by a prominent literature reviewer and broadcaster. Within this course element women have been introduced to Latvian and Russian literature and taught to analyse narratives. Women who do not read and write Latvian have discovered their own cultural literature and learned to express themselves without using prison slang. As the cohort current during the visit declined to participate in the ECOR process evaluation, the new cohort beginning in September 2015, was asked to contribute quantitative data for the ECOR pilot report.

Data collection

Table 3.5 summarises the data collection methods for the evaluation.

Participants	Interviews with two Miriam programme participants; one in her first year and the other her second year of the programme Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) and evaluation questionnaires (x1) distributed at Time 1 (Sept. 2015) n=14; Time 2 (Dec. 2015) n=15
Programme staff and volunteers	Discussion with Miriam programme Director Interviews with three Miriam teachers
Ilguciems Prison	Interview with Deputy Prison Director
Ministry of Justice	Round table interview and discussion with the Prison Authority Deputy, the Head of Education and Employment, and the Director of Prison Fellowship, Latvia
Observations	Partial tour of Ilguciems prison including Miriam site
Table 3.5: Data Collection, Miriam Evaluation	

The Miriam manager and three volunteer staff were interviewed using the interpreter provided by Prison Fellowship, Latvia. The manager and Gospel choir teacher were interviewed together in the prison chapel, the Old Testament teacher was interviewed at the Latvian Christian Radio studio, and the newly recruited literature teacher was interviewed in a meeting room at the national library. These interviews were each approximately one hour long. The findings of the evaluation are presented below.

Recruitment

The prison's senior management support Miriam and have established an oversight committee to embed it within the prison's regime. When assessing applicants for the programme they consider their legal status (whether they are permitted to live outside the main, secure area) and the stage of women's incarceration. They aim to accept women close to the end of their sentence so that they will be released on completion of the programme. This ensures that 'graduates' can put into practice the things they have "learned, felt, and encountered" in a different culture from the standard prison environment. Occasionally women cannot live separately straight away and are permitted to begin Miriam by attending lectures only until they can move into the programme's premises. Although the prison management do not promote the programme the Deputy Director said that many women have heard about it even before they are convicted.

Programme Management

The prison has created a separate department within which the Miriam programme operates. A member of the prison administration and the chaplain head the department. Miriam is staffed entirely by 12 volunteers and managed by the prison chaplain. The department head acts as a liaison between the prison administration and participants. This ensures that the women have individual attention if necessary whenever they request meetings.

All participants are housed separately within the prison thus enabling the establishment of internal rules aimed at individual support. The Christian ethos of respect and love governs these rules and, as all participants are volunteers, they are expected to uphold and enforce them. By treating others with respect, the programme is intended to convey the human value of participants. One woman is appointed as a spokeswoman by the programme manager and department head. All disagreements and disputes are taken to her in the first instance and the women are encouraged to resolve them themselves using the moral and ethical norms that they have been shown and taught.

The women are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the living quarters and communal areas. They do their own cooking and laundry and often make decorations for public festivals such as Christmas.

Where Latvian law dictates any participant's custodial conditions, the prison accommodates them being on the programme. For example, two women currently have prison guard escorts to and from classes as they are required to be in secure accommodation. They cannot live in the separate area at present as this is prohibited by their security classification.

Volunteers

Volunteering is not common in Latvia especially to work with prisoners. Miriam volunteers' commitment is high given that they provide all the materials for their classes and are not reimbursed for their expenses. Most attend the prison once every week or two weeks for approximately two hours. Additionally, they have regular discussions with the programme manager and prepare their courses. Staff are committed to helping women find their own self-worth enabling them not to reoffend once they are released.

For the volunteers Miriam was their only experience of rehabilitation programmes and working in prisons. Some were familiar with the APAC model and the ECOR project. For example, the literature teacher's first encounter with Miriam came when she interviewed an author who had been a participant during a period of imprisonment.

The literature teacher said that she been quite fearful at first and did not tell her family about her volunteering until after her first two sessions. Then she told her children before her husband and her family now support her work. She had initially been concerned that she would be patronising towards the prisoners but said this soon passed. Apparently her first lecture was long but, "Immediately afterwards one lady asked me if we could look at two particular books. She came and looked me straight in the eye and said you will keep coming in won't you? I was immediately hooked". She plans to have the women write a short piece for their end-of-year exam and has a long-term goal of publishing some of their work.

As most volunteer teachers and programme staff have no experience of working with incarcerated people, Miriam's manager familiarises them with prison regulations and alerts them to the potential difficulties of working with manipulative or dominant women. Furthermore, most teachers are prominent within Latvian society so that their own authority can override that of any dominant women within the classes.

Curriculum

Up to 16 women learn about and practice fine art, art history and appreciation, craft, and drama. Within this framework they study theatre and cinema, creative arts and crafts, and music. Teachers are generally people known to the prison chaplain or recommended to her. All are professionals within their field and frequently invite colleagues to assist with specific events such as theatrical productions; for example, stage managers or make-up artists. As mentioned above, as part of the ECOR project a literature course

has been added. Many Miriam participants do not read and write Latvian because Russian is their first literary language. Therefore, in addition to studying literature, they learn written Latvian.

At the beginning of each year Miriam's manager discusses the curriculum with the teachers and meets them regularly throughout the programme. Teachers formulate their own courses and provide the resources required. They set tests to assess progress and there is a final examination at the end of each year which is invigilated and assessed by the teacher. In practical subjects the women produce an item of work for the end of year assessment.

There is no merit/demerit system in place but women who are non-compliant or disruptive are returned to the main prison. Although women volunteer for Miriam, their place on the course is deemed to be a privilege owing to the living conditions, staff attention, and resources provided. Women 'graduate' at the end of each year and are presented with a certificate. The Deputy Prison Director said that only two women had been expelled during the last ten years. One had not passed the exams and the other was disruptive.

All classes and lessons are held after the daily prison work schedule and last until 8 or 8.30pm, Monday to Friday. There is a two hour fine art session on Saturday mornings and a two hour church service on Sundays. Each day begins with a short time of prayer and breakfast before participants join the regular prison work-schedule. Prisoners in Latvia earn money for working but are not expected to work more than four hours per day in Ilguciems although they frequently do. Educational classes are provided within the prison regime and Miriam participants may attend these if necessary instead of working. However, as prison vocational classes are held simultaneously with Miriam classes these are not available for participants. Dinner within the separate quarters precedes classes and the day ends with a time of prayer. Every day is punctuated with roll-calls before and after the work period and

at 9pm. During holidays participants have free time and there are opportunities for individual discussions.

Bible study is central to Miriam, its purpose is to study individual human value and understand the principles governing human interaction throughout the world. Women are assisted to see themselves apart from their criminal identity and find hope in a future without offending. Built into these concepts is the study of culture, as expressed in art and music, leading to examining the spiritual dimensions of cinema and theatre. Classes involve lectures and discussion as women are encouraged to contribute and participate. However, the women's academic abilities are often limited so teachers have to gain their trust and adjust their teaching methods. For example, the theological teacher said that at first women did not understand his academic style so now he always tries to maintain academic rigour in parallel with simplicity by using many examples. Furthermore, he avoided any suggestion of lowering standards as the women would recognise that and feel patronised.

As women progress they begin art and craft workshops in a studio setting. Professional artists supervise these classes as a study of art and not any form of therapy. The workshops aim to create an artist-to-artist rather than a teacher/pupil relationship. In this way participants' self-esteem is developed and their creativity cultivated. A similar atmosphere is promoted in the theatre workshops as plays are rehearsed and produced. Individuals' input is encouraged in discussion and debate and every role's importance is emphasised no matter how seemingly minor. Additionally, there is a music course where women can either participate in a gospel choir or learn to play the guitar.

Each month there is a culturally focused event related to celebrations or public holidays outside the prison. Women may have a guest artist or speaker attend the prison or they can contribute towards an exhibition of their work. For example, when Riga was the European city of culture these events were

themed towards culture in Ilguciems prison. At the end of each year there is a theatrical production attended by the other inmates and members of the prison administration. Professional actors and theatrical personnel support these productions by contributing their expertise; for example, a composer has prepared the music and male actors have played male roles. In 2013 a public exhibition of participants' artwork was held outside the prison.

Prisoners are expected to perform four hours' compulsory work per weekday or, if their educational level is low, to attend education classes. They are paid to work in the prison kitchens, clean the prison buildings and exteriors, or work for outside manufacturers. For example, they make fishing flies or do sewing. Their earnings help with buying extra food or paying outstanding fines. The prison offers other programmes, such as addiction courses, but women within Miriam do not have time to participate in them.

The programme is completely devoted to academic and educational matters as the prison provides any counselling or psychotherapy. Classes involve pedagogical teaching and discussion when participants are encouraged to analyse and critique narratives and texts. Basic human values are included throughout the programme with discussions about values using case studies from the Bible.

Most classes include practical skills such as knitting or crochet or painting; others involve physical exercises such as singing. Within the Gospel singing sessions dancing may be included that involves the wider prison population. Together with interactions between Miriam participants and other inmates during prison work schedules, these dance sessions also serve to raise awareness of the programme.

There may be some difficulties with language. The official language within the prison service is Russian although, legally, the official language is Latvian. However, most officers speak Russian and many women within Miriam do

not speak Latvian well. Therefore, Latvian language study is a part of the course and volunteers, particularly the literature teacher, are careful to help the women improve their knowledge of Latvian.

Prison staff do not participate in programme staff/volunteer discussions or meetings. The oversight committee deals with any disciplinary matters, although difficulties rarely proceed to that level being dealt with by the women themselves. Otherwise Miriam's manager has daily, informal talks with the prison management for which there are no formal protocols or minutes.

Assessment

All teachers devise their own lesson plans and set and mark the end of year examinations. There are no formal, written progress reports but all teachers have regular discussion with the programme manager.

Officially, the prison staff gauge progress as they see the women during their usual prison activities. However, all the interviewees identify behavioural changes as participants follow the programme. For example, women become noticeably more positive and knowledgeable in their questions during classes. The Bible teacher, who has had three year's experience with Miriam, noticed that bitterness leading to 'controversial' questions in the early stages changes to more constructive, but no less challenging, questions.

The literature teacher finds that women begin to contribute to discussion or, as a result of their reading, begin to suggest new texts to read. She said that, in the beginning, the women wanted romantic novels or fashion magazines brought in. She is a literary reviewer so has access to publisher's copy and has a wide knowledge of Latvian and Russian literature and supplied works by world renowned authors and educational or nature magazines instead. Since September 2014 the women's interest has broadened and now they are particularly interested in biographical stories. As their confidence has grown,

they have begun to question the accuracy of the texts they read where before they regarded the written word as unquestionable.

The Gospel singer noticed that women's physical appearance improves, they lose their greyish complexion and smile or laugh more frequently. Women also become more compliant with prison rules and have less desire to mix with women outside the programme. She also commented that singing and music were very emotional observing that she could "see tears and I can see joy". Women's level of commitment can be gauged because their singing improves as a result of following exercises and practicing technique.

Prison staff notice behavioural changes in Miriam participants as they become calmer and have more profound interests than populist literature or gossiping. Staff appreciate that the women learn about and experience discussion and activities that they would never have the opportunity for outside prison.

Participant experiences

INTERVIEW DATA

Two participants were separately interviewed. One woman was in her second year of the programme, the other, an older woman, had started six months previously. Both expected to be released in a year having served 2.5 and 1.25 years respectively.

Both women were enthusiastic about Miriam and the opportunities the course offers. The younger lady said that she was reluctant to talk about it with people from outside the prison in case they thought that imprisonment was not severe enough. The older lady saw the separate living area as a sanctuary from the main prison and was keen to give the impression that she was

different from the other prisoners.[11] Neither thought that they needed or valued support from their peers. This attitude seemed to reflect the emotional barriers that prisoners erect around themselves. The younger woman said, "There's no care from others what happens afterwards. Prisoners move on".

The older woman was past retirement age and expected to return to her family upon release. She was keen to be helpful and viewed herself as the programme manager's assistant. She enjoyed having responsibility as a spokesman and appreciated the improved manners, respect, and peaceful atmosphere the living area provided. Additionally, she was conscious that her behaviour was observed by the prison staff and hoped that her efforts would contribute to any parole decisions. She said that she hoped to learn more about the Christian faith.

On the other hand, the younger lady had been reluctant to apply for Miriam and found it difficult to adjust to the regime. However, she quickly settled into the programme and said that she could not count the number of things she had learned. When asked about the future the younger lady seemed confident that the skills she had learned offered her the opportunity to prosper. She said, "I will do everything not to come back here". She was confident that she would find employment upon release and had aspirations to use the skills she had learned in starting her own business. She expected to live with her parents and now appreciated the struggles they had had in supporting her in the past. Her one-word description of Miriam was, "soulful".

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

At Time 1 all fifteen women on the course completed self-administered questionnaires supervised by the ECOR partner. These women were at

[11] Senior prison staff and Miriam managers know that the course is often viewed as an escape from mainstream prison life. This does not prevent them offering women places as they are confident that the programme can still benefit them.

different stages of the programme; six were new, three were one year into it, five had completed two years, and one three years. The questions were written in English and translated by the ECOR partner into Latvian and Russian. A second survey was completed in December 2015 (Time 2) by which time seven women had been released and six more women had joined the programme.

At Time 1 most women's experience of Miriam was positive with 80% (N=12) agreeing or strongly agreeing that they felt safe all the time; 100% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they got on with their peers, always had enough to keep occupied, and were busy all day. Although only two women felt that they had insufficient privacy, 67% (N=10) wanted more privacy sometimes. More than half of the new participants thought there were too many rules (N=4) but six of nine more experienced women disagreed with them (67%). Overall most women said they found the atmosphere friendly, they were treated with respect, they enjoyed their work, and they had learned a lot. Eleven women (73%) said they rarely felt stressed and 87% (N=13) became angry more slowly than before. Nevertheless half of the women were worried about the future and this was true for both new (60%) and older (56%) participants.

The women's perceptions about discriminatory attitudes towards prisoners were negative.[12] Most thought that ex-prisoners would not be trusted, would be less likely to find a partner who accepted them, or would be perceived as dangerous. Only one woman disagreed with the statement that ex-prisoners are looked down upon by others, two were ambivalent, but ten (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are. Most respondents viewed employment prospects negatively (71%) thinking that prospective employers would not hire ex-prisoners.

[12] Only 14 completed questionnaires in this category were returned.

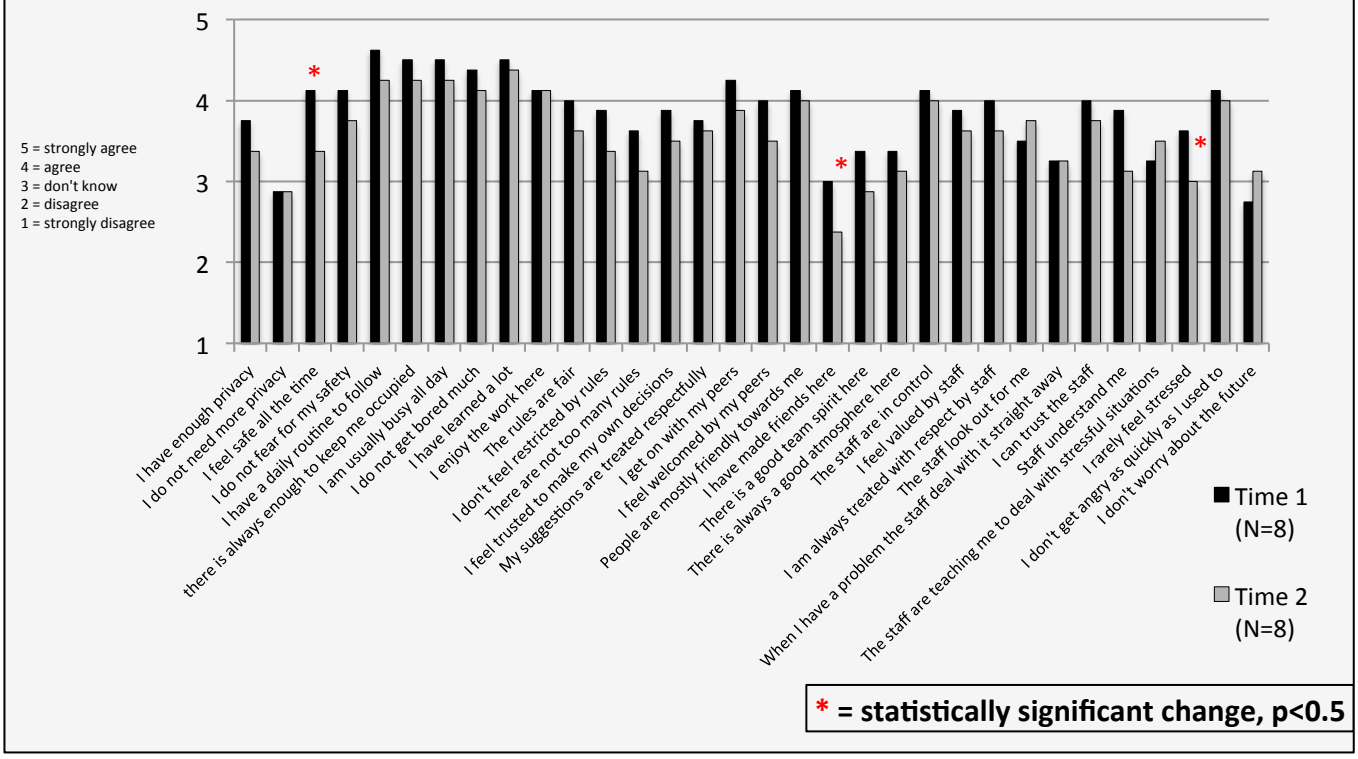
Six women did not answer several of the questions related to rejection as they indicated that they were serving their first prison sentence. However, all of them said they would hide their past from people until they knew them well and thought it a good idea to keep their prison sentence secret. Only two women had experienced rejection by friends and family, but seven (64%) had been hurt by others as a result of their imprisonment. Several women (N=8, 53%) at Time 1 thought that questions relating to attitudes towards prisoners or ex-prisoners/addicts did not apply to them as this was their first period of imprisonment. At Time 2 the same women again did not respond to these questions. Conversely, all new participants at Time 2 answered all questions.

When answering questions related to problems, nobody said they would have difficulty with avoiding crime although nine (82%) of those who responded were unsure. Seven (58%) had money or employment problems (which may be linked) and four (of whom two were close to release) were worried about accommodation. Relationships, and alcohol abuse were generally unproblematic but three respondents who were new to the programme said they had drug problems.

At Time 2 seven women had been released from prison. The eight remaining participants completed questionnaires. Paired T-Test analyses were conducted to identify any change in the women's experiences of the programme. Their responses at Time 2 were largely similar to Time 1 although slightly less positive. There were statistically significant differences in women's perceptions of safety (Time 1 (M= 4.1 SD=0.6) and Time 2 (M= 3.4 SD=0.5) $t(7) = 3.0$ $p < .05$., peer relations Time 1 (M= 3.6 SD=0.7) and Time 2 (M= 3.2 SD=0.6) $t(7) = 2.4$ $p < .05$. and stress levels Time 1 (M= 3.6 SD=0.7) and Time 2 (M= 3.2 SD=0.6) $t(7) = 2.4$ $p < .05$. These were all rated more negatively at Time 2. This may be attributable to the challenging nature of the programme elements or to hierarchies within the cohort. For example, the programme director commented in the final partner semi-structured interview that she intended to monitor more closely relationships within the

programme as strong personalities had been allowed too much influence. Figure 3.13 presents the responses of the eight women who completed questionnaires at both Time 1 and Time 2. Asterisks identify the three variables with statistically significant changes.

Figure 3.13: Miriam participants' change in experience Time 1 to Time 2

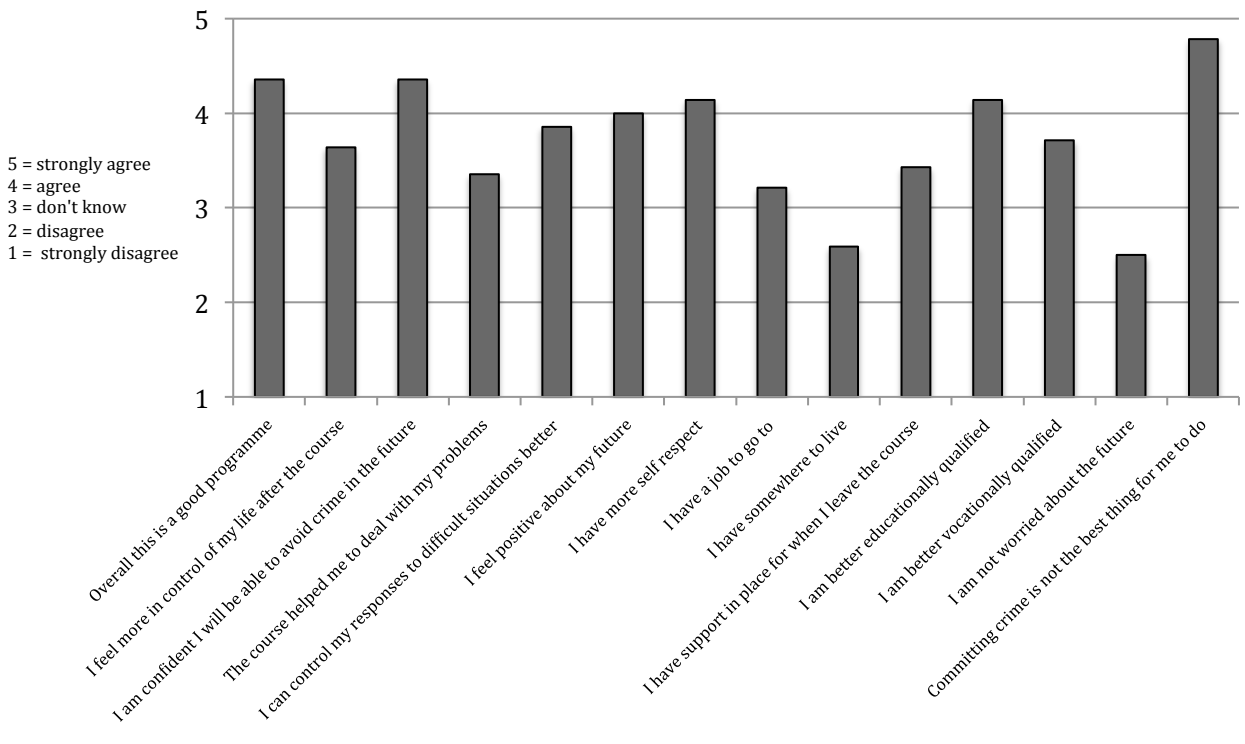


On a more positive note, the paired T-Tests identified a statistically significant drop in the women's combined stigma scores between Time 1 (M= 3.6 SD=0.7) and Time 2 (M= 3.2 SD=0.6) $t(7) = 3.3$ $p < .05$.

The fourteen women completing the evaluation of the programme at Time 2 rated it positively overall. The average score for the statement 'Overall this is a good programme' was 4.4 out of 5 where 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'. The scores for personal development; for example, education, self-control, and self-respect were among the highest we found. Although women largely viewed the future positively, there was less

confidence amongst the group regarding finding employment and accommodation on leaving the programme. This may reflect the low level of probation support in Latvia for prisoners after release. These results are shown in Figure 3.14.

Figure 3.14: Miriam participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=14)



3.6 Latvia: Ratnieki Aftercare

Main administrative building Ratnieki programme, Latvia

Introduction

The 20 year old post-Soviet Latvian prison system, despite much change, is still heavily influenced by earlier Soviet policies. For example, there is more emphasis on security and surveillance than rehabilitation. However, in 2009 ideas about resocialisation led to legislation in 2011 that provided for education and social and psychological therapy for prisoners. Nevertheless, the prison service in Latvia does not provide any kind of aftercare for released prisoners and any community parole or supervision by probation services is court mandated. Although the needs and disadvantages of ex-prisoners are recognised by the Latvian Prison Administration, there seems to be little impetus within the current legislative framework to provide any systematic aftercare. This appears to be partially due to a concentration on improving the prison system itself; a new prison is due to open in 2018. Restructuring within

the system is ongoing with a new drug/alcohol rehabilitation centre due to open in 2016 and the closure of three prisons.

In Latvia approximately 2,500 prisoners are released every year, most of whom will have no access to aftercare or assisted reintegration. Many do not wish to return to prison but in the view of the Ratnieki staff, Latvian society is quite hostile towards ex-prisoners. A non-governmental organisation (NGO) called Integration for Society (IFS) was formed to harness offenders' impetus to desist from crime, and provide them with the means to reintegrate into society. In 1999 the NGO opened a residential aftercare centre, Ratnieki, just outside the capital, Riga. It was funded by various charitable foundations with some support from municipalities. Working in cooperation with the prison and probation services, Integration for Society contracted with these administrations to provide aftercare services for recently released male prisoners. There was an operational capacity of up to 20 adult men. Fluctuating financial conditions have meant that, although aftercare is considered an important model for the Administration, they have not renewed any contracts since 2011. Nevertheless, prisoners are unofficially referred to the centre and Ratnieki managers visit prisons to publicise the centre's services.

Ratnieki is the only aftercare programme offered to ex-prisoners in Latvia. Its goal is to counteract the negative, criminogenic effects of imprisonment, especially as the average term of imprisonment in Latvia, according to the Ratnieki director, is five years. The programme provides a model for a staged system of reintegrating prisoners into the community, whereby prisoners are prepared for release whilst still in custody, then released into a supportive and constructive environment before discharge into society, rather than being expected to survive with little or no state aftercare provision.

The programme has been operating for 16 years and claims good results for reduction of re-offending. According to data from IFS (Latvia), between 1999

and 2015 580 ex-prisoners participated in the 'Ratnieki' aftercare programme; 83% of them successfully completed the programme and have been employed; 17% were dismissed for violations. Among those who completed the programme less than 20% returned to prison during those 16 years.

The model below shows how the Ratnieki programme structure may provide the human/social capital necessary to encourage and assist desistance.

Prison →	**→ Aftercare →**			**→ Society**
Establish contact (trust and relationships)	Economic elements: training/employment opportunities (social capital)	Social elements: new and restored (human capital)	Cultural and spiritual elements: new interests and ethical values (social and human capital)	Continued support (social and human capital)
Model for Ratnieki Aftercare programme				

Programme overview

Ratnieki provides accommodation and a structured regime within which clients receive psychological support and addiction counselling together with vocational training and help with general life skills. Men are housed in small dormitories for two people and live and work as a community. They sign a contract with the centre in which they undertake to remain on the premises during weekdays and be drug and alcohol free at all times. All psychological and addiction classes are compulsory.

Residents are responsible for the general maintenance of the site including keeping the grounds around the buildings tidy, some building repair/decorating, and cleaning the residential and administrative premises. Community living and building relationships are central to the programme ethos as they are believed to prepare men for returning to society in general and, when possible, their families in particular. Clients are encouraged to

become independent and directed in using their spare time constructively. They receive practical guidance with health matters, state administrative requirements, and learning how to apply for and keep employment.

Communal building Ratnieki programme, Latvia

Additionally, there is a vocational programme whereby clients learn carpentry and woodworking in professionally equipped workshops run by a qualified carpentry teacher. They take a national examination set by the Carpentry Training and Examination Centre at the end of the course.

A client's individual programme content is tailored to his progress and abilities. They are expected to have accommodation and employment when they leave and the maximum stay is one year. The aim is to provide personal growth, change criminal thinking patterns, teach clients to make good choices and take responsibility for their actions, rebuild family relationships, redirect their values and goals, restore self-respect and return ex-prisoners to society so that they do not reoffend. Past clients are encouraged to retain contact with the centre.

Unusually for the ECOR project all regular Ratnieki staff are employed. However, some volunteers assist within the programme and there are

connections with church congregations in the community to aid resettlement when clients leave the aftercare centre. The Ratnieki programme was enhanced for the ECOR project by opening additional accommodation for 13 men and a separate fitness gym.

Data collection

To provide quantitative data clients completed questionnaires designed to investigate their experience of the programme at two Time points seven months apart. The questionnaires aimed to probe participants' self-perceptions as ex-prisoners and their experiences and evaluation of the programme. Questions were written in English and translated into Latvian. The first questionnaire was designed to gain some understanding of clients' self-perception and self-worth; the second to capture their experience of the Ratnieki programme and social rehabilitation centre so far. We had 13 responses at Time 1 (100%) and 11 at Time 2. It is a requirement of residence that alcohol and non-prescription drugs are prohibited as is being under the influence of either. At Time 2 two men had disobeyed this rule and were required to leave.

We also collected qualitative data through observation and interviews with programme staff and Ministry of Justice officials (see table 3.6 below).

Participants	Interviews with two Ratnieki programme participants; one new to the programme having been released after serving six year's imprisonment, the other six months into the programme following a five year incarceration. Self-perception (x2) programme experience (x2) programme evaluation (x1) questionnaires distributed at Time 1(May 2015) n=13; Time 2 (Dec. 2015) n=11
Programme staff and volunteers	Discussion with Ratnieki programme Director. Interviews and group discussion with Ratnieki professional staff.
Observations	Tour of Ratnieki site.
Ministry of Justice	Round table interview and discussion with the Prison Authority Deputy, the Head of Education and Employment, and the Director of Prison Fellowship, Latvia.

Table 3.6 Data Collection, Ratnieki Evaluation

Programme recruitment

The Director and some staff from Ratnieki speak in prisons to publicise the centre and many prisoners hear about it by word-of-mouth or from literature in the prisons. As part of the ECOR project, the Director and staff at IFS have increased contact with prisons. Working with prison chaplains, psychologists, and social workers they have sought to raise awareness of the Ratnieki programme and motivate prisoners to apply for aftercare.

There is no official referral system and ex-prisoners approach the centre themselves and are interviewed by the Director. Often the interview is conducted by telephone when men first enquire about the programme. It is acknowledged that many such approaches are made because recently released prisoners have nowhere else to go. However, this initial rationale would not prevent them being offered a place on the programme if one is available and they are considered to be suitable and motivated. Ex-prisoners with any kind of offending history are accepted onto the Ratnieki programme. The main requirement is to be willing to change. However, they must have a registered address or connection with Riga to be eligible for city council funding. A maximum of 20 clients is permitted as individual attention is not possible for higher numbers.

Management

On arrival at the centre men are required to sign a contract between themselves and IFS. The contract offers the programme, board, and lodging in exchange for clients following the rules and attending all compulsory programme elements.

All regular staff members are employed and are experienced in delivering rehabilitative programmes. Their goal for clients is to assist them reintegrate into the community. Currently there are two social workers, an addiction counsellor, a psychologist, and a vocational teacher. Additionally, the Ratnieki Director delivers some classes. All are familiar with the APAC rehabilitation model and aware of the aims of the ECOR project.

Staff try to foster a family atmosphere and equality is emphasised from the beginning to confront and break down any prisoner hierarchies (which are reported as very strong in Latvia). There is an individualised focus and all clients have access to regular mentoring and counselling. Every week all clients gather together informally with the social workers for discussion accompanied by tea and biscuits. All formal meals are eaten together. At first clients may be sceptical about the possibility of change so the combination of formal/informal and individual/group discussion is designed to identify personal strengths and weaknesses so that positive traits can be encouraged and negative ones reduced or eliminated. By having staggered entry to the programme the aim is that new arrivals see the example of older clients and settle in quickly.

Curriculum

Clients can join Ratnieki at any time as the course is designed to absorb new people at any stage, but the ECOR cohort were all admitted in January 2015. The programme has five main streams; psychological therapy, addressing addiction using the '12 step' approach of Alcoholics Anonymous, vocational

training, classes concentrating on social skills and learning, and a spiritual renewal programme aimed at ethical, moral, and value systems. Woven into these streams are regular group and individual therapy sessions, Bible studies used as a basis for the moral and ethical dimensions of relationships with individuals and society, and a work programme intended to restore motivation, provide a qualification, and build self-respect. The centre follows a Life School programme which is approved by the Ministry of Justice.

Classes are planned to be stimulating and interesting as clients can have low attention thresholds. Mixed teaching methods are used from a lecture format to group discussion and watching films and documentaries intended to promote debate and conversation. Life situations derived from these media can be used to help clients solve their own problems indirectly.

The psychological stream comprises five elements; communication skills (18 hours), group therapy (10 hours), relationships (10 hours), conflict resolution (14 hours), and personal reflection/therapy (24 hours). Each element involves lectures, interactive seminars, role-play, individual consultation, films, and discussion. These sessions are intended to assist clients in self-reflexivity and understanding their own potential, together with taking responsibility for past actions and making positive choices in the future. With improved communication skills and coaching in resolving conflict and dealing with adverse life situations, the aim is to restore relationships with society and, particularly, families. Ultimately, these individually focused elements are intended to support clients to reintegrate and desist from criminal behaviour.

The anti-addiction stream follows the Alcoholics Anonymous approach of supported self-help. Classes total 64 hours broken down into individual therapy (15 hours) group therapy (20 hours), lectures (15 hours) and 14 hours of cognitive behavioural classes addressing problem identification and family/social relationships. The main teacher is a recovered drug addict who is now a qualified social worker.

Individual sessions are intended to build a picture and identify the specific needs of the person. Overall each client may expect to have two hours per week psychotherapy and one hour per week group therapy. Practical issues are included such as establishing and overseeing registration with a doctor and ensuring that medical advice is followed. Additionally, clients are assisted with all necessary legal administration and writing CVs and job applications.

Throughout the programme the emphasis is based on positive peer pressure with clients further into Ratnieki expected to set examples to newer recruits. The importance of altered thinking patterns is taught through studying Bible stories which are used to provide references to moral or virtuous behaviour. Objective and subjective views are explored to aid ex-prisoners in changing their world-view and seeking positive future goals. Through lectures, practical classes, homework, and short, daily, (30 minutes) morning discussion clients study Biblical events through application to current events. These ethical components fall within the framework of forgiveness, cause and effect, problems with pride, selfishness, loving and serving others.

Labour therapy is introduced gradually with the newest clients engaged in daily tasks such as cleaning the centre's buildings and grounds. Throughout the programme clients spend six hours per week engaged in maintaining the grounds. They also grow vegetables and fruit crops outside and in greenhouses and do painting and decorating where required. Once prepared through these tasks clients begin the carpentry course. This comprises a total of 180 hours of supervised learning which leads to a recognised qualification awarded by the Carpentry Training and Examination Centre.

Generally, clients have broken or strained relations with their families. However, where there is proof of a marriage, clients are allowed to have their wives stay for weekends. A room is provided for family visits although

families are not integral to the programme. All wives and families must consent before they are invited to visit or stay.

Towards the end of a client's stay he is assisted to find accommodation and a job. Although residence for longer than a year is not permitted, clients are encouraged to maintain contact with the centre after they leave. If they have managed to establish good relations with their families they usually return to them.

Assessment

Apart from the vocational course, there are no examinations. Each client has a personal file which is maintained by all staff members. Their personal profile is discussed regularly, approximately every two months, with clients. The profile acts as a means of challenging them when problems are identified and helping them to develop solutions. Positive reports provide encouragement for further growth and assurance that they can cope when they encounter obstacles. These consultations provide the necessary merit/demerit motivation for progress. Clients are expelled immediately if they are found consuming or under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs. They will also be expelled if they do not participate in compulsory classes.

Progression is assessed through regular staff meetings and the client/staff consultations mention above. Staff note visible changes in appearance, behaviour, and thinking as clients advance. Men become calmer and begin to ask questions (staff note that this indicates self-confidence), they gradually start to ask for jobs to do and take responsibility for their actions as well as ask for help in resolving problems. Altered thinking patterns are evidenced by addressing the problems that led to their incarceration, increased enthusiasm for the programme, reduced blaming of others and selective perception of situations out of context, and more future-oriented goals.

Participant experiences of the programme

INTERVIEW DATA

Two Ratnieki clients were interviewed. Both men had heard about the aftercare centre during their incarceration by word-of-mouth and both had served long sentences; five and six years. The first interviewee was the youngest and had the six-year sentence. He was interviewed during his initial telephone call to the centre and expected to stay when he first arrived. He was unsure of what the course and the centre was like and said he was very nervous at first. He encountered some clients that he had known from prison and was "amazed to see the changes in them". The second man was older and more cynical. He had been released after a five-year sentence and tried to cope with life by himself. He was homeless and had been rejected by his family. The promise of accommodation made him contact the programme Director and he arrived with little intention to stay. He was fearful because he knew some of the ex-prisoners already resident and was worried about the prison hierarchy/atmosphere he would encounter. However, he was surprised on arrival and discovered that he had much to learn. When asked to describe the course in one word, he replied, "Super".

Both participants thought that the programme was helping them address the problems ex-prisoners face such as learning to deal with, and find solutions to, stressful situations. One said that he had always found it difficult to prioritise his aims and he was learning to concentrate on achieving one goal. Both wanted to live free of crime in the future and learn to establish relationships with other people, something both had struggled with in the past. The younger man had begun to accept responsibility for his actions and stop blaming others for his problems.

A key element of Ratnieki is ensuring that all clients have employment and accommodation on leaving. The younger man was very confident that he would achieve this. The older man was more doubtful but attributed his

doubts to his age and because he had not had the usual three year's vocational programme whilst in custody. He was more positive about finding accommodation. Both had forward-oriented aspirations to find jobs and have settled family lives.

Their experience of the programme was positive with support and encouragement from the staff and their peers. They valued the life-skills and vocational teaching and said that they had already learned strategies to cope with disappointments and change their thinking processes. The younger, less experienced participant, seemed to recognise the institutionalising effects of prison and found the programme helped overcome them. For example, he said that everybody should learn the day-to-day tasks of independent living such as controlling budgets or domestic chores as these were considered unimportant in prison.

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Overall experience of the atmosphere, environment, and programme content at Time 1 was positive amongst the 13 men who completed questionnaires. Clients felt safe, supported and respected by the staff, and generally felt that their peers were friendly and unthreatening. Individual benefits such as reduced stress levels and less inclination to anger are marked; five men (39%) strongly agreed with the statement that they rarely felt stressed and seven (54%) agreed, only one man was unsure. Conversely, clients were unsure about how the staff viewed them and their own contributions to the programme. Similarly, seven men thought that there was little sense of team-spirit. Although 69% (N=9) men thought there was usually enough privacy, only 39% (N=5) did not wish for more privacy occasionally. When asked whether clients worried about the future only one said he did not and two were ambivalent.

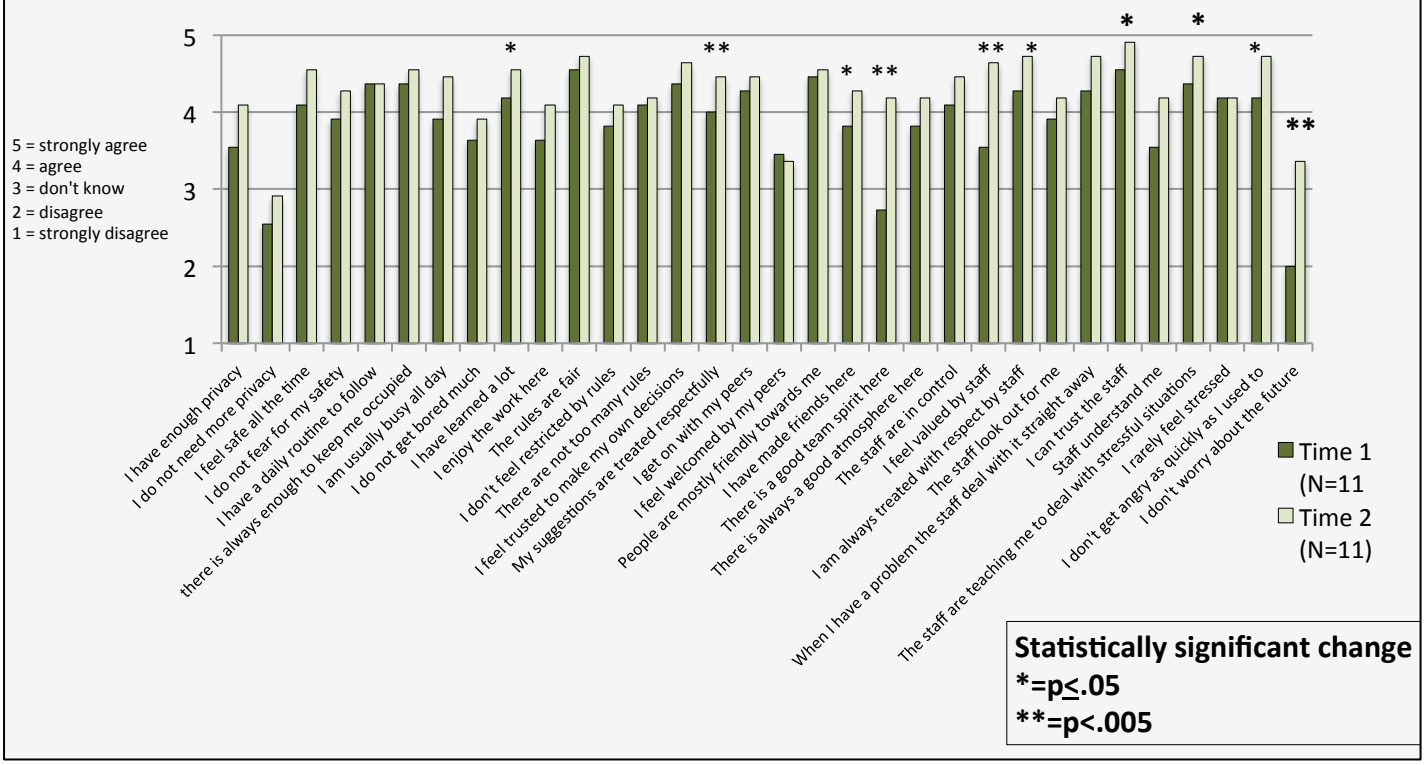
Perceptions about themselves as offenders and ex-prisoners were fairly negative at Time 1. For example, all questions relating to experiencing

discrimination produced negative or neutral responses. Referring to direct discrimination, eight men thought that their friends had treated them differently and six men had been deliberately hurt by others because they had been imprisoned. Although attitudes towards finding employment were more positive, 62% (N=8) would not apply to an employer that they knew did not want to employ ex-prisoners. Money, accommodation, and employment were the main areas that clients viewed as problematic and these are areas that Ratnieki specifically targets so as to improve clients' resettlement opportunities. Relationships, drugs and alcohol, and avoiding crime were not perceived as challenging on the whole.

The eleven participants who completed questionnaires at Time 1 and Time 2 showed significant changes in aspects of their self-perception and experience of the programme over the evaluation period. Paired T-Tests revealed that there was a statistically significant drop in the men's combined stigma scores between Time 1 (M= 3.1 SD=0.4) and Time 2 (M= 2.7 SD=0.4) $t(10) = 5.3$ $p < .005$. There were also positive changes in participants' experiences of the programme over time. Average scores increased on all dimensions although there were mixed responses to questions on peer relationships. There were statistically significant differences in participants' relationships with staff, attitudes towards learning, coping with stress and the men's perceptions of the future. These higher scores suggested a more positive experience for participants on the programme over time.

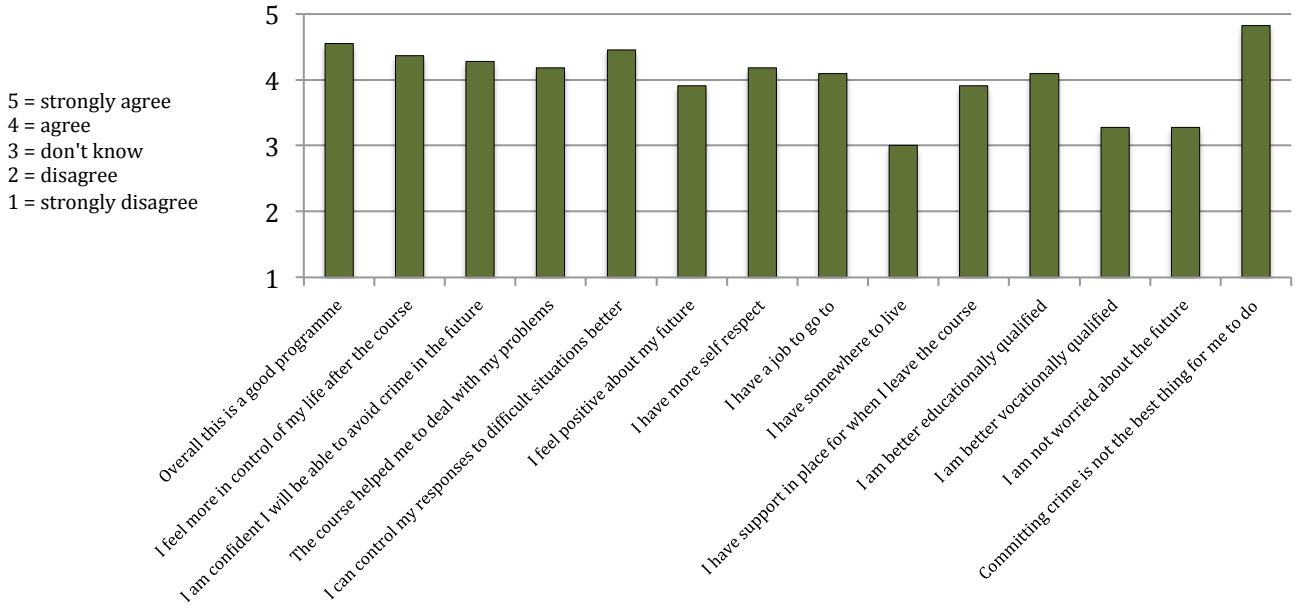
Their evaluation of the programme was positive overall as well, with the participants all agreeing or strongly agreeing that it was a good programme. Although participants' views about the future were more positive than at Time 1, there remained some uncertainty about future prospects and about finding accommodation in particular. Figure 3.15 illustrates the responses at T1 and T2; note that all except 'feeling welcomed by peers' have improved.

Figure 3.15: Ratnieki participants' change in experience Time 1 to Time 2



There are two points to note regarding interpretation of the data in terms of the programme's impact. First, this group of men comprise only those who had remained on the programme during the time of the evaluation. Data from the two men who were asked to leave were not collected. It is likely therefore that the data here are positively skewed. Secondly, as there is no control group of similar men who did not participate in the programme, it is not possible to rule out factors external to the programme that may have led to change. Nevertheless, the qualitative comments from the men indicate that they perceive the programme to have a positive and beneficial effect. Results from the evaluation survey at Time 2 are presented in Figure 3.16.

Figure 3.16: Ratnieki participants' evaluation of programme at Time 2 (N=11)



The criminal justice system in Latvia

A round table discussion was held with the Latvian Prison Authority Deputy, the Head of Education and Employment, and the Director of Prison Fellowship, Latvia in a meeting room within the Ministry of Justice. Also present were the Director of the Ratnieki programme and the ECOR partner who collaborated with the Miriam programme director.

During this meeting the Justice Ministry personnel said that they were aware of the ECOR project and knew something about the Miriam and Ratnieki programmes. However, further details about the programmes were outlined by the practitioners and attention drawn to the EU Green paper (COM(2011)0327) relating to detention conditions within EU countries and its

concern that countries should consider social rehabilitation as a vital part of reducing recidivism.

Rehabilitation and reintegration are difficult to situate within the Latvian criminal justice system as the Prison Authority and Probation Department are completely separate entities.

Prisons are only responsible for offenders until release and then other organisations are responsible for ex-prisoners with no existing connection between these departments. Some municipalities and NGOs work with ex-prisoners but the executive authorities within the criminal justice paradigm have no 'common language' with which to link these different organisations and activities. Existing legislation only provides for short-term assistance to some ex-prisoners through these bodies.

The legislature appeared to welcome the input of volunteers and NGOs but were cautious about extending their contributions. The main concerns centred on a perceived lack of systematic training and the diversity of target populations. For example, there is some support for addicts with ex-addicts as volunteer workers but the Ministry worries that there are few qualified, professional staff-trainers.

Ministry staff emphasised the government's willingness to enable ECOR and other such rehabilitation programmes but observed that it would involve other departments and not just the prison service. They were keen to encourage collaboration between the existing volunteer force working in prisons and said that they would work towards improving their rehabilitation work. The Prison Authority Deputy Head said that the ECOR project was of great significance to the government and they would be interested in trialling more such programmes. There are currently some government programmes but they are less holistic, more fragmented and only available in prisons. Furthermore, these programmes do not remove prisoners from the influence

of existing prison subcultures. The Deputy Head pointed out that such developments were likely to require legislative changes that would be slow to materialise, especially if financial investment was required.

Summary

The ECOR project has enabled the extension of two quite different rehabilitative programmes in Latvia; Ratnieki and Miriam. Despite the difficulties of the legislative context, which makes it challenging for any rehabilitative programme begun within prisons to continue after prisoners' release, the Ratnieki programme accepts volunteer, male ex-prisoners for up to one year. All participants are assisted to find accommodation and employment when they leave. Places on the course are funded by donations and municipalities and all staff are paid.

Ratnieki's existence is precarious as it is completely dependent on charitable and municipal funding. Therefore, provision of places is directly affected by the availability of finance and fundraising may act as a distraction from managing/monitoring programmes.

The Miriam programme is for women prisoners and usually accepts candidates during their final three years' incarceration. Although there may be some practical assistance when women are released, this is not a programme feature.

The Latvian government and Prison Authority value the provision of the ECOR programmes but the interviewees emphasised that rehabilitation and aftercare of prisoners is in its infancy in post Soviet-bloc countries. In any jurisdiction resettlement is challenging but with little preparation or provision of post-release support, many Latvian ex-prisoners will struggle to remain crime-free. The apparent value of aftercare support is discernable in the quantitative data we collected from the clients participating in the ECOR pilot at Ratnieki. We identified positive changes in the attitudes of participants

who stayed on the programme – notably, lower levels of stigma, more trusting relationships with staff, effective learning experiences, and greater optimism about their future. Whilst these outcomes cannot be attributed directly to the programme without a control group, together with the qualitative data they are suggestive of the positive changes resulting from participation in the aftercare programme.

The Ratnieki programme is the only ECOR programme solely designed for prisoner aftercare. As such its clients have been released without assistance from the criminal justice system but their response to a structured and supportive regime indicates an appetite for sustained aid to return to society.

Unfortunately the lack of official reconviction data in Latvia meant that our evaluation was unable to determine the programme's impact on recidivism. Nevertheless, from the data we collected it is reasonable to claim that Ratnieki currently provides a valuable resource to ex-prisoners and, if they successfully rejoin and contribute to society, the programme presumably represents a considerable cost-benefit when compared to incarcerating recidivists.

4 Collective Analysis of Findings

It is relevant to consider the overall impact of the ECOR programmes from two key perspectives; first, the extent to which they provide a humane environment and facilitate the well-being of prisoners during their time in custody and second, their contribution to prisoners' desistance from crime and/or addiction.

Well-being in prison

The link between well-being and personal development is well established. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs identifies the importance first of meeting basic physiological and security and affection and esteem needs before people are able to achieve the goal of self-actualisation. Similarly, educational researchers such as Rudduck (1998) have identified the importance of physical and psychological well-being for learning. Within the penal context, Alison Liebling and others at the University of Cambridge have identified the importance of the moral performance of prisons – the extent to which the prison regime is based on principles of respect, trust, and decency – for a prison regime for human flourishing (see for example, Liebling with Arnold, 2004).

Desistance from crime or drug addiction

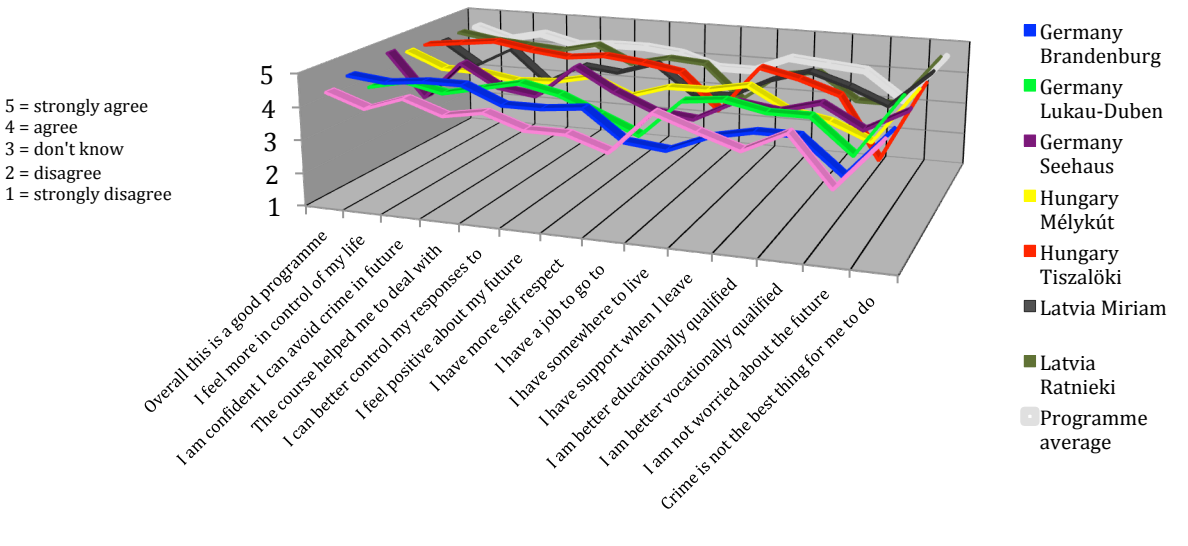
> How do you know when someone has successfully conquered their addition (offending lifestyle)? If someone has a relapse after five years, do you discount the first 4 years that the person stayed clean (desisted)? We say success is every day that someone is clean (desisting)
>
> (Blue Cross staff member).

Desistance from an established lifestyle of crime or drug addiction is known to be a difficult and challenging process and dependent on personal and social factors. Personal qualities identified with successful desistance include

motivation to change, hopefulness, and a sense of agency (see Maruna, 2001). Social conditions for change include opportunities for employment, social networks, and support groups (Farrell, 2002). In the absence of long-term measures of re-offending and in light of the brief evaluation period, it is relevant to take into account any intermediate outcomes in terms of the extent to which the ECOR programmes facilitate well-being and the development of both personal and social resources over time.

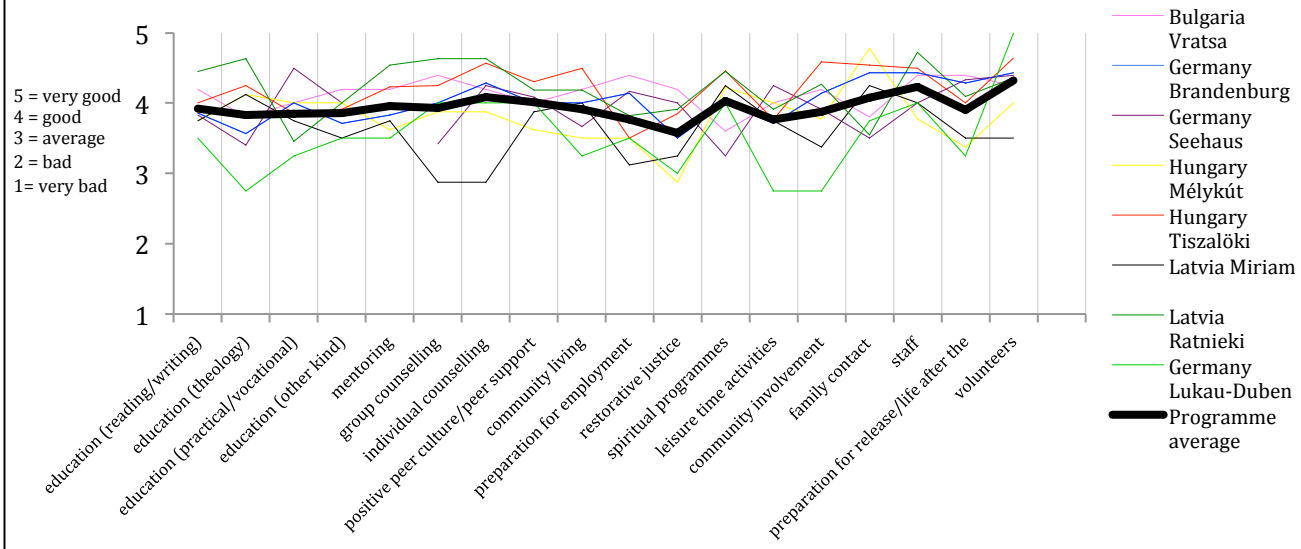
Our collective analysis of the quantitative data showed a positive picture of the ECOR programmes in this project. They support the views of practitioners, prison staff, and programme staff and volunteers that APAC-based programmes are adaptable to the EU context and that participants generally feel they benefit from them. Figure 4.1 shows the overall evaluation of each programme by its participants.

Figure 4.1: Participants' evaluation of programme and its outcomes



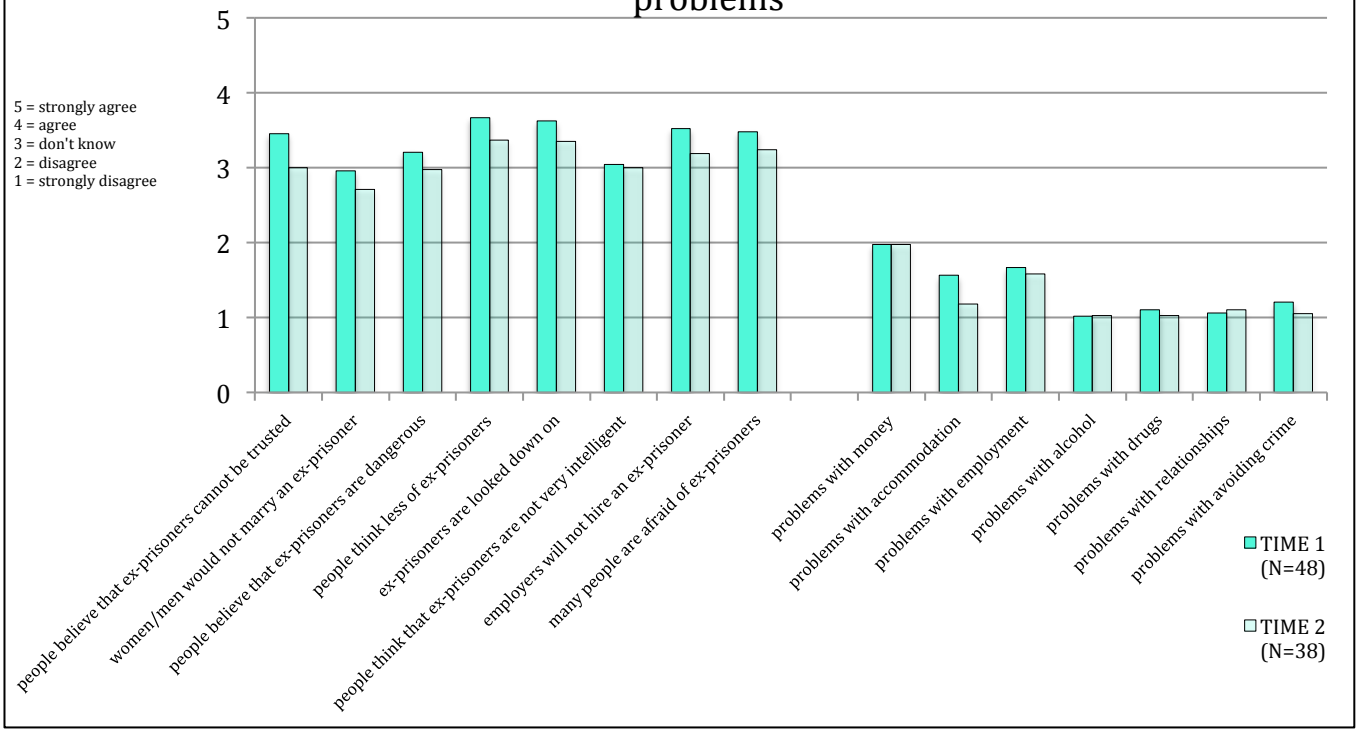
In Figure 4.2 we present the evaluation of their individual programme elements by all participants at Time 2 (except Seehaus when the questionnaires were administered at Time1).

Figure 4.2: Participants' evaluation of programme elements



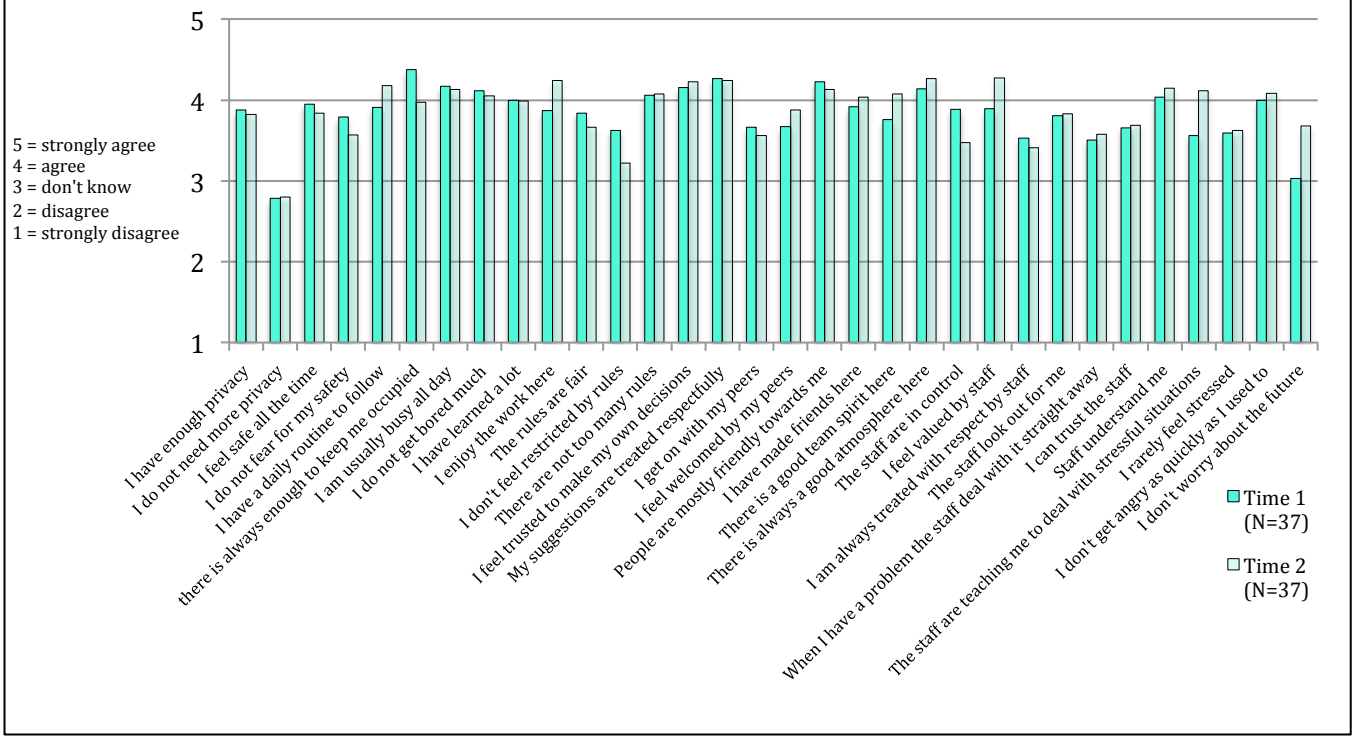
We also found some significant improvements in participants' perceptions of themselves. In all four programmes where change over time was analysed (COR at Vratsa in Bulgaria, Miriam and Ratnieki in Latvia, and Tiszalöki in Hungary) participants' levels of stigma dropped and these changes were statistically significant in the Ratnieki and Miriam programmes (see Figure 4.3 below).

Figure 4.3: Pooled sample: Ratnieki, Miriam, Tisalöki, and Vratsa respondents' change in perceptions of stigma and personal problems



Participant experiences of the four programmes where change over time was measured were largely positive overall and showed a slight, although not statistically signficant, increase over time (Figure 4.4. below).

Figure 4.4: Pooled sample: Vratsa, Tiszalöki, Miriam, and Ratnieki participants' experience at Time 1 & Time 2



Our qualitative data identified that participants saw the ECOR programmes as humane environments conducive to their psychological well-being:

> I was a person in a family not a number
>
> (Germany, Seehaus participant).

> I was looking for a group I could survive this terrible life with
>
> (Hungary, Tiszalöki prisoner).

> We implemented the ECOR site here in Pálhalmai because family relations are very important for women
>
> (Hungary, Mélykút prison director).

We also found qualitative evidence that the programmes were contributing to the personal development of participants:

> We noticed that the prisoners in the community groups talked about the discussions they had with each other afterwards, but when they lived separately, they went back to their cells, and there wasn't the same discussion
>
> (Director, Luckau-Duben Prison).

> It is difficult to learn together. I am training for the outside […] if I can get on with people in here, then [...] I can learn to solve problems with others
>
> (Participant, Blue Cross programme).

In interpreting these findings it is important to note that respondent numbers were small and all the programmes had many months left to run after the Time 2 questionnaire survey. Therefore the data reported here should be interpreted as an interim assessment. A further point to note is that all programme participants were drawn from a volunteer population and selected by the prison staff and programme practitioners. Furthermore, a requirement for all programmes was an expressed desire to change and so all respondents were motivated prior to joining the programme.

Consequently, while there are positive results from the evaluation it is important to acknowledge that there is a selection effect. The programmes are not likely to be suitable for everyone at all times. There are some people who find the communal living or the regimes difficult and leave, or are asked to leave. It may be that the programme will never be appropriate or it may be a question of finding the right time for an individual. On the Vratsa and Ratnieki programmes for example, two participants broke community rules and were asked to leave. At the Seehaus, one young man returned to prison:

> One young person didn't co-operate, he did nothing we said to him…. He had no motivation and went back.
>
> (Programme staff member, Seehaus)

Blue Cross programme managers' view is that from every 10 people who attend the course, 3 clearly change, the progress of 4 is uncertain, and 3 do not succeed. The ECOR programmes may be best seen therefore as having a 'niche' appeal and of being one of a portfolio of resettlement initiatives that reflect the diversity of the personal and social needs of people who have been imprisoned.

Evaluation Conclusions

APAC IN EUROPE

The ECOR programmes described above are derived from the APAC model and build upon the foundations already established in four European countries. However, the context is challenging. Bulgaria, Hungary, and Latvia are all post Soviet-bloc countries that retain much institutional and structural Soviet influence. This infrastructure has restricted the capacity for developing the full APAC model of continuing state support (as opposed to court mandated supervision) once prisoners are released. Additionally, the Soviet-bloc ideology and attitude towards convicted people was concentrated on detention and security rather than rehabilitation (see for example, Pettai & Pettai, 2014). However there are signs of policy change in the post-Soviet era. For example, in Hungary there has recently been a shift towards a more probation-focused approach. Further, all the criminal justice authorities in this study valued the rehabilitative work of the NGOs and volunteers. Without exception the authorities we met were impressed by the energy, professionalism, and capability of the ECOR partners' varied organisations.

The importance of a volunteer staff is that the ECOR model can provide a cost-effective programme, a key consideration where little state provision exists. However, this presents a challenge to volunteers themselves as their level of commitment needs to be high. Not only do many travel long distances to the programme sites, others supply the resources required for the classes. It is clear that prison and criminal justice administrations value the provision

of extra resources but are unable to ensure that all services for offenders are linked between the departments responsible for their detention and/or supervision in the community. Additionally, in Bulgaria and Latvia the rules governing security classifications are based on fixed factors and cannot be influenced by individual prisoner's behaviour or compliance with programmes aimed at rehabilitation.

Aims and achievements

Each ECOR programme aimed to rehabilitate offenders, treat them with humanity, equip them with useful skills, and encourage their future desistance from crime.

Although it was a challenging timescale, all of the ECOR programmes had been set up and had recruited their first participants. At Vratsa prison a new building was completely refurbished and a formal contract agreed between Prison Fellowship, Bulgaria and the Bulgarian Prison Authority; in Hungary two completely new programmes were implemented, one in a women's prison and the other in a men's maximum security prison; in Latvia the Ratnieki programme doubled its capacity and the Miriam programme added a completely new course element; in Germany both the Seehaus and the Blue Cross provided new aftercare provision and addiction counselling. All of these measures fit within the overarching ECOR goal of providing more humane conditions of detention to facilitate the rehabilitation and restoration of individuals.

Theoretical dimensions and programme impact

In evaluating the APAC model in Europe considering the contribution of prison-based programmes as a humane approach to detention as well as the longer-term goals related to desistance from offending and addiction is pertinent.

Many of the ECOR prison programmes can be seen as examples of 'humane detention', as conceptualised by King & Morgan (1980), which includes holding prisoners in establishments closest to their community ties, providing access to appropriate health, welfare, and educational facilities, and offering decent standards of accommodation, food and clothing, and employing the minimum levels of security needed to protect themselves and others. The existence of these prison programmes across different European contexts is evidence of the potential for widespread change to the detention conditions of prisoners throughout Europe.

Although no large-scale long-term reconviction analysis was possible because of the short timescale of the evaluation, the data collected support the theoretical links between the ECOR model and knowledge about desistance from offending and addiction. The programmes can operate as 'turning points' for change (Laub & Sampson, 2003). They provide a supportive environment within which individuals can develop the human and social capital to establish a new lifestyle. They facilitate the development of skills for independent living and the community networks to provide practical and emotional support. The emphasis on family contact and restoration in the Hungarian and German programmes encourages the maintenance of relationships in the long term (Lanskey et al., 2016), which can in turn support resettlement of ex-prisoners (Losel et al., 2012). Finally, the long-term vision of the model in prison and community settings is aligned with the understanding of desistance as a process that is likely to require ongoing and consistent support over time.

Reflections on evaluation methodology

Due to the variations in the recruitment and selection criteria across the projects, the evaluation methodology required some flexibility. For example, before and after measures were possible when a cohort of participants all joined at the same time but not where individuals came and left at different times. It was important that our evaluation methodology was adaptable to the

particular style of the programme so that we could fully capture its effects; hence the mixed methodology. This evaluation did not have the scope to assess long-term outcomes but we have shown that both staff and participants valued the programmes in the prisons where they were implemented.

We were not able to track individuals after programme completion and so their experiences 'to date' were the best possible measures available. It is important to note that short-term outcome data which assess 'appreciation', subjective experiences, or perceived value should always be viewed with caution as actual long-term outcomes may differ (McCord, 1978; 1981).

Questionnaires were derived from other programme evaluations and developed in relation to the short-term outcome data that were available. It was difficult to develop questions that were universally applicable. For example, questions relating to drugs were irrelevant in some cases but, in others, central. Therefore, these questions form a useful template and guide for a short-term process evaluation but may need refinement or adaptation for individual programmes and longer periods of evaluation.

All questions were written in English and there may have been some inconsistencies in the translation into local languages and their interpretation by respondents. For example, questions relating to 'staff' were intended to mean programme staff and not uniformed or non-uniformed prison staff. However, it is possible that some of these questions may have been misinterpreted. The anonymity of participants was a further barrier to long-term follow-up. It also prevented any preparations for a reconviction study in the future. Nevertheless, it may be possible to arrange for a final survey as individuals finally graduate from their respective ECOR programmes.

Practical time constraints meant that we were only able to interview selected or available individuals. For example, the Prison Director at Ilguciems prison in Latvia was ill and the Deputy was interviewed instead. Additionally,

interviewees were not randomly selected nor did they necessarily represent every aspect of the programmes concerned and we were unable to meet all programme staff or all those prison staff with experience of the ECOR programmes and their predecessors.

Most interviews required interpreters. ECOR partners arranged for interpreters and, although they appeared quite competent, not all were professional; rather they were usually proficient English speakers. This could have introduced some inconsistency in the level of translation between interviews/individuals. In any case, the requirement for interpretation added to the length of the interview thus reducing the number possible during each site visit.

All the programmes observed were in the set-up and development stage. This was reflected in the readiness of the separate living quarters and the short length of programme experience for some participants and volunteers/teachers.

Some of the participants' positive responses may reflect the attractiveness of better living conditions in prison rather than elements of wishing to change and learn from what the programmes offer. Responses from such participants may confound the results from those with aspirations to change their lifestyle.

In terms of programme implementation, the ECOR project is very short. Therefore, the process evaluation has been limited to the first few months of programmes designed to last a minimum of one year and up to three years. A subsequent longitudinal research study, which tracked the progress of the participants over the full duration of the programme in prison and in the community, would provide important evidence of the impact of the programmes in the long-term

Learning points from the evaluation

Governmental support is critical to the success of ECOR programmes. This needs to be at all levels of the justice hierarchy from ministerial, through prison governors and officers, to frontline practitioners. Without such support programmes requiring physical facilities and staff co-operation will struggle to survive. However, this project clearly demonstrates that, when support is available, APAC-based programmes such as ECOR can open avenues of trust between staff and volunteers that lead to positive outcomes for prisoners.

Programme direction and management

All the ECOR programmes were labour intensive with volunteers providing the majority of support.[13] This has implications for management and training to ensure that (even professionally qualified) programme staff adhere to appropriate prison rules, maintain up-to-date knowledge, and follow protocols. Most volunteers and paid programme staff were professionally qualified or practised in their area of expertise and several had worked with prisoners before.

Volunteers

The concept of volunteering seems to be culture-dependent. In Germany, for example, volunteering is common and widely accepted. However, in Latvia this is less so and in Bulgaria programme directors thought that volunteering was an urban concept rather than one popular in the areas around rural prisons. With such high levels of commitment required for ECOR programmes, some countries may find it challenging to recruit and/or retain sufficient numbers. Nonetheless, the volunteers we met showed very high levels of commitment and satisfaction. The opportunity to see the improvements in prisoners' abilities, skills, and attitudes seemed to provide ample recompense for the input made.

[13] Ratnieki was the exception with paid professional staff.

Although volunteers may receive no salary, there remains a cost to the NGOs and charitable bodies that use them. Governments should develop policies that support a volunteering culture which, consequently, provides additional rehabilitative resources such as ECOR. This is exemplified in the Seehaus programme where money is available for adequate provision irrespective of participant numbers.

5 Expansion Analysis

This section considers what would be required to develop the ECOR programme more widely within Europe. It discusses first the potential to sustain and expand the current projects and secondly, how new Communities of Restoration in different European contexts might be developed. The analysis presented here is based on data from the experiences of ECOR partners collected during the evaluation of the projects and reflective interviews on the ECOR programmes' Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) with the leaders of each partner project in February 2016.

1 The development of existing ECOR projects.

The evaluation of the projects has identified several important features for the sustainability of the ECOR projects; working within the national context, maintaining relationships with criminal justice authorities, securing long term financial stability, maintaining the flexibility of the programme content with the established principles, appropriate strategies for recruiting participants, developing the infrastructure of staff and volunteers, and developing contacts with offenders' families and the wider community. These are discussed below.

National context

All partners were clear about the importance of embedding the projects within the existing criminal justice provision whilst maintaining the independence from prison authorities that is pivotal to their success. In some countries, such as Germany and Hungary, achieving legislative support was a significant achievement and established the long-term viability of the programme in principle and provided strong foundations for further development. However, not all legislatures can introduce the legislation necessary to enable the full extent of the ECOR/APAC vision of providing ongoing support beyond the prison gates. For example, the prison authorities in Latvia recognised the value of the Ratnieki programme and its contribution

to rehabilitation but they were restricted in legislative terms by the separation of custodial and community supervision. A similar situation exists in Bulgaria.

It was also felt to be important to dovetail the programme with other provision within the system so that it complemented and extended what was already available to people in prison and on release. In Germany for example, the Seehaus's vocational training programme was complementary to another custodial programme, available to young people in the state of Baden-Württemberg, offering academic training.

Relationships with Criminal Justice Authorities

Having established initial support from ministries of justice nationally and locally, the ECOR partners noted the importance of keeping in regular contact with officials about the work and the success of the programme. They said it took time to build up trust and that it was helpful to provide information about the project's successes in terms of criteria recognised and valued by policy makers. Evidence of the programme's positive impact on participants and local communities and public support from high profile employers and well-known personalities were considered to be particularly useful.

The projects that were either prison based, or that were dependent on prisons to recruit participants, identified the critical importance of strong relationships with the prison governors and staff working on the prison wings. They noted that it took time to develop trusting relationships. Trust was built by ECOR partners respecting key prison rules, by demonstrating their expertise in the specific areas of the programme, and providing evidence of their success. In some cases, where projects wanted to make changes to the working relationship with the prisons, there was a need to negotiate with the authorities and to wait to see whether there would be agreement to change.

The existence of strong working relationships between ECOR partners and individual prisons was a positive influence on prison authorities' decisions to support proposed changes to an existing project or agree to the establishment of new projects in other prisons.

Long-Term Financial Security

> 'What makes the programme last is financial security'.
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross)

Financial considerations are a key concern for the continuation of the programmes. The EU grant represented a signification contribution to the ECOR partner organisations in terms of helping set up new projects and to develop the work of existing ones.

Maintaining the increased level of activity and expanding the projects' fundraising activities will need to be a core part of the leadership strategy. The key costs associated with running the programmes are; employment of professional staff, the acquisition and maintenance new premises, and developing infrastructures of community support particularly amongst employers.

> As the ECOR programme is growing we need a mentor/leader to work on each of the four sites, the two existing ones and the two new ones. These four leaders/ mentors will need salary, tools and transportation
>
> (Programme Director, Hungary).

The sources of funding will vary across the different national contexts but are likely to include funding from government bodies, religious and charitable foundations, and sponsorship from employers and businesses. Regular funding streams were preferred as they allowed the projects to focus on the work of delivering the programmes. The financial commitment of the German state of Baden-Württemberg ensures that the Seehaus programme is not

dependent on participant numbers. Conversely, Ratnieki in Latvia is completely dependent on local government support to fund each ex-prisoner's place. Partners advised avoiding regular financial commitments and fundraising for particular aspects of the project instead. For example, they said that it was better to buy and renovate premises rather than rent premises for the programme.

Adaptability of the programme

The partners agreed that to maintain the relevance of the programme it was important to be adaptable to the changing needs of offenders, and their prospects after release from custody, whilst maintaining the core principles underpinning it. For example, a key principle of the Blue Cross programme could not be effective without adherence to the core principle of 'abstinence'.

> You always have to change things. Once you think you are perfect then you are wrong! You always have to make changes. Inmates change. Surroundings change. You have to make changes to make your programme adapt to the needs of inmates and the social context. For example, addiction problems are growing. We have had to adapt
>
> (Programme Director, Seehaus).

> Within the programme streams (psychology, addiction treatment, counselling), the programme is very adaptable. Specialists know the goals and use the necessary tools (methods) from their expertise to achieve these goals. However the core principles underpinning the programme need to remain firm
>
> (Programme Director, Latvia).

The ECOR partners said it was also important to be clear of each programme's limitations. For example, the Seehaus project works with family model and excludes sex offenders for three reasons. First, it is not a therapeutic community and does not have the necessary resources in the form of psychotherapists. Secondly it would pose a potential risk to the children of the families living in the Seehaus, and thirdly it would be harder to maintain

local public support for the Seehaus. The local support for the Seehaus has taken time to build and is important to the success of the Seehaus project.

On-going recruitment of participants

A regular and active means of disseminating information about the programme to potential applicants was considered to be a key element. Project partners said that participants should be clear in advance of the rules, aims, and purposes of the project and to understand what living in the community would entail.

Some project partners warned that selection criteria might need to be refined and adapted in order to ensure that participants were fully committed and able to benefit from the programme. They noted that it was important to be aware that, where the conditions of imprisonment were poor, participants' motivation to join the programme may be in order to escape prison conditions rather than a commitment to the project's goal itself. The Bulgarian project identified the challenges of prisoners, who had become institutionalised through multiple prison sentences, moving to open conditions.

A further point for consideration was how to maintain positive relationships with those who leave, or are asked to leave, the programme and return to the original prison community. This was thought important so that former participants are not overly negative about the programme in their communication with other potential recruits.

Extending staffing infrastructures

The volunteers who support the programmes are a highly important and valuable resource. However, they are not free (Brudney, 1999) as they must be trained and managed. Furthermore, in the prison context, they must be capable of passing security checks. Many ECOR programmes depended on the expertise of professionally qualified volunteers; for example, several

volunteers on the COR programme in Bulgaria were trained psychologists and counsellors.

The projects had to ensure that their volunteers are well-trained to deliver the programme and are clear of the lines of authority within the project. Several projects identified the need to build a stronger support network within the community that programme participants could access on leaving the prison:

> It is not just enough to have 3 or 5 people; one needs a new community. It is important to have people who are prepared to let people forget their problems in community. An example is P who lives alone… whenever he has problems he knows he can always go to the community. As one person cannot be there for him the whole time, there needs to be lots of people he can trust
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross).

Local church communities could provide such a network but these were not always available close to the prisons. Sometimes it would be necessary to build up a volunteer network from scratch. This would likely be a gradual, and consequently slow, process.

All the volunteers encountered through the research evaluation invested considerable time and effort in supporting the programmes and prisoners. Many had been volunteering in this kind of capacity for several years but, if ECOR programmes are to expand, more people ready to support the project will be required.

Some projects identified the need for more professional staff to work on site within the prisons and to deliver specialist courses, such as addiction programmes. The newly established infrastructure of ECOR partners provides some opportunity for the sharing of expertise and support. For example, the Seehaus and the Blue Cross had started working together to provide addiction counselling for young people at the Seehaus:

> To develop the programme further you have to exchange ideas with similar projects, share experiences and together with your staff always work on enhancing the methodology
>
> (Programme Director, Seehaus).

As the projects became more established and relationships became stronger on the ground, some ECOR directors were able move to a more managerial, supervisory role. Such moves facilitate the development of new work and prevent a dependence on individual, charismatic leadership.

> At the beginning of the project there was not so much working together but this is better now. People are now working together. Over time we have taken on more of a supervisory role – watching the project from the top
>
> (Programme Director, Hungary)

Contact with participants' families and wider community support

Several projects identified the importance of strengthening relationships with participants' families during their time in prison and afterwards. Establishing contact with families during the prison sentence was necessary to encourage participation at family events and, to develop effective support after release, links with families in the community had to be sustained. Where relationships with immediate family were weak or broken, then it was necessary to develop contact with extended family members or to provide alternative family-type support from volunteer networks.

Additionally, the support of the wider community, particularly from employers and other training providers, was important to develop. Some of the ECOR projects had already established good links with employers, for others this was work in progress.

Publicity

The value of publicising and disseminating the work of ECOR was recognised as an important part of the strategy for gaining new recruits and also for sustaining support from ministries of justice and local communities; in turn supporting the continuation and expansion of the projects. The projects made use of social media and the internet to publicise their activities and many had their own websites. Project directors were active in promoting the work of the programmes at international conferences.

2 Starting a new ECOR project

The second part of this expansion analysis considers what is necessary to start new projects from scratch. Drawing on their experiences, the ECOR partners identified the following components; having a clear vision for the project, securing the support of co-workers and volunteers, establishing positive but independent relationships with prison authorities, having clear strategies for publicity and recruiting participants, tailoring the programme content to the needs of participants, and identifying how to establish contact with participants' families. The partners offered varying advice on where to start the work of setting up the project, which reflected the differing criminal justice contexts they worked in.

Vision

The partners agreed that it was important to have a clear vision of what the project would achieve and how. They said it was necessary to take time for reflection first to establish the theory of change that would underpin the programme. To do this it was recommended to study the APAC methodology carefully and ideally to visit the programme in Brazil or elsewhere for a week or longer to get a real sense of how it works. The Ratnieki programme is an example where a theory of change has been clearly

set out and which could be used as a template for the development of new ECOR programmes.

Partners also commented on the importance of taking advice and considering how the programme could be best applied and adapted to the local context. This would include becoming familiar with the culture of the prison and existing relationships between prison officers and prisoners, and seeking information about the extent of existing rehabilitative programmes in prison and resettlement opportunities on release. It would also necessitate careful calculation of the resources that are necessary and where the sources of support are. Partners advised identifying several possible sites for the new programme:

> If you are in several prisons you have a better chance with the communities around each different place. Then if there are problems in one place, you can continue elsewhere
>
> (Programme Director, Bulgaria).

Programme Content

The initiators of new programmes should have a good understanding of the population of offenders who will be participating and their particular needs. The content of the programme should be tailored to these needs. In particular it was felt necessary to consider how participants' needs would continued to be supported 'through the prison gate' and into the community. Programme directors said there was scope to be creative with the development of the curriculum but it would be important to keep within the boundaries of the staff's expertise and also to ensure that all activities could be completed.

Financial support

> Money is the hardest thing
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross).

Securing financial support for the project is essential. No matter how good the political and practical provision for rehabilitation initiatives is, the ability to project programme delivery into the future can make or break any endeavour regardless of its perceived beneficial outcomes (Mullett, 2016). Many charities and NGOs receive money from foundations and trusts but, equally, individual's donations and fundraising efforts can contribute substantially to their finances.

Although most charities and NGOs have volunteer workforces, most require paid staff to work in key roles such as management or training. Where a volunteer's travelling is involved these expenses may need to be reimbursed. Furthermore, there might be costs incurred in keeping volunteers up-to-date with new information and ensuring that they can demonstrate their knowledge of evolving guidelines or requirements related to their work. These costs must come from the organisation's fundraising efforts from whatever source. Additionally, some volunteers contribute financially or in kind, as in Miriam for example, but this is not universally the case.

Publicity

ECOR partners said it was important to develop a clear publicity strategy to establish positive public perceptions of the programmes locally and nationally, and support fundraising initiatives. This may involve, for example, the issuing of press releases to local and national press, the establishment of a website, and attendance at local and national conferences on prisoner resettlement.

Establishing the credibility of the programme through identifying links with academic research and theory on desistance and 'what works' in terms of interventions with prisoners was considered helpful. The following table may provide a useful template. It is adapted from the presentation by Professor Friedrich Lösel at the final ECOR conference in February 2016. It shows how various core elements of the ECOR programmes are in accordance with research findings on what helps people to desist from criminal lifestyles and what further research evidence is needed to understand the nature, range and extent of the programmes' effects.

ECOR element	Research evidence	What more is needed
Human valorisation and unconditional love	A basic principle of psychotherapy; relevant for all programmes.	Clear indicators for this criterion are needed.
Reintegration and restoration	Restorative Justice has shown positive effects, but not for all types of offender (see Sherman & Strang, 2010)	It is important to understanding of the experiences of people from different cultural backgrounds
Organisational culture	Institutional climate is important (Moos, 1975; Liebling with Arnold, 2004),	More research on the link between prison climate and the impact of interventions run in prisons is needed.
Sentence management, inmate selection based on capacity of change	The ECOR programmes are basically in accordance with strength and needs-based models e.g. Good Lives Model (Ward & Brown, 2004), the Risk Needs Responsivity (Andrews et al, 2006)	Positive selection and dropout rates need to be taken into account (Johnson, 2004). Tensions between prison based risk assessments and programme philosophy of openness and transparency need to be addressed.

Programme management; rewards and accountability	Basically appropriate; holding "each other" accountable is reminiscent of democratic Therapeutic Communities.	Perceptions of fairness are critical. Can be problems of motivation for those on lower levels of rewards system.
Basic education, labour therapy, work	Very important issue; sometimes more relevant than "psychotherapy"; fits to multiple pathways to desistance approach (Sampson & Laub, 1993; Mulvey & Schubert, 2012).	What steps are in place to progress from labour therapy to work?
Christian values	Often results in strong engagement of staff. Spiritual experience can be a protective factor (Lösel & Bender, 2003).	Faith-based programmes require more systematic research (e.g. Aos et al, 2006; Johnson, 2004) Potential risks of faith based programmes need to be established and consideration of their relevance to prisoners with differing or no religious affiliations.
Volunteer support; mentors from the community and the family	Mentoring has some empirical evidence (Tolan et al., 2014)	Key issues: selection and training of mentors; consistency and stability of provision.
Family reintegration; relationship driven	Involving the family is an important issue (see research on desistance (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001) and on family relations in resettlement (Lanskey et al, 2016).	Location of prisons and distance from family home. Organisation of visits. Cases with no/weak family bonds
Community reintegration and restoration; community-based programmes	Good for resettlement & continuity of care. Research identifies larger effects in community programmes than in institutions (Koehler et al, 2013).	For prison APAC programmes how is continuity of care to be established?

In interpreting the research findings shown in the above table, it is necessary to consider the particular needs of the participants who would take part in any new ECOR programme. Although there will be some elements of commonality, the factors contributing to the well-being of women, young people, or men addicted to drugs in custody may vary. Similarly, the resettlement needs and aspirations of different groups of offenders are likely to be different.

Co- workers and Volunteers

> It is communal work
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross).

Persistence and patience were leadership qualities frequently mentioned by ECOR partners. They said that programme leaders should love their work and be ready to spend extra time and resources on the programme. However, partners all agreed that this was 'communal work'. They did not recommend setting up a project alone, rather it was important to find supporters in ministry of justice officials, politicians, practitioners, volunteers, employers, and others.

They agreed that the programme's vision should be understood and supported by all involved in its organisation and delivery. Staff and volunteers required a shared understanding of how the ECOR programme was different from other local initiatives and how it would be implemented in the local context.

The availability of volunteers is of central importance to the development of an ECOR programme and consideration must be given to the different types of volunteers for different prisons. Partners suggested that it was helpful to

develop a profile of the necessary qualities for volunteers on particular projects.

ECOR partners agreed that a central task is to establish strong networks of support for the offenders in the community. Tapping into existing networks, such as church groups, for voluntary support in the community was considered to be a successful strategy for helping ex-prisoners to build new supportive relationships.

Partners said that the motivation of volunteers needed to be clear and unambiguous. Volunteers required a high level of commitment and a shared understanding of ethical beliefs. Several spoke of the need for volunteers to 'serve' and to 'love' the programme participants. They said volunteers should not be involved to solve their own problems, to run away from their lives, or to earn money. Volunteers needed to be able to give the time and to be trained to provide the appropriate support. A further consideration is the acceptability to prison authorities, prison directors/governors, and uniformed prison staff of volunteers working with prisoners.

All partners agreed that training for staff volunteers was essential so that they could effectively deliver the ECOR programme and also so that they were prepared for working within a prison setting. They commented that it would be necessary to establish a clear structure for managing and co-ordinating the volunteering network and for maintaining regular communication with volunteers and staff on the programme.

> We have weekly meetings to discuss all matters
>
> (Programme Director, Bulgaria).

Relationships with criminal justice agents

ECOR programmes require many people to work together and it is vital to establish good relationships with criminal justice agents, from senior ministry

officials to the prison staff. Achieving legislative support for the programme, however, is likely to be a long rather than short-term goal.

The ECOR partners advised new project leaders to ensure that they had credibility with the prison authorities and met them frequently. Demonstrating evidence of expertise was considered to be central to gaining the trust of the prison authorities. This may require professionals to supply the expertise for accomplishing the main work with volunteers providing support.

Good relationships with the staff in the prison are particularly important for facilitating the programme. ECOR partners said it was critical to work together with prison staff to ensure that there are no clashes or confusions. For projects that are running in a prison, prisoners will want clearly visible lines of authority between the ECOR staff and the prison managers. Establishing regular meetings with the prison staff is also helpful. Involving prison managers in the recruitment process may be necessary and/or beneficial for gaining the prison authorities' confidence in, and support for, the programme.

Independence from the Prison Authority

> If it is not possible to be independent then it is not possible to run the programme
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross).

Although it is important to have good working relationships with prison staff, a key principle of the programme is to be independent from the prison authority. Partners were clear that their project's independence allowed the development of trust and openness between programme staff and the participants. It also gave programme leaders greater scope to work with

participants without constraint from any criminal justice agenda such as risk assessments.

Equally, the project needed to be run in a dedicated space, which was separated from the rest of the prison, so that prisoners could adopt new values and behaviour, free from the traditional pressures of the prison subculture.

Participants

ECOR partners said it was important to give participants time to get to know the programme and to develop an understanding the philosophy behind it. It was also valuable to give them time to develop trust for the programme staff and volunteers, as trust is often a rare commodity in prisons. Honesty and transparency in all interactions with participants was considered to be critical therefore, but that could be challenging at times because prisoners are aware that prison staff are often the opposite in the name of confidentiality. Consequently, it may take a long time and require patience but continuing to work on building trust with participants was vital.

Partners stressed the need to ensure that participants demonstrated a commitment to the programme, which included adhering to the community rules and being willing to change their thinking. However they cautioned against only opening the programme to prisoners who were particularly favoured by the prison authorities as success could be achieved with prisoners who had been given poor official prognoses:

> What matters is most is motivation. Anyone who wants to change can change […]
>
> (Programme Director, Seehaus).

> To 'want' is the most important thing
>
> (Programme Director, Blue Cross).

Nevertheless it was recognised that, even with this motivation, participants who are released into the community may need support up to 24 hours per day as they learn to be independent and self-sufficient. Therefore, a strong community support network for prisoners post-release must be established.

Family contact

Where possible building trust between programme staff and participants' families helps to provide a better possibility of support when the prisoner is released.

It is likely that families will not be known to new programme leaders and therefore it will be important to collaborate with the prison authorities and participants to ensure that relatives can be traced and approached.

Where to start

When asked about where to start with the work of setting up a project, from the top down or from the ground upwards, ECOR partners answered that it depended on the national context.

In some countries, such as Germany, it might be feasible to start informally if there was already a good relationship with the prison director:

> The most important person in German prisons is the prison director. He has the most power and the autonomy to decide what goes on in the prison
>
> (Manager, Blue Cross).

Other projects started from practitioners on the ground:

> We started with social workers and then went up to the next rank. The paradox was that after two years we felt something had happened

> because when we changed prison the higher authorities knew about us and protected the programme
>
> (Programme Director, Bulgaria).

In Hungary, however, starting at the top was seen to be the first necessary step:

> The programme will only work when the Hungarian state thinks it is important
>
> (Programme Director, Hungary)

However, to launch and establish the project it was stressed that there had to be support throughout the hierarchy of the justice system and that building on existing relationships could prove fruitful:

> Really you need to start in both places with people in field and in the justice ministry. However if the prison director doesn't want it, the ministry of justice won't be able to make it work. It is ideal if you are already working in prison so that people know you and have trust in you. You must go to the authorities to gain authorisation to work with this target group of ex-prisoners and work from the bottom up to gain experience of working with them
>
> (Programme Director, Latvia).

Conclusions

The ECOR partner organisations all had ambitions to develop their work. The provision of care after release from prison was considered to be particularly crucial. Several projects wanted to develop more restorative work within their programmes as well, and others hoped to extend their work to other populations within prisons. There was a recognition that progress had to be made in small steps to ensure the continuing support of all stakeholders:

> The key is to take small steps at a time, to go forward too quickly is not advisable and things can go wrong
>
> (Programme Director, Blue Cross).

Three key components to establishing a successful project were identified. First, good communication and trust between programme directors and prison staff, particularly prison directors, is vital. Second, no matter how successful any programme within prisons may be, it is the supported transition into the community that is crucial to participants' future desistance from crime. Third, patience, persistence, vision, and motivation are required to bring new APAC/ECOR programmes into existence.

All of the observed ECOR programmes had arisen from the vision and inspiration of one or two people most of whom were still involved in their oversight and delivery. The charisma of these pioneering leaders has played a key role in the success of the programmes. The extent to which the programmes can be developed will depend on the extent to which this strong vision and leadership can be sustained by others.

The content of each potential new programme should be adapted to the particular criminal justice context. Our evaluation data suggest that a promising strategy is to acknowledge the niche appeal of the ECOR programmes and present them as part of a portfolio of resettlement and desistance initiatives for prisoners. For example, whilst the tailored design of the Miriam programme ensured its relevance and continued usefulness in Ilguciems women's prison, its serviceability elsewhere without adaptation may be limited. Nevertheless, the ECOR programmes in this project demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability of the APAC principles.

Similarly, practitioners should to consider how each programme will meet the needs of participants at different stages of their desistance trajectories. This includes the custodial period, then 'through the gate', to resettlement in the community. As the original APAC model identifies, a systemic commitment

to participant well-being and personal development in the present and the future is critical to this endeavour.

Organisations wishing to implement programmes based on the APAC/ECOR principles must therefore have credibility, access to expertise, and leaders with patience and persistence. Without sufficient support from the criminal justice system, access to volunteers with expertise, and the necessary funding ECOR programmes will struggle to survive. Additionally, clear selection criteria, accurate participant profiles and attendance registers, regular progress assessments, and research evaluations will be key to building the evidence base to justify the projects' expansion and replication.

Potential practitioners need to bear in mind that, for researchers and evaluators, negative (that is, unsuccessful candidates or programme participants) outcomes are as important as positives. Such data contribute towards building profiles of suitable offender 'types' for programmes and improving ultimate outcomes. Additionally, unsuccessful negotiations, implementations, or programme elements add to our overall knowledge of how to devise and implement 'good ideas'.

6 Recommendations

We make six key observations and related recommendations based on the research evaluation and expansion analysis:

1. The entry points for the APAC programmes in different countries may vary. In the German state of Brandenburg, for example, addiction treatment was the entry point for the Blue Cross course; in Hungary, the religious dimension of the programme was its key attraction. ECOR programmes will therefore be received well and with most interest when they align with political and/or criminal justice policy and enhance existing provision.

2. It is important to establish support for the ECOR programmes at all levels within the criminal justice system, from senior ministry officials to prison governors and prison and probation practitioners on the ground.

3. Further networking between ECOR partners and other interested parties would be helpful to provide collective learning and reflection on the strengths and limitations of the existing ECOR programmes and to share good practice.

4. Careful record-keeping and systematic selection criteria should be instigated across all programmes to improve future programme sustainability and evaluation. Data on participants who drop-out and complete the programmes would assist with participant profiling potentially improving take-up and completion and reducing wasted resources.

5. The questionnaires that were used in this evaluation may provide useful templates for future research and evaluation. However, they may need to be adapted and refined for individual resettlement programmes. The ECOR training manual can include the questionnaires we used so that they can be adapted for practitioners own evaluations.

6. All the ECOR programmes evaluated here are long-term programmes; the minimum duration being one year. They therefore require a long-term evaluation to properly assess whether they have any beneficial impact on prisoners and ex-prisoners. It would be beneficial if an evaluation of the programmes' impact used a controlled design. Any future assessment should also be suitably tailored to capture the impact of the programmes in terms of both their contribution to humane conditions of detention in the present and their contribution to desistance in the long-term.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTIONS

To be administered to participants/clients at the beginning and end of evaluation period						
DATE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED						
DAYS/WEEKS INTO ECOR PROGRAMME						
PERSON ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE						
Please say how much you agree/disagree with the following statements						
PERCEPTIONS/SELF AWARENESS						
perceived devaluation/discrimination		strongly disagree	disagree	don't know	agree	strongly agree
1	most people believe that former prisoners cannot be trusted					
2	most women/men would not marry a person who has been a prisoner					
3	most people believe that an ex-prisoner is dangerous					
4	most people think less of a person when they have been in prison					
5	most people look down on people who have been in prison					
6	most people think that prisoners are just as intelligent as the average person					
7	most employers will not hire a person who has been in prison					
8	do you believe that many people are afraid of those people who have been in prison					
9	most people believe that drug addicts cannot be trusted					
10	most women/men would not marry someone who has been addicted to drugs					
11	most people believe that someone who has been addicted to drugs is dangerous					
12	most people think less of a person who has been in hospital through a drug problem					
13	most people look down on people who have been in hospital through a drug problem					
14	most people think that drug addicts are just as intelligent as the average person					
15	most employers will not hire a person who has been a addicted to drugs					
rejection experience		yes	don't know	no		
1	did some of your friends treat you differently after you had been in prison?					
2	have you ever been avoided by people because they knew you had been in prison?					
3	have people used the fact that you have been in prison to hurt your feelings?					
4	have you ever been refused accommodation because you had been in prison?					
5	do you sometimes avoid people because you think they might look down on people who have been in prison?					
6	after being in prison were people uncomfortable around you?					

7	did some of your friends reject you after they found out you were using drugs?					
8	did some of your family give up on you when they found out you were using drugs?					
9	were some people afraid of you when they found out you were using drugs?					
10	have people treated you unfairly because they knew you were a drug addict?					
11	do you sometimes avoid people because you think they might look down on people who have had a drug problem?					
12	have some employers paid you lower wages because they knew you had a drug history?					
secrecy		yes	don't know	no		
1	do you sometimes hide the fact that you were a prisoner?					
2	do you think it is a good idea to keep your history of prison a secret?					
3	would you advise a close relative who had been in prison not to tell anyone about it?					
4	do you wait until you know a person well before you tell them you have been in prison?					
5	do you sometimes hide the fact that you were once addicted to drugs?					
6	do you think it is a good idea to keep your history of drug use a secret?					
7	would you advise a close relative who had a serious drug problem not to tell anyone about it?					
8	do you wait until you know a person well before you tell them about your problem with drugs?					

withdrawal/employment		yes	don't know	no		
1	would you apply for a job if you knew the employer was going to ask about your history of prison?					
2	would you apply for a job if you knew the employer didn't like to employ former prisoners?					
3	would you apply for a job if you knew the employer would ask about your history of drug use?					
4	would you apply for a job if you knew the employer didn't like to employ former drug addicts?					
do you have problems with any of the following		yes	don't know	no		
1	money					
2	accommodation					
3	employment					
4	alcohol					
5	drugs					
6	relationships					
7	avoiding crime					

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCE

To be administered to participants/clients at the beginning and end of evaluation period							
DATE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED							
DAYS/WEEKS INTO ECOR PROGRAMME							
PERSON ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE							
PLEASE SAY HOW MUCH YOU AGREE/DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS							
		strongly disagree	disagree	don't know	agree	strongly agree	
1	I have enough privacy						privacy
2	I feel safe all the time						safety
3	I have a daily routine to follow						structure
4	the staff look out for me						support
5	I get on with my peers						relationships
6	there is always enough to keep me occupied						stimulation
7	I am usually busy all day						stimulation
8	I don't feel restricted by rules						freedom
9	I feel valued by staff						respect
10	I get bored a lot						stimulation
11	Sometimes I worry about my safety						safety
12	I am always treated with respect by staff						respect
13	There are too many rules						freedom
14	Sometimes I don't feel welcomed by my peers						relationships
15	I would like somewhere more private sometimes						privacy
16	I have learned a lot						development
17	People are mostly friendly towards me						relationships
18	There is a good team spirit here						relationships
19	The staff are teaching me to deal with stressful situations						support
20	There is always a good atmosphere here						safety

21	I feel trusted to make my own decisions						support
22	I don't think the staff understand me						freedom
23	I enjoy the work here						stimulation
24	When I have a problem the staff deal with it straight away						respect
25	The rules are fair						structure
26	I can trust the staff						support
27	My suggestions are treated respectfully						respect
28	The staff are in control						structure
29	I rarely feel stressed						safety
30	I have made friends here						relationships
31	I don't get angry as quickly as I used to						development
32	I don't worry about the future						development

Appendix 3: Participants' evaluation

	To be administered to participants/clients at the end of evaluation period
	DATE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED
	DAYS/WEEKS INTO ECOR PROGRAMME
	PERSON ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE
	END OF COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE

		strongly disagree	disagree	don't know	agree	strongly agree
1	Overall this is a good programme					
2	I feel more in control of my life after the course					
3	I am confident I will be able to avoid crime in the future					
4	The course helped me to deal with my problems					
5	I can control my responses to difficult situations better					
6	I feel positive about my future					
7	I have more self respect					
8	I have a job to go to					
9	I have somewhere to live (with my family)					
10	I have somewhere to live (not with my family)					
11	I have support in place for when I leave the […] course					
12	I am better educationally qualified					
13	I am better vocationally qualified					
14	I am worried about the future					
15	Committing crime is not the best thing for me to do					

		EVALUATE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE PROGRAMME ELEMENTS					
		not applicable	very good	good	average	bad	very bad
1	education (reading/writing)						
2	education (theology)						
3	education (practical/vocational)						
4	education (other kind)						
5	mentoring						
6	group counselling						
7	individual counselling						
8	positive peer culture/peer support						
9	community living						
10	preparation for employment						
11	restorative justice						
12	spiritual programmes						

13	leisure time activities						
14	community involvement						
15	family contact						
16	staff						
17	preparation for release/life after the course						
18	volunteers						

REFERENCES

Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J. & Wormith, S. (2006) 'The recent past and near future of risk and/or needs assessment', *Crime and Delinquency*, 52(1): 7–27.

Aos, S., Miller, M. & Drake, E. (2006) *Evidence based Public Policy Options to Reduce Future Prison Construction, Criminal Justice Costs, and Crime Rates.* Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

Braithwaite, J. (1979) *Crime, Shame and Reintegration*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3: 77-101.

Brudney, J.L. (1999) 'The Effective Use of Volunteers: Best Practices for the Public Sector', *Law and Contemporary Problems* 62(4): 219-255.

European Commission (2011) *Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area – A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention*. COM(2011) 327 final. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/procedural/docs/com_2011_327_en.pdf. Accessed: 09.07.2015

Farrall, S. (2002) *Rethinking What Works with Offenders: Probation, Social Context and Desistance from Crime*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Hancock, P. & Jewkes, Y. (2011) 'Architectures of Incarceration: The Spatial Pains of Imprisonment', *Punishment and Society* 13(5): 611–629.

Heidensohn, F. & Gelsthorpe, L. (2007) 'Gender and Crime', in M. Maguire, R. Morgan & R. Reiner (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology* Oxford: Oxford University Press (fourth edition), pp. 381-420.

Johnson, B. R. (2004) 'Religious programs and recidivism among former inmates in prison fellowship programs: A long-term follow-up study', *Justice Quarterly*, 21(2): 329-354.

King, R.D. & Morgan, R. (1980) *The Future of the Prison System*, Farnborough: Gower.

Koehler, J., Lösel F., Akoensi T. D. & Humphries, D. K. (2013) 'A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis on the Effects of Young Offender Treatment Programs in Europe', *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 9:19–43.

Lanskey, C., Lösel, F., Markson, L. & Souza, K. (2016) Children's contact with their imprisoned father and the father child relationship after his release', *Families, Relationships and Societies* 5(10):43-58.

Laub, J. & Sampson, R. (2003) *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives*, Harvard University Press.

Liebling, A. with Arnold, H. (2004) *Prisons and their Moral Performance: A Study of Values, Quality and Prison Life*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Link, B.G., Struening, E.L., Rahav, M., Phelan J. & Nuttbrock, L. (1997) 'On Stigma and Its Consequences: Evidence from a Longitudinal Study of Men with Dual Diagnoses of Mental Illness and Substance Abuse', *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 38(June), 177-190.

Losel, F. & Bender, D. (2003) 'Protective Factors and Resilience', in D.P. Farrington & J. Coid (eds.) *Prevention of Adult Antisocial Behaviour,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 130-204.

Lösel F., Pugh G., Markson L., Souza K. & Lanskey C. (2012) *Risk and Protective Factors in the Resettlement of Imprisoned Fathers with their Families,* Milton: Ormiston Children's and Families Trust.

Maruna, S. (2001) *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives,* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

Maslow, A. H. (1943) 'A theory of human motivation', *Psychological review*, *50*(4): 370.

McCord, J. (1978) 'A thirty-year follow-up of treatment effects', *American Psychologist* 33(3): 284-289.

McCord, J. (1981) 'Consideration of Some Effects of a Counselling Program' in Martin, S.E., Sechrest, L.B. & Redner, R. (eds), *New Directions in the Rehabilitation of Criminal Offenders*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, pp. 394-405.

Moos, R. (1975) *Evaluating correctional and community settings.* New York: Wiley.

Mullett, M. (2015) *Conducting a Randomised Experiment in Eight English Prisons: A Participant Observation Study of Testing the Sycamore Tree Programme*, unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge.

Mulvey, E.P. & Schubert, C. A. (2012) 'Some Initial Policy Implications from the Pathways to Desistance study', *Victims and Offenders*, 7(4): 407-427.

Pettai, E. C., & Pettai, V. (2014) *Transitional and retrospective justice in the Baltic States*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rudduck, J. (1998) 'Student voices and conditions of learning', in B. Karseth, S. Gudmundsdottir, & S. Hopmann, *Didaktikk: Tradisjon og Fornyelse, Festskrift til Bjorg Brandtzaeg Gundem*, Oslo: Universitet i Oslo, pp. 131-146.

Sampson, R.J. & Laub, J.H. (1993) *Crime in the making: pathways and turning points through life*, London: Harvard University Press.

Sherman, L.W. & Strang, H. (2007) *Restorative Justice: The Evidence,* London: The Smith Institute.

Tolan, P. H., Henry, D. B., Schoeny, M. S., Lovegrove, P. & Nichols, E. (2014) 'Mentoring programs to affect delinquency and associated outcomes of youth at risk: A comprehensive meta-analytic review', *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *10*(2): 179-206.

Ward, T. & Brown, M. (2004) 'The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation', *Psychology, Crime and Law,* 10(3): 243–257.

Wilson. M. & Lanskey, C. (2015) *European Communities of Restoration: Evaluation Report*. Available from [http://restorative-justice.eu/ecor/]