

Joint Irish Prison Service & Probation Service Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Objective

The Irish Prison Service and Probation Service have a multiagency approach to offender management and rehabilitation from pre to post imprisonment in order to reduce re-offending and improve prisoner outcomes.

Our Operating Environment

The Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service both manage orders of the Criminal Courts handed down in respect of convicted offenders.

It is the work of the Probation Service to manage such offenders in the community and the work of the Irish Prison Service to manage those sent to prison, in the first instance.

Both organisations have as their primary goal the maintenance of public safety through the reduction in offending of those in their care. Increasingly offenders are sentenced to periods in custody followed by periods under supervision in the community after release.

For the majority of those incarcerated, and for those sentenced to sanctions in the community, similar criminogenic needs and risks exist. Lack of employment, abuse of alcohol and drugs, anti-social attitudes and companions, emotional and personal difficulties, poor educational achievement, family problems, and lack of housing or accommodation are prominent among them. Such multiple needs are often interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

Essential to offender focused interventions is that both criminal justice and non-criminal justice agencies encourage the development of a multi-agency problem-solving approach by focusing on offenders, not on offences. Approaches which tackle the complex range of needs are more likely to be effective than focusing on single issues in isolation.

The Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service in their combined efforts to address the cycles of sustained offending behaviour, which place a tremendous burden on national resources, especially through prison overcrowding, need to bring together partners to develop and deliver responses that work.

Community resources need to have strong links with prisons so that work can start early, building motivation and planning for release.

Irish Prison Service & Probation Service

Our Strategic Actions

	Actions	Strategic Outcomes
1	Ensuring that all sentenced prisoners can be assisted in their rehabilitation and community reintegration throughout their sentence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced offending, increasing public safety. • Better resettlement and desistance from crime. • Enhanced sentence management and through care.
2	Building on the success of the Community Return Programme of earned early release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved reintegration of prisoners. • Management of numbers in prison. • Enhanced restorative and reparative releases.
3	Providing support for short sentenced prisoners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased availability of structured release from prison. • Reduced overcrowding of prisons. • A reduction in re offending by short sentenced prisoners.
4	Engaging with service users to reduce the risk of re-offending, creating safer communities through improved service provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a structured opportunity to present the voice of the service user to the joint services. • Developing service users' social capital through leadership, engagement and social integration opportunities.
5	Enhance pre-release planning for prisoners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forging collaborative arrangements with statutory and voluntary providers to respond to the reintegration needs of released prisoners.
6	Promoting social inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better responses to the needs of women prisoners. • Response to the particular needs of travellers in prison.
7	Promotion of joint integrated responses to crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater emphasis on inter-agency co-operation in the management and rehabilitation of prisoners.
8	Responding to Victims - upholding the rights, supports and protection of victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing for the meaningful engagement of victims in the criminal justice system.

Strategic Action 1 :

We will ensure that all sentenced prisoners can be assisted in their rehabilitation and community reintegration throughout their sentence.

Actions	Responsibility
a) The Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service will establish a joint review of funded addiction services to the prisons and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate, Irish Prison Service • Director, Operations, Probation Service
b) Review existing funding arrangements for CBOs to ensure appropriate oversight, governance, financial management and output.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Corporate Services, Probation Service • Director Finance, Irish Prison Service
c) We will identify a schedule of offender programmes to be delivered in prison in order to reduce reoffending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate, Irish Prison Service • Assistant Director, Probation Service
d) We will ensure a transparent and open application of the Incentivised Regime Policy, ensuring all prisoners are kept informed of the various programmes open to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service Operations and Care and Rehabilitation Directorates
e) We will examine the potential for a prison based Drug Therapeutic Community to facilitate better outcomes for prisoners post release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate, Irish Prison Service • Probation Service
f) Enhance collaborative working on the sentence management of sex offenders between the Irish Prison Service Psychology Service, Probation Service and Integrated Sentence Manager Officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation, Irish Prison Service • Regional Manager, Prisons, Probation Service

Strategic Action 2: Community Return.

Building on the success of Community Return Programme of earned early release.

Actions	Responsibility
<p>a) Following on the publication of the Evaluation of Community Return we will implement the recommendations of the report in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Engagement with DSP • In reach services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit
<p>b) To deliver on an integrated approach to Community Return we will develop rehabilitative initiatives, including work training, education and addiction recovery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit
<p>c) We will develop an accredited horticultural initiative in Thornton Hall in collaboration with the CDETB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit
<p>d) In reviewing the assessment processes for the Community Return Programme we will ensure robust arrangements are in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit
<p>e) Match or exceed the target of 450 participants per annum in reparative and restorative structured releases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit

Strategic Action 3:

Provide support for short sentenced prisoners.

Actions	Responsibility
<p>a) Expand on the establishment of Community Support Schemes to include the Midlands Campus and Castlerea Prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Service Oversight Group
<p>b) Target of 400 structured releases to the Community Support Scheme in 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
<p>c) Establish formal evaluation of Community Support Scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Service Oversight Group
<p>d) Ensure consistent assessment and release procedures based on learning of scheme to date.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit

Strategic Action 4:

Engage with service users to reduce the risk of re-offending, creating safer communities through improved service provision.

Actions	Responsibility
a) We will pilot initiatives to engage ex-offenders as peer mentors with offenders under temporary supervised release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
b) Building on the work of the Red Cross organisation across the prison estate, we will seek to develop a community based programme post release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
c) We will seek to capture feedback from service users through surveys and focus group Probation Service, further developing and enhancing our practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Service
d) Explore funding possibilities for ex-offender employment in the Community Return Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Community Return Unit

Strategic Action 5 :

Enhance pre-release planning for prisoners

Actions	Responsibility
a) We are committed to forging improved collaborative arrangements with statutory and voluntary providers to respond to the re-integration needs of released prisoners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate • Probation Service
b) We will develop a Prisoner Release Policy to ensure the effective transition of offenders into the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate • Probation Service
c) We will seek to develop collaborative agreements, underpinned by protocols, with providers in accommodation, education, financial support, healthcare and training /employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Rehabilitation Directorate • Probation Service
d) In keeping with Children First Guidelines we undertake to notify Tusla (Child and Family Agency), through a central point of contact, of all pending releases of sex offenders into the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service

**Strategic Action 6:
Promoting social inclusion**

Actions	Responsibility
<p>a) Building on the Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Women’s Strategy we will respond to the needs of women prisoners and pursue a dedicated approach to working with women offenders in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
<p>b) We will establish a ‘Travellers in Prison Initiative’, in partnership with the St. Stephens Green Trust, in responding to the particular needs of Travellers in prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
<p>c) Identify specific interventions with prisoners aged 18-21 years with a focus on reintegration that takes into account individual developmental needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service

**Strategic Action 7:
Promotion of joint integrated responses to crime**

Actions	Responsibility
<p>a) With identified medium to high risk sex offenders, who will enter the Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management arrangements on release, initial SORAM meetings will take place in the prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant organisations in SORAM
<p>b) We will pilot Joint Agency Response to Crime providing for co-ordinated and enhanced levels of co-operation and co-ordination between An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service.</p> <p>(i) <u>The Ballymun Strive Initiative</u> which will concentrate on those causing a high level of harm or disruption to the local area. We will seek to motivate them to desist from crime and to have their needs supported by local agencies or face an appropriate level of intervention necessary to disrupt their criminal lifestyle.</p> <p>(ii) <u>The Bridge Project Opt In - Change Works Programme</u> which will concentrate on violent offenders in the Dublin area who have been assessed as likely to cause serious harm, aligning Garda Case management, Probation Case Management, Integrated Sentence Management and Community Return (Irish Prison Service).</p> <p>(iii) <u>Opt In Acer</u> - which will concentrate on the management of identified offenders who have been convicted or charged with burglary offences from the Dublin 8 and Dublin 24 areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service • An Garda Síochána • Probation Service

**Strategic Action 7 continued:
Promotion of joint integrated responses to crime**

Actions	Responsibility
c) Each of the above initiatives will be subject to an evaluation which will measure their effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service • Probation Service • An Garda Síochána.
d) Continue to explore joint training initiatives across the agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service
e) Promote and support research and evaluation projects and initiatives in the Probation Service, in the Irish Prison Service and across the Services' shared areas of interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service/Probation Service

**Strategic Action 8:
Responding to Victims - upholding the rights, supports and protection of victims**

Actions	Responsibility
a) We will work in collaboration, and in line with legislation to give effect to the European Directive (2012/29/EU), to provide an appropriate, timely and effective response to all victim requests/concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Service Victim Service Co-ordinator • Victim Liaison Officer, Irish Prison Service
b) We will explore developing a joint information leaflet on the services available to victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Service Victim Service Co-ordinator • Victim Liaison Officer, Irish Prison Service
c) We will continue to contribute and represent our respective services on the work of the Victims of Crime Office, Department of Justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Service Victim Service Co-ordinator • Victim Liaison Officer, Irish Prison Service

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