

1. Introduzione -

Il fatto che i 46 paesi del Consiglio d'Europa siano riusciti a varare le "108 Nuove Regole Penitenziarie Europee" sulla base dei Diritti dell'uomo ed in uno spirito umanitario evidente è sorprendente soprattutto in un momento in cui le prigioni si riempiono e molti governi ed il pubblico hanno la tendenza ad insistere su sempre più "tolleranza zero".

La firma comune delle nazioni europee dimostra come i paesi dell'Est si siano avvicinati alle regole democratiche del gioco per quanto riguarda il regime carcerario, e a che punto le società dei paesi dell'Europa occidentale ed i problemi giuridici e penitenziari siano diventati simili (delinquenza giovanile, droga, sovrappopolazione carceraria, recidiva, stranieri, sicurezza, reinserimento difficile, la nuova povertà, ecc).

La maggior parte delle informazioni per questo rapporto proviene dall'internet. I diversi documenti copiati riempiono più di 5 raccoglitori. Ci sono anche le risposte a molte lettere ed e-mail scritti per chiedere informazioni agli esperti, alle ambasciate, alle amministrazioni penitenziarie ed alcune associazioni di volontariato dei paesi in questione. Tutta quest'informazione fa parte dell'attuale aggiornamento 4/2008 del rapporto.

Nel corso della ricerca sul tema principale, mi è sembrato utile creare 5 capitoli "contestuali" (Statistiche, Organizzazioni internazionali ecc. – sezione "B" qui sopra), perché questi soggetti sono già o potrebbero diventare importanti per i volontari penitenziari nel futuro in un modo o nell'altro.

Lo scopo di questo rapporto è molto limitato e pragmatico. Dopo aver letto le "108 nuove regole penitenziarie europee", volevo sapere come il volontariato carcerario era organizzato a livello europeo. Ben presto mi sono reso conto che la maggioranza delle associazioni lavorava a livello locale o regionale, di rado nazionale, che le "federazioni nazionali" costituivano l'eccezione e che non esisteva nessuna organizzazione europea per l'insieme del volontariato penitenziario; tranne alcune "associazioni specializzate" come Eurochips o EMNA. Di conseguenza, volevo semplicemente

- conoscere meglio il mondo carcerario dal punto di vista di un semplice volontario penitenziario e l'informazione accessibile a tutti (i rapporti "secondo paesi" non sono scritti tanto per i nazionali, ma piuttosto per gli stranieri per dare un'idea del volontariato all'estero),
- conoscere meglio i nostri colleghi del volontariato carcerario nell'Europa occidentale, sapere come lavorano, qual sono le loro organizzazioni e condividere le conoscenze trovate con loro,
- sapere se le organizzazioni nazionali di volontari penitenziari sentono l'utilità di avvicinarsi, di scambiare informazioni, di imparare l'uno dall'altro, per fondare forse più tardi una sorta di "Associazione Europea per il Volontariato Penitenziario".

La mole di informazioni raccolta dovrebbe permettere alle associazioni europee del volontariato penitenziario di decidere sulle opzioni opportune per il futuro.

Vorrei ringraziare la Signora Anne-Marie Klopp (Foro Europeo per la politica criminale applicata di Düsseldorf) ed il Sign. Raphaël Bonte (ex presidente dell'ANVP) per l'incoraggiamento a condurre a termine quest'indagine. Grazie ai miei colleghi in Olanda, Inghilterra, Spagna, Germania e Francia per le verifiche relative al loro paese. Grazie anche ai miei amici Josette, Soledad, Mary-Jo, Diana, Françoise, Alan, Hans e Roberto per il miglioramento linguistico dei testi ed a Maurice per la sistemazione del sito.

A - Conclusioni

1. Il volontariato penitenziario in Europa ha una lunga tradizione. Dopo che il Quaker Richard Wistar ebbe fondato nel 1776 la “Philadelphia society for assisting distressed prisoners”, Elizabeth Fry e le sue compagne della prigione di South Gate di Londra, formarono la prima “Associazione di donne” nel 1817. Nel 1819 fu fondata l’associazione volontaria di San Pietroburgo, seguita da gruppi simili a Amsterdam nel 1823, a Copenhagen nel 1824, a Düsseldorf nel 1826 (Rheinisch-Westphälische Gefängnisgesellschaft) ed a Graz (Austria) nel 1846. Nello stesso anno ebbe luogo il primo congresso internazionale a Francoforte con 75 delegati di 12 nazioni. In occasione di questo convegno e dei seguenti si discusse sul lavoro delle associazioni religiose “private” e del volontariato nelle prigioni che fornivano anche vitto e alloggio per gli ex detenuti. Già durante il congresso di Londra nel 1872, i partecipanti riconobbero che “il migliore sistema carcerario non vale niente se il detenuto non ritrova un posto di lavoro all’uscita” e che “l’aiuto ai detenuti scarcerati costituisce un complemento indispensabile ad una futura riforma penitenziaria”.

All’epoca, le visite in carcere da parte dei volontari furono ammesse in Austria, Francia, Prussia, Olanda, Belgio e parzialmente in Russia ed in Italia, mentre furono proibite in Danimarca, Norvegia, Baviera, Sassonia ed in Gran Bretagna/Irlanda, malgrado il lavoro esemplare di Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), “l’Angelo delle prigioni”.

Nel 1905, in occasione del convegno di Budapest, si decise che, benché le associazioni di volontari lavorassero sotto l’autorità dello Stato, questo non aveva il diritto d’immischiarsi nel loro lavoro perché i volontari contribuivano “ad assicurare l’elevazione morale dei loro protetti” (Estratto da “Selbstverständnis – l’immagine di se stesso” di Gerhard Deimling).

2. Secondo stime ufficiali, circa 1000 associazioni di giustizia sono attive in Germania, 600 in Inghilterra/Galles, 550 in Francia, almeno 524 in Spagna e 223 in Olanda, e 500 in Italia che dovrebbe corrispondere ad un totale di circa **4000 associazioni attive** a livello locale, regionale, nazionale ed anche europeo. Dunque il **volontariato penitenziario è molto presente nella società dell’ Europa occidentale**. Riflette benissimo la diversità culturale, politica e storica del vecchio continente. Di fianco alle amministrazioni penitenziarie con i loro funzionari ed ai professionisti del sistema giuridico e sociale, i volontari sono attivi in almeno **40 campi dalla prevenzione fino alla probazione**.

I volontari penitenziari sono organizzati in molti modi:

- a) Possono essere accettati dalla prigione locale e lavorare come **individui**.
- b) Possono far parte di un’**associazione locale**, come “La Touline” a Nivelles (Belgio), il “Centro de Ayuda e Inserción” di Lleida (Catalonia), il “Pfälzischer Verein für Straffälligenhilfe”, Zweibrücken o il “gruppo volontario del carcere di Lucca”.
- c) Molte organizzazioni sono **specializzate in una sola attività** a livello locale, regionale o nazionale come, per esempio, la GENEPI francese nell’educazione, l’ICVA britannica che ispezionano i commissariati di zona, l’andalusa “Ambassadors in Sport España” che sono attivi nella prigione di Granada o “Solidaires”, un’associazione che gestisce un “centro d’accoglienza di visitatori” a Bois-d’Arcy presso Parigi.
- d) Altre associazioni offrono tutta una **gamma d’attività**, come, per esempio, la “Freie Hilfe Berlin” o HOPE (Scozia) che è specializzata nell’ascolto dei detenuti e delle loro famiglie, nell’assistenza amministrativa, nei consigli d’educazione e di formazione professionale e nella ricerca di lavoro. Inoltre, HOPE organizza un “Prison Visitors Centre” e si occupa delle donne incarcerate.

- e) Molti volontari fanno parte di un'organizzazione **umanitaria o religiosa internazionale** come la Croce Rossa, Amnesti International, la CARITAS, l'Esercito della Salvezza, l'associazione di San Vincenzo di Paoli o la "International prison Fellowship";
- f) Altri lavorano in seno ad un'**associazione nazionale**, come la DIAKONIE protestante ed il "Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband" laico in Germania, Proyecto Hombre in Spagna, NACRO in Inghilterra, CIMADE in Francia, USG-Restart in Olanda o ARCI in Italia,
- g) Ce ne sono che lavorano nelle **compagnie commerciali**, come Neustart in Austria (probazione) o negli **enti regionali**, come "l'Ufficio cantonale della Probazione" di Berna,
- h) e per concludere, c'è una grande varietà d'associazioni, come, per esempio:
- "La Compagnie de Charité" di Liège fondata nel 1654 o la "Encomienda de acción penitenciaria" le cui radici affondano nel "Real Orden de los Caballeros de Santa Maria del Puig" del tredicesimo secolo fino alla "Association Luxembourgoise de Visiteurs de Prison » e « Prélude », l'associazione svizzera di cultura, che sono state fondate tutte e due soltanto nel 2006,
 - Associazioni laiche come la ANVP francese o la NAOPV inglese così come la cattolica "Pastoral Penitenziaria" spagnola, i "Samaritans" della chiesa anglicana, gli evangelisti di "Alpha for Prison" ed i protestanti del Johanneswerk e del "Schwarzes Kreuz" in Germania,
 - "Gamblers' Anonymous", Inghilterra aiuta i maniaci del gioco, "Arge Abschubhaft", Innsbruck difende gli stranieri minacciati dalla deportazione, "When the eagles learn to fly", L'Aia assiste giovani delinquenti, la "rosarote Gefängnishilfe" d'Augusta (Germania) è a disposizione di detenuti omosessuali, i "Circles of support and accountability" di Londra e CAB, Bruxelles tentano di curare i maniaci sessuali ed i volontari d'EORG in Olanda assistono i detenuti nei loro problemi giudiziari.
 - associazioni dai nomi così sonori come "De Regenboog – arcobaleno" a Amsterdam, il Granello di Senape a Venezia, "Dar a mão" a Tires/Portogallo, "Mujeres Gitanas" in Spagna, "s'Häferl" che potrebbe dire in viennese "la gamella" e "Girasol Levante", un' associazione che si occupa di tossicodipendenti nelle regioni orientali della Spagna.

Oltre all'assistenza statale ai prigionieri, quale sono i principali **campi d'attività del volontariato penitenziario in Europa?** La suddivisione successiva di circa 400 associazioni prese da un totale di più di 4000 può essere soltanto "indicativa" perché molte di loro operano in vari campi nella loro maniera specifica e che potrebbero dunque essere incluse in parecchie sezioni:

Prevenzione

Probare, Trier
 Helamaniskan (Svezia)
 AVP, Firenze
 Sacro (Scozia)
 Prison. Me? No way! (Inghilterra)
 Verbrechensverhütung VUS, Hannover
 Papyrus (Inghilterra)

Teatro

Chicken Shed, Geese (Inghilterra)
 Teatro Yeses, Madrid
 Compagnia della Fortezza, Volterra
 Pantagruel, Pistoia
 Théâtre de l'Opprimé, Francia
 Aufbruch, Berlino
 Riksteatern (Svezia)

Sostegno morale, ascolto

La Touline, Belgio
ALVP, Lussemburgo
Centro francescano di ascolto, Rovigo
GAVAC, Roma
Einzelbetreuung (Germany)
Guild of St. Philip Neri (Irlanda)
Families outside (Scozia)
NAOPV, Inghilterra
Ultimi degli ultimi, Roma
Naga, Milano
Samaritans (Gran Bretagna/Irlanda)
ANVP, Francia
Croce Rossa (Scandinavia e Finlandia)
Vrijwillige Bezoekersgroepen, Olanda
Résiliance asbl, Mons

Giuridico, Riforma penale

Fair trials abroad (Europa)
Diritti dei detenuti, Roma
Miscarriage of Justice, Inghilterra
Prison Reform Trust (Gran Bretagna)
Anlaufstelle Göttingen
Partners of Prisoners, Inghilterra
PILD, Italia
Antigone, Italia
L'altro diritto, Firenze
EORG, Olanda
OIP, Francia + Belgio
No more prison (Inghilterra)
Howard League for Penal Reform (Br. Bretagna)
Altenea, Spagna
Avvocati di Strada, Italia
Juridisch Loket, Olanda

Formazione generale e professionale

EPEA, Europa
Génépi, Francia
ADEPPI, Belgio
Forum Prison Education, Inghilterra
Rückenwind, Bernberg
Die Werkstatt, Speyer
Insert, Belgio
Colectivo La Calle, Madrid
Il Varco, Italia
CNED, Francia
Derode Antriciet, Fiandre
PECP/UNED, Spagna
Confraternidad Carcelaria, Spagna

Aiuto Bambini

Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, Reutlingen
Relais Enfance-Parents, Francia
Eurochips (Europa)
Kids VIP (Gran Bretagna)
NEPACS (Inghilterra)
Policino, Tessino
Horizontes Abiertos, Spagna
Coordinadora de Barrio para menores
y juvenes, Spagna
Telefono Azzurro, Italia
Action for Prisoners' families (Inghilterra)
Commission des Patronages (Belgio)
PACT (Inghilterra)
Spirit, Amsterdam
Espace Libre, Charleroi

Famiglia

Autrement, Bruxelles
Ass. Carcerati e famiglie, Gallarate
SACRO, Scozia
Mothers Union (Scozia)
POPS (Inghilterra)
Bremische Straffälligenbetreuung
Family Helpline (Inghilterra)
Humanitas (Olanda)
Gefangenenzorg (Olanda)
Nepacs (Inghilterra)
Scottish Prisoner's families helpline
Prisoners' Families and Friends (Inghilt)
Prisoners' families Infoline, Irlanda
Riksbryggan, Svezia
Mujeres Progresistas, Spagna
Gezin in Balans, Den Bosch

Giustizia restorativa, mediazione

Opfer- und Täterhilfe, Trier
Fondazione per le vittime, Bologna
Neustart, Austria
SACRO, Scozia
Inside out Trust, Inghilterra
CRISI e Istituto Don Calabria, Italia
Sunnmoek Rad, Norvegia
Mikkeli Median, Finlandia
Le Radian, Belgio
Fairmittlung, Germania
Victim Support, Olanda
An Garda Siochana, Irlanda

Shannon Trust (Inghil + Irlanda)
CLIP, Francia
Mabis, Münster
Business in Prison, Inghilterra
Auxilia (Fr, Ger, Spagna)
TTS, Breda
HZZB, Berlino
Die Brücke, Lippe
Presos sin fronteras, Barcelona
From dependency 2 work, Inghilterra
TWCA, Holanda
ASJ, Belgio

Droga, tossicodipendenza

Proyecto Hombre, Spagna
UNAD, Spagna
Remar, Spagna
Centro toscano dipendenza, Lucca
Adfam, Inghilterra
Antox, Spagna
De Regenboog (Olanda)
Act-up, Parigi
Jellinek, Amsterdam
Release, Inghilterra
Aides, Francia
Grüner Kreis, Vienna
Reto a la esperanza, Spagna
AMBIT, Valencia
Girasol, Spagna

Malattie Mentali

PEAPS, Spagna
MIND (Inghilterra)
AISME, Italia
Trimbos, Olanda

Ricerca di lavoro

Die Brücke, Germania
Gefährdetenhilfe, Breitscheid
Zorgconcept, Olanda
Renatec, Düsseldorf
Confraternidad Cancelaria, Spagna
Via, Bochum
HZZB, Berlino
Chance ev, Münster
Business in prison, Inghilterra
Fine Cell Work, Inghilterra
Après, Bruxelles
Freie Hilfe, Berlin
Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Germania
Nacro (Inghilterra)
Inserimento lavorativo, Forli

Probazione

Bewährungshilfe, Neumünster
Verein für Bewährungshilfe, Sarrebrücken
BayLBG, München
Neustart, Austria, Germania,
SOVA, Londra
L'esercito della Salvezza, Olanda
BSDG, Colonia
Activ, Schwerin
Stichting Reclassering Nederland (Olan)
Freie Bewährungshilfe, Stutgart
Cantonale Bewährungshilfe, Berna

Alcol

ASH, Berlino
Ruban Bleu, Finlandia
ELG (Scozia)
Vie libre, Francia
Alcolicos Anonimos, Spagna
AA, Europa
Alcoholico Liberador, Spagna
Kreuzbund, Germania
Blaues Kreuz, Vienna
Tactus/InTact, Olanda
Lanernas Riksförbund (Svezia)
AICAT (Italia)
RIO, Norvegia
FARE, Spagna
Francasa (Olanda)

Donne incarcerate

Straffälligenhilfe kath. Frauen, München
Women in Prison, Inghilterra
Women's link (Inghilterra)
Humanitas (Olanda)
Asociación Mujeres Progresistas, Spagna
Dar a mão, Tires/Portogallo
Hope (Scozia)
Acope, Spagna
Parcours des femmes, Francia
Tussenfasehuis, Olanda
Hibiscus, Inghilterra
SKF, Köln
Women in Prison, Inghilterra
Kath. Gefängnisverein "draussen"
Düsseldorf
Creative support Trust, Inghilterra
BerTha F. Frauenberatung

Prigionieri all'estero

Apex, Spagna
Utlandsbryggan, Svezia

Consozio Sollo, Brescia
Apex, Inghilterra
Gefährdetenhilfe, Kiel
Reto a la esperanza, Spagna

Alloggio

Haus Rupprechtstrasse, Köln
Un tetto per tutti, Milano
Housing sociale, Vigevano
Sacro, Scozia
FNARS, Francia
Exodus, Olanda
Perspektivwechsel, Frankfurt
Stoneham Housing Ass, Inghilterra
YMCA, Inghilterra
Esercito della Salvezza, internazionale
Kontakt, Bayreuth
Ordensgemeinschaft, Düsseldorf
Salvation Army (internazionale)
STEK, Olanda
Integrationshilfe, Vienna
Kontakt in Krisen, Göttingen
HZZB, Berlino
Don Bosco-Haus, Düsseldorf

Associazioni religiose

Schwarzes Kreuz, Celle
IPCA Internazionale
Compagnie de Charité, Liège
Reto a la Esperanza, Spagna
International Prison Fellowship
San Vincenzo di Paoli,
Dignitas, Italia
Zentralwohlfahrtstelle Juden (Germania)
Scheideweg, Hückeswagen
Gefährdetenhilfe Breitscheid
Caritas/Secour Catholique
Alpha for prison (internazionale)
Sesta Opera Fedele, (Italia)
Pastoral Penitenciaría, Spagna
Sepap-Barna, Barcelona
Assemblea de Deus, Portogallo
Christian Ministries Service, Olanda
Encomienda acción penitenc., Spagna
Gefangenenzorg, Olanda
Christian Prison Ministries, Amsterdam
De open Deur, Olanda
Muslim Council of Britain
Sverige Kristna Rad (Svezia)
Amanecer, Burgos
Mateus 25, Portogallo

EGFAS, Olanda
EGPA, Europa
Prisoners abroad, Inghilterra
Prison World, internazionale

Stranieri, deportazione

CIMADE, Francia
ProAsyl, Frankfurt
Asylcafé, Mannheim
Abschiebehaft, Büren
Flüchtlingsrat, München
Glasmoorgruppe, Hamburg
Glasgow Welcomes Refugees
Bezoekergroep Greshospitium, Amsterd.
De Vuurdoop, Tilburg (Olanda)
Arge Abschubhaft, Innsbruck
AVID, Inghilterra
Hanslar, Inghilterra
Dover Detainee Visiting Group
ANFE, Francia
MIB, Francia
Hope, Scozia
GISTI, Francia
Aprim, Francia

Associazioni locali

Jesus lebt, Lenzburg (Svizzera)
Diakonie, Rosenheim
Pfälzischer Verein für Straffälligenhilfe,
Zweibrücken
Colectivo La Calle, Madrid
Il Granello di Senape, Venezia
Bénévolat, Thorberg (Svizzera)
VOC, Tandem (Olanda)
Gefangenenfürsorgeverein, Feldkirch
Austria
Asociación Bideresari, Bilbao
Darse, Madrid
Presos sin frontera, Barcelona
Asociació ExPres "4 Camins"
Granolars (Catalonia)
Sociale Eingliederung, Rheinbach
Straffälligenhilfe Allgäu, Kempten
La prison dans la ville, Brest
Le Cri, Marmande (Francia)
Een Nieuwe Start, Olanda
De Brug, Katwijk

Organizzazioni particolari

Prison Dharma (buddista - internazionale)
CAGE, musulmano
Mujeres Gitanas (Spagna)

Organizzazioni umanitarie

Croce Rossa Internazionale
Amnesty International
Human Rights Watch
Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband
Lega dei diritti dell'uomo

Confederazioni

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft BAG-S, Bonn
BSDG, Köln
LAG-Bayern, München
Prisoners' Families Helpline, Gran Bretagna
Conferenza Nazionale Penitenziaria Giustizia
SEAC, Italia
Consejo Social Penitenciario, Spagna
UNAD, Spagna
Eurochips, Europa
AVP, Piemonte, Toscana, Veneto
EPEA, Europa
Prison Art Network, Europa
FNARS/FARAPEJ, Francia
Bonjo, Olanda
FAFEP, Belgio
EMNA – Europa
CEP, Europa
KAG-S, Germania
REDA, Belgio

Assistenza agli ex detenuti

Apex Trust, Gran Bretagna
Merchant Quay (Irlanda)
Das Trampolin, Vienna
MRS, Parigi
L'ESTRAN, Francia
Emausbewegung, Germania
Delinkwentie & Samenleving, Olanda
KRIS, Svezia

Cultura/Arte plastica

Changing lives through literature, Inghilterra
Prélude, Svizzera
Colectivo Paréntesis, Murcia
ACFE, Svizzera
Association Pulsart, Villepinte (Francia)
Kunst kennt geen Tralies, Belgio
Koestler Trust, Inghilterra
Escape Artists, Inghilterra
ART-ig, Vechta (Germania)
Ann Peaker Centre, Inghilterra
Music in Prison, Inghilterra
Kunst im Knast, Germania

Black Prisoners Support (Inghilterra)
Rosarote Gefangenenhilfe, Augusta
Out-side-in (aiuto prigionieri omosessuali)
Gernica Gogratuz (Spagna)
Libero (anti-mafia), Italia
Rote Hilfe (aiuto politico), Germania
Prisonniers sans frontières, Francia
Gamblers' Anonymous, Inghilterra
Glückspielsucht, Neuss
Garten und Therapie, Detmold (Germania)
Sverige Muslimer Riksförbund
ICVA (ispezione posto polizia), Inghilt.
Prison Phoenix Trust (yoga), Inghilterra
Weisser Ring (aiuto ai vittime), Vienna
Prison Links (per detenuti africani), Ingh.
Knastnet (blog), Germania
Prison talk (blog), Inghilterra
Samaritans (telefono), Gran Bretagna + Irl
Cercle of support and accountancy,
Inghilterra (maniaci sessuali),
SCAPI, Molenbeek (locale)
Unlock (ex detenuti), Inghilterra
Altus (internazionale), ispezione
Blaulicht/Graulicht, Austria (blog)
Prisonniers sans frontières, Africa
Dress for success, Olanda
Welzijn en Justizie, Fiandra

Informazione

DHB (Lotse), Köln e BAG-S, Bonn
Clinks, Inghilterra
Ban Public, Francia
FIVOL e l'altro diritto, Italia
Fouriluogo e CESVOL, Italia
Fundición Atenea grupo Gid, Spagna
Nazorggroep, Olanda
OIP, Francia e Belgio

Accoglienza di visitatori

PACT, Inghilterra
POPS, Inghilterra
Mothers' Union (Gran Bretagna)
Assisted Prison Visits Unit (Scozia)
Quakers (Irlanda)
Carrefour Prison, Svizzera
Solidaires, Francia
AVISO, Montpellier
San Vincenzo di Paolo, Francia
WRVS, Scozia
Nepacs, Inghilterra
UFRAMA, Francia

Studenti che offrono servizi nella prigione: GENEPI (Francia), Initiative Zelle (Würzburg), Goldsmith College Students (Londra), Solidarios para el desarrollo (Madrid), Studenti dell'Università di Granada,

AIDS/HIV - informazione ed assistenza: Body Positive (Inghilterra), LILA (Italia), AVACOS (Valencia), Aidshilfe Erfurt, SIACTION (Francia), Lighthouse (Inghilterra), Ciudadano Antisida (Spagna), Associació Anti-Sida (Catalonia), Verslavingzorg (Olanda), AIDES (Francia).

Associazioni che offrono tutta una gamma d'assistenza, come SKM (Bochum/Freiburg), Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, Reutlingen, Freie Hilfe Berlin, Pastoral Penitenciaría, HOPE e SACRO (Scozia), Humanitas (Olanda), Secours Catholique (Francia), Fondición Padre Garralda (Spagna), NIACRO (Irlanda del Nord), Service de Réinsertion Sociale, Bruxelles, Kath. Gefängnisverein, Düsseldorf, Centro francescano di ascolto, Rovigo, Neustart (Austria), associazioni regionali come la AVP, Firenze o la Croce Rossa in Scandinavia e Finlandia.

Inoltre ci sono una moltitudine d'associazione specializzate, come per esempio,

- remissione dei debiti (Hamburger Fürsorgeverein o Stiftung Traugott Bender a Stoccarda, Schulden- und Insolvenzberatung, Düsseldorf),
- la sorveglianza dei lavori di comunità (Stadtmission, Kiel ed Espace Libre, Charleroi),
- il Telefono amico (Telefono Azzurro, Samaritans, Telefonseelsorge),
- il group counselling (come in Austria, Italia, Scandinavia),
- la risocializzazione d'adolescenti (come offerta da "Outside Chance" di Londra o "Die Brücke", Monaco di Baviera, Bravvo-Bravvo, Bruxelles; Esprit, Amsterdam),
- lettere ai detenuti/aiuto per scrivere lettere/assistenza amministrativa (come Le Courier de Bovet in Francia, "pen friends/pals dappertutto nel mondo),
- organizzazioni internazionali che offrono consigli (Accord, Strasburgo e Beratungsstelle, Görlitz),
- radio, riviste e blogs realizzati in carcere con l'aiuto di volontari.
- attività sportive (come Escola Esportiva, Brafa - Barcelona)
- biblioteche (come quella della casa circondariale di Münster che ha ottenuto il Primo Premio fra tutte le biblioteche in Germania nel 2007, libri in 30 lingue)
- corsi di computer (ideali per studenti e tecnici pensionati, come la CLIP in Francia),
- ispezione dei posti di polizia (come ICVA in GB ed ALTUS in Olanda),
- anger management (autocontrollo di violenza), addestramento comportamentale e superamento di conflitti, training autogeno (come Starthilfe, Trier),
- insegnamento della lingua nazionale e delle lingue straniere,
- circoli di discussione (organizzati dal comitato dei detenuti in certe carcere insieme ai volontari),
- militare a favore di condizioni migliori nelle carcere all'estero (come "Prisonniers sans Frontières" in Francia),
- educazione civica, conoscenze economiche di base (denaro, banche, imposte, lo Stato, leggi, società, ecc)
- così come delle attività in gruppi e di svago,
- un servizio "trovare un compagno/a" ed "amministrare l'appartamento di un detenuto" come fa la Bonjo olandese, ecc, ecc.

3. Nella nostra epoca d'indifferenza religiosa, è sorprendente constatare il forte **coinvolgimento delle organizzazioni religiose** nella vita carceraria che comportano sia gruppi internazionali con un forte messaggio evangelistico, come il "International Prison Fellowship" quanto la Caritas, la Diakonie protestante, la Pastoral Penitenciaría cattolica,

i Samaritans della Chiesa Anglicana che centinaia d'associazioni cristiane a livello locale e nazionale in tutta l'Europa. Inoltre, i cappellani e le loro assistenti garantiscono il diritto fondamentale d'esercitare la propria religione nelle carceri. Seguendo il passo della Bibbia "io fu in prigione e veniste a trovarmi", le Chiese cristiane che furono all'origine del volontariato penitenziario, continuano la loro missione in Europa e nel mondo.

Vista la proporzione importante di musulmani nelle carceri europee, lo scarso numero d'Imam e di volontari penitenziari approvati dalle organizzazioni ufficiali musulmane che lavorano effettivamente nelle prigioni, è sicuramente uno svantaggio non soltanto per l'Islam, ma anche per la società occidentale. La paura crescente del fondamentalismo musulmano da parte del pubblico complica ancora di più la situazione attuale nelle prigioni.

4. Pare che ci sia una **larga concordanza di opinione** tra i Criminologi, la maggioranza dei giudici, le Amministrazioni Penitenziarie e le organizzazioni di volontari penitenziari in Europa nell'affermare che l'incarceramento debba costituire l'ultimo ricorso, perché la pena seguita dall'allontanamento del delinquente dalla famiglia e dal suo lavoro nonché la dura esperienza della prigione non migliorano le condizioni dell'inserimento sociale. Il principio della punizione come "purificazione o dissuasione" pare pressoché abbandonato oggi dagli esperti. Oltre alla necessità di proteggere la società da individui pericolosi, la finalità (almeno ufficiale) dell'incarceramento è l'inserimento, la normalizzazione del condannato alle migliori condizioni per prevenire la recidiva (l'incarceramento compreso come un "time-out costruttivo", l'opportunità di un nuovo inizio grazie ad una giustizia e ad una società "riconciliatrici").

Grazie alla politica della "responsabilizzazione personale per l'atto commesso ed il trattamento rispettoso durante il soggiorno nel carcere con lo scopo di un reinserimento durevole nella società civile", i paesi scandinavi sembrano aver più successo degli altri paesi che rimangono legati piuttosto al principio dell'espiazione della pena ed al "ruolo di garantire la sicurezza".

Negli Stati Uniti, rinchiudere massicciamente i delinquenti (ed i recidivisti per molto tempo secondo la regola del baseball "strike three and you are out") sembra essere considerato come una "necessità spiacevole, ma inevitabile", ma ha come conseguenza un tasso d'imprigionamento sette volte più forte di quello dell'Europa occidentale. Ma anche da noi, le statistiche mostrano che i giudici pronunciano sempre più spesso delle sentenze d'incarceramento e per periodi più lunghi, che il tempo della preventiva si allunga, che si costruiscono sempre più prigioni, che il tasso d'occupazione e quello della recidiva hanno piuttosto tendenza ad aumentare.

5. Le organizzazioni del volontariato penitenziario **riflettono le strutture degli stati nazionali**:

- La struttura federale della Germania si riflette nelle amministrazioni separate dei 16 Länder. Di conseguenza, anche le circa 1000 associazioni del volontariato penitenziario sono organizzate piuttosto a livello locale o regionale, quasi mai nazionale. A parte la BAG-S, non esiste una "Confederazione" all'immagine della "Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia" in Italia. Questo vale anche per la Svizzera con i suoi 26 cantoni malgrado l'Amministrazione Penitenziaria centrale che si trova a Berna.
- La Spagna possiede un'amministrazione penitenziaria ben strutturata con una grande varietà d'associazioni religiose e laiche che sono unite nel "Consejo Social

Penitenziario” fondato nel 2007. La Catalogna ha la sua propria amministrazione penitenziaria con oltre 30 associazioni di volontari giustizia.

- Le 500 associazioni del volontariato carcerario italiano sono ben sviluppate non soltanto a livello delle 20 provincie (come la AVP, Firenze) , ma anche a livello nazionale con la “Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia – CNVG” e la SEAC che unisce le associazioni cattoliche.
- Come nel campionato di calcio, la Gran Bretagna ha 3 amministrazioni penitenziarie separate (Inghilterra e Galles, Scozia, Irlanda del Nord) ed una forte “National Association of Official Prison Visitors” strutturata in modo molto simile all’ANVP. Le circa 600 associazioni coprono una gamma d’attività assai varie. Una “Confederazione Nazionale” non esiste.
- In Francia, il SPIP (Service Pénitentiaire d’Insertion et de Probation) è un’amministrazione molto centralizzata che gestisce non soltanto il regime di semilibertà e quello chiuso, ma anche la probazione. Oltre alle associazioni locali, ci sono delle organizzazioni nazionali ben strutturate come la “Association Nationale des Visiteurs de Prison - ANVP”, la GENEPI (gli studenti per l’insegnamento), AUXILIA (corsi per corrispondenza), CIMADE (assistenza agli stranieri), FARAPEJ, UFRAMA e FNARS.

6. **Il termine “visiteur de prison”** è una particolarità francese/inglese ben definita. Il dizionario legale europeo su www.ju-lex.com non menziona affatto il “Visiteur de Prison” e “le bénévolé” (il volontario generale) ha anche altri significati.

- In inglese, la parola precisa sarebbe “voluntary prison visitor o befriender o volunteer” per differenziarlo dal “prison visitor” che designa qualsiasi persona che passa per il “Prison Visitors Centre” per andare a trovare un detenuto. In Inghilterra esiste una differenza fra il “official prison visitor” della NAOPV e “visitors to prisons” che designa altri volontari che entrano in prigione.
- In tedesco, un “visiteur de prison” si traduce testualmente con “Gefängnisbesucher”, ma questa parola si utilizza soltanto per la famiglia che visita il detenuto. Il “Ehrenamtlicher Mitarbeiter” o abbreviato “Ehrenamtlicher” è il termine per tutti i volontari. “Ehrenamtlicher Vollzugshelfer” corrisponde al “Volontario penitenziario” ed il “Einzelbetreuer” (assistente individuale) piuttosto al “Visiteur de prison”.
- In italiano il “volontario” è la designazione generale per il “bénévole, volunteer”. “Il volontario di assistenti” secondo l’articolo 78 sarebbe piuttosto conforme alla funzione del “Visiteur de prison” francese o del “Einzelbetreuer” in tedesco, benché “l’assistente” abbia un ambito d’attività più diversificato ed ufficiale.
- Neanche in spagnolo c’è distinzione fra il volontario generale ed il “Visiteur de prison” alla francese. I termini più frequenti sono “volontario de prisión o voluntariado penitenziario”.
- “Vrijwilliger o Gevangen Bezoeker” sarebbe l’equivalente in olandese.

Niente è mai semplice in quest’ Europa multinazionale e multilingue, neanche la funzione apparentemente evidente del “Visiteur de Prison”. Consultando il dizionario europeo per termini legali www.ju-lex.com ci si rende conto della diversità legale nei paesi europei. Dato che numerose leggi e funzioni esistono soltanto sul piano nazionale, a volte è difficile trovare la terminologia adeguata nelle altre lingue.

7. **L’incontro fra il detenuto ed il volontario** penitenziario avviene in seguito ad una domanda da parte del detenuto che vuole parlare, oltre ai funzionari dell’amministrazione, ai compagni di prigione ed alla famiglia, ad una persona neutra e discreta che ascolti e che mostri un interesse alla persona del prigioniero. Per molti detenuti, il volontario

rappresenta l'unico contatto con il mondo esterno, perché è stato abbandonato dalla famiglia e dagli amici, o perché non vuole che loro sappiano che si trova in carcere, o perché è uno straniero isolato dal punto di vista linguistico e culturale. Siccome la relazione fra il prigioniero ed il volontario è libera da interessi pecuniari, di rango sociale e che finisce normalmente all'uscita dalla prigione del detenuto, il contatto può essere abbastanza equilibrato e basato sulla fiducia. In funzione all'apertura mentale del detenuto ed al suo desiderio di reinserirsi nella società, la relazione talvolta delicata fra i due può evolvere da semplici conversazioni superficiali su calcio e gastronomia, per attenuare la solitudine del detenuto, ad un vero progetto di vita dopo la prigione senza delinquenza. L'incontro, normalmente settimanale, diventa così un evento radicato nella vita tanto del detenuto quanto del volontario. "Rendersi disponibile ai prigionieri in un modo aperto ed amichevole" costituisce la base dei volontari specializzati nell'ascolto come quelli dell'"ANVP" francese, della "NAOPV" inglese, degli "Einzelbetreuer" tedeschi, dei "volontari di assistenti" italiani, dei Cappellani e dei loro assistenti nonché indirettamente di tutti i volontari giustizia che lavorano nelle diverse funzioni enumerate nel paragrafo 2 qui sopra. Nel suo libro "Ce monde hors du monde", Claire Capron, volontaria penitenziaria da 13 anni a Bruxelles, ha ben descritto i problemi, i detenuti ed il ambiente carcerario. Nel suo libro "In carcere, scomodi", Livio Ferrari descrive il mondo carcerario come è: difficile, deprimente, scomodo ed il ruolo particolare dei volontari dentro l'amministrazione penitenziaria.

8. Le amministrazioni penitenziarie offrono generalmente servizi di base come l'insegnamento elementare e professionale, delle attività del tempo libero, l'attribuzione di difensori d'ufficio, psicologi, volontari, lavoro e organizzano il passaggio alla semilibertà o al rilascio definitivo. Grazie alla loro esperienza di vita, alla grande varietà di interessi e talenti, i volontari penitenziari sono in grado di mettersi meglio nei panni dei detenuti e **di capire le loro problemi individuali**. Al di là del volontariato penitenziario "tradizionale", e seguendo il principio "what works should be done – faremo quello che funziona bene", si sono sviluppati nuovi modi per aiutare il delinquente a vivere una vita senza delinquenza in alcuni paesi, ma non in altri, come, per esempio:
 - a) La "Community Chaplaincy – cappellania di comunità", "Offender monitoring/management". Questa "probazione volontaria" a favore di un delinquente ha come idea di base che un recluso "con una buona probabilità di reinserimento riuscito" è seguito da un tutore. Egli lo prepara nel miglior modo possibile al rilascio e l'accompagna poi il tempo necessario come una specie "d'amico paterno/materno" che interviene in caso di problemi; e soprattutto quando c'è rischio di ricaduta. Associazioni religiose americane, NOMS in Gran Bretagna, la MRS francese, l'assistenza post-detenzione danese e svizzera lavorano secondo questo principio. E che fare per i detenuti "meno promettenti", quelli che non beneficiano di misure d'assistenza speciale, quelli che non possono o vogliono vedere l'incarceramento come un "time out costruttivo" per riformarsi, che sono rilasciati nello stesso ambiente spesso precario prima dell'incarceramento con, in più, l'impronta di "avanzo di galera" e l'esperienza sovente traumatica della prigione? Anche se chiedere un volontario di assistenti o un tutore dovesse rimanere la libera scelta del detenuto, sarebbe sicuramente vantaggioso, se potesse ricorrere rapidamente, in caso di bisogno urgente, ad una "persona civile di fiducia" dentro o fuori dalla prigione.
 - b) La resistenza, da parte degli **ufficiali della probazione** in certi paesi, a cooperare con il volontariato, sia per ragioni di status sociale, sia per la minaccia di privatizzazione della funzione, pare poco realista visti i budget sociali in calo e l'impossibilità materiale di sorvegliare efficientemente da vicino da 80 a 120 persone in probazione.

Se ognuno di questi professionisti della probazione cooperasse con alcuni volontari, l' "esperto" potrebbe concentrarsi sui casi più difficili e servire come consigliere e supporto per i volontari. Così l'efficacia della probazione, che è già stata provata rispetto all'imprigionamento, diventerebbe ancora più visibile e la posizione chiave di questi professionisti-funzionari sarebbe ancora più evidente. La cooperazione fra professionisti e volontari funziona bene in alcuni paesi come in Olanda, Austria e Svizzera; perché non potrebbe riuscire anche in altri paesi?

- c) **Giustizia restorativa e la mediazione** sono attività assai delicate che chiedono una grande destrezza e maturità. Giudici ed amministrazioni sociali nel Nord dell'Europa favoriscono questa forma durevole di riconciliazione. In caso di un delinquente ragionevole e pentito, occorre un atteggiamento conciliante anche da parte della vittima, cioè il contrario della situazione attuale in cui "la vittima è quasi costretta ad insistere su una punizione esemplare del reo fino alla sua rovina", come se un sentimento pieno di odio e di vendetta potesse attenuare alla lunga gli effetti di un crimine commesso. Se alcune associazioni di volontari possono offrire questo servizio difficile, ma tanto utile, con idee originali come, per esempio, "l'atelier d'expression et d'écriture" a Bruxelles, perché non altre ed in altri paesi?
- d) Negli Stati Uniti come in Europa, sempre più autori di **reati violenti** riempiono le carceri, ove la promiscuità, la disciplina alle volte seccante e l'ozio imposto aumentano ancor di più il potenziale d'aggressione. Rari sono i volontari che lavorano nell' "anger management – controllo di sé", per la prevenzione di conflitti, nel "group counselling" e nell'insegnamento del comportamento sociale – social skills". Se alcune associazioni sono in grado d'offrire questi corsi molto utili, perché non altre in altri paesi?
- e) Dopo un divorzio, la perdita del posto di lavoro, un credito acceso da incoscienti, molte persone che non sanno spendere i soldi con parsimonia, accumulano debiti e finiscono nella delinquenza. Nella stessa maniera in cui avvocati aiutano gratuitamente (ex)detenuti, volontari competenti potrebbero organizzare **servizi d'assistenza finanziaria**. Con l'aiuto di professionisti esterni, lo scopo principale sarebbe, per ricominciare una nuova vita su solide basi, l'analisi realista della situazione finanziaria di una persona e le opzioni nella remissione dei debiti. Le 108 regole penitenziarie invitano la società civile a coinvolgersi nella vita carceraria. Questo servizio sarebbe un'opportunità per battere nuove strade per l'aiuto pratico ai detenuti ed alle loro famiglie.
- f) È una realtà che molte persone finiscono nella delinquenza perché sono incapaci intellettualmente ed emozionalmente d'inserirsi nella nostra società sofisticata e materialista. La possibilità di avere più **alloggi sorvegliati** per le persone ai margini della società (incluse giovane senza sostegno familiare), con un minimo di disciplina e ben amministrati con l'assistenza di volontari, eviterebbe a molti di loro la condanna e la prigione. All'uscita dell'incarcerazione queste persone emarginate potrebbero trovare un ambiente dignitoso e non considerare l'incarcerazione come un'alternativa possibile alla vita in libertà.
- g) "Le pene sostitutive o le **alternative all'imprigionamento**" sono non soltanto meno costose per il contribuente e producono meno recidivi, ma sono allo stesso tempo una sfera d'attività ideale per i volontari. Questa forma di reinserimento, pur essendo già praticata nei paesi del Nord dell'Europa da molto tempo, ha ancora un potenziale di sviluppo importante, mentre è appena cominciata nei paesi mediterranei.

h) Durante l'incarceramento molti detenuti hanno grossi problemi con i loro **appartamenti e mobili** perché non riescono a comunicare con l'estero. Dato che questo problema non è previsto nel regolamento, normalmente l'amministrazione carceraria non può aiutare. Il recupero dell'alloggio alla scarcerazione costituendo una misura reintegrativa vitale, Bonjo (Olanda) ha creato un'agenzia immobiliare per gestire questi appartamenti sulla domanda del detenuto.

Parecchi volontari penitenziari benevoli che lavorano da molto tempo nelle prigioni non riescono a riconoscere il ruolo trainante dei governi e dell'Amministrazione per l'evoluzione verso un sistema penitenziario moderno il cui obiettivo principale è (dovrebbe essere) la risocializzazione dei delinquenti. Non riescono a capire la logica delle incarcerazioni sempre più numerose dato che sono da 5 a 20 volte più costose delle pene sostitutive, producono più recidivi ed escludono migliaia d'uomini per sempre dalla vita normale. Questi volontari sono anche dispiaciuti del fatto che le associazioni complementari che lavorano nella stessa casa circondariale, non riescono a cooperare fra loro.

9. Interesse per il prossimo, costanza e tempo disponibile sono premesse essenziali per il volontariato penitenziario; ma anche la **formazione di base e permanente**, sono importanti per capire meglio la psicologia del detenuto e per poter rispondere in modo più adeguato al suo atteggiamento comportamentale, ai suoi discorsi ed alle sue speranze. La formazione è generalmente ben organizzata in Germania con corsi di base di 3 giorni (o di 10 serate), la partecipazione obbligatoria ai seminari (ciclo di formazione che può durare fino a 2 anni), lo scambio con volontari pratici e l'accesso all'aiuto di un professionista. Il servizio di probation del cantone di Berna impone un corso introduttivo di 54 ore. L'amministrazione penitenziaria (come per esempio lo SPIP in Francia) organizza corsi a livello regionale per spiegare le proprie regole e funzioni, il ruolo dei volontari, il loro campo d'intervento ed i loro limiti. Come si vede dai "rapporti secondo paesi", in Spagna si organizzano frequentemente corsi intensivi fino ad una settimana per formare "voluntarios penitenciarios". L'amministrazione catalana (Serveis Penitenciaris) insiste su corsi d'aggiornamento di tutti i volontari che lavorano in seno ad un programma convenuto. BONJO in Olanda organizza corsi per i volontari delle sue 70 associazioni ed in Italia corsi per diventare "volontari di assistenti" durano per una o due settimane entro 6 mesi e sono spesso proposti dalle associazioni regionali.

10. **La cooperazione** fra l'Amministrazione ed i volontari penitenziari pare a volte problematica ovunque in Europa. Il convegno annuale della "Conférence Européenne de Probation – CEP" nel 1999 a Potsdam (D21) scelse come tema principale "Pratiche e significato del contributo volontario nella giustizia criminale". Il dibattito svelò un latente malcontento subliminale. Nel 2001, un colloquio fu organizzato dalla "Freie Hilfe Berlin" sul soggetto unico "Il volontariato penitenziario costituisce una concorrenza per i funzionari?" (D6A). La CNVG italiana criticò nel 2005 in modo molto esplicito l'Amministrazione Penitenziaria perché non apprezzava sufficientemente il contributo positivo dei volontari penitenziari alla risoluzione dei problemi carcerari. Neanche le 108 Regole Penitenziarie non chiariscono la situazione quando "incoraggiano" soltanto l'implicazione della Società Civile "quando è opportuno".

È possibile che i volontari penitenziari siano percepiti come un sacco di gente idealista senza obbligo d'ottenere risultati concreti, che causano lavoro supplementare e che si immischiano in affari per cui i funzionari ben formati e diplomati sarebbero più efficienti? Ma come valutare l'efficienza dei volontari? E se questa valutazione fosse necessaria,

quali sarebbero i criteri per valutare i professionisti del governo e dell'amministrazione giudiziaria/carceraria?

Gerhard Deimling (DE1) parla delle frustrazioni e dell'abbandono di molti volontari a causa della "professionalizzazione" progressiva dell'ambito carcerario ove funzionari e professionisti organizzano delle attività di formazione e di svago, con o senza la collaborazione di volontari. Ma questi funzionari "sociali" sono troppo pochi ovunque in Europa (il rapporto abituale è un funzionario per 80/120 detenuti) per amministrare i dossiers individuali ed essere all'ascolto dei carcerati con i loro molteplici problemi (attività per cui erano stati preparati). Dunque anche i funzionari hanno a volte ragioni per essere scoraggiati. E quando i volontari tentano di completare l'attività dei funzionari sovraccarichi, quando tentano d'intervenire a favore dei loro detenuti, possono verificarsi facilmente attriti da una parte e dall'altra.

Fatto sta che quest'avversità/diffidenza è onnipresente nella relazione fra il volontario (generoso e gratuito) ed il dipendente statale/professionista (formato e remunerato), non soltanto nell'ambito penitenziario. Il volontario che si è impegnato con convinzione per portare più umanità ai carcerati in difficoltà, talvolta non riesce a capire certe azioni ed atteggiamenti da parte dei funzionari giuridici, professionisti e secondini, che, a loro volta, sono costretti a conformarsi ad una regolamentazione rigorosa e talvolta molto lontana dallo scopo ufficiale: l'inserimento durevole dei detenuti. Per tradizione, l'amministrazione dà priorità assoluta alla sorveglianza/sicurezza, perché sono ben definite e misurabili all'istante. Al contrario, i bisogni individuali dei detenuti per l'inserimento durevolmente sono ben più complessi e quantificabili solamente 10 anni dopo l'uscita dei detenuti dalla prigione attraverso valutazioni molto teoriche della recidiva. La conseguenza di questo dato di fatto è che nessun decisionista assume mai personalmente la responsabilità per la politica penitenziaria a lunga scadenza.

A livello dell'alta amministrazione e nei documenti ufficiali, il contributo dei volontari è apprezzato, perché il sistema penitenziario non potrebbe più funzionare senza la loro partecipazione. È perciò che la relazione talvolta conflittuale fra i funzionari, i professionisti ed i volontari non ha molto senso.

11. In generale, **i problemi carcerari sono abbastanza simili** in tutta l'Europa occidentale (proporzione elevata della recidiva particolarmente fra i giovani e la tossicodipendenza, carcerati in stato di custodia cautelare mescolati con criminali condannati, analfabetismo, mancanza di lavoro qualificato nelle prigioni, percentuale importante di stranieri, costo elevato per detenuto, proporzione importante di malati mentali, razzismo supposto o reale, sovraffollamento delle carceri, la nuova povertà, ecc). Ma "una società può scegliere fra un tasso di detenzione alto o basso e questa scelta si esprime attraverso le sentenze inflitte da parte dei giudici" (Professore Coyle, ICPC – Div 2). Anne-Marie Klopp (Europäisches Forum) dice che "l'Europa si è avvicinata in molti campi, ma ancora pochissimo nella legislazione penale" – e penitenziaria, perché gli Stati nazionali decidono secondo i loro valori nazionali e le opportunità politiche del momento (esempio: nel 2005 la Corte Costituzionale Federale tedesca ha cancellato una direttiva europea che aveva previsto l'extradizione automatica di tedeschi alla giustizia d'altri paesi dell'Unione Europea).

Così ci sono delle differenze importanti tra vari paesi, come per esempio,

- nel trattamento rispettoso del detenuto e nelle misure liberali d'inserimento dei paesi scandinavi, a differenza dell'incarceramento più punitivo/tradizionale nel resto dell'Europa ove l'espiazione della sentenza e la sicurezza predominano,

- tra la crescita del tasso dell'incarcerazione dal 40 al 100 % negli ultimi 10 anni in Inghilterra, Spagna, Olanda e Lussemburgo (che hanno seguito piuttosto l'esempio americano) e la stagnazione o crescita moderata in Portogallo, Italia, Danimarca, Germania e Svizzera.

L'ideale sarebbe un consenso nazionale/europeo sulla politica penale e penitenziaria, come è stato il caso per lungo tempo in Finlandia, e che tutti i paesi europei adottino le 108 nuove regole come base della loro legislazione nazionale. Ma, sfortunatamente, fra i conservatori, i populistici e quelli con un atteggiamento più umanista, la discordanza pare insormontabile, perché il fascino del crimine e la sicurezza della popolazione sono temi elettorali per eccellenza. La stampa "tabloid" in particolare in Gran Bretagna ed in Germania è responsabile di molte distorsioni di dati di fatto penitenziari e di un allarmismo tendenzioso (Div 10).

12. Già nel 2000, la "Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia" italiana presentò un progetto di un "Forum Europeo del Volontariato Giustizia" (It13). Anche la presente indagine giunge alla conclusione che la creazione di una "**Associazione Europea del volontariato penitenziario - AEVP**" sarebbe vantaggiosa per tutto il sistema carcerario europeo; a condizione naturalmente che i governi e la giustizia possano ammettere che il volontariato abbia un ruolo significativo da sostenere nella riconciliazione fra il detenuto e la società, come lo prevede, per esempio, il progetto britannico NOMS. Come si potrebbe fondare una "federazione europea" ?.

- a) Viste le diverse definizioni ed attribuzioni, bisognerebbe definire prima chi è un "Visiteur de Prison" e chi dovrebbe o vorrebbe dunque far parte della futura AEVP?
- Definizione ristretta: Tutti i volontari penitenziari che entrano in prigione essenzialmente per "ascoltare e dare un sostegno morale", secondo i principi della NAOPV e dell'ANVP, degli "Einzelbetreuer" in Germania o dei "volontari di assistenti" in Italia.
 - Definizione larga: Tutte le organizzazioni che insegnano in carcere, animano gruppi di teatro ed attività diverse, amministrano librerie, fanno sport con i detenuti, aiutano i reclusi nei loro problemi amministrativi, preparano i detenuti alla liberazione controllata o definitiva, organizzano le visite delle famiglie, lavorano nella probatione; insomma tutte le associazioni che lavorano dentro le carceri e fuori per il bene dei detenuti e che sono comprese nel paragrafo 2 qui sopra.
 - Definizione generale: Tutti i volontari e professionisti delle associazioni "miste" e delle NGO (Non Governmental Organisations) che lavorano nell'ambito penitenziario e che fanno parte (secondo l'articolo 17 in Italia)
 - delle "Charities" inglesi, delle non-profit-making organisations, delle fondazioni e "private (voluntary) welfare agencies",
 - in Francia delle "associazioni 1901 - à but non lucratif" ("asbl" in Belgio), delle ONG (associations non gouvernementales) e "l'aide privée",
 - in Germania delle « gemeinnützige Vereine » o « Freie Träger »,
 - in Italia delle „associazioni no-profit“ o UNLUS (organizzazioni non lucrative di utilità sociale),
 - in Spagna delle "asociaciones de utilidad pública",
 - in Olanda le "Belangen Overleg Niet-Justitiegebonden Organisaties".

E perché una ditta commerciale con oltre 680 volontari, come "Neustart" in Austria, o il "Servizio Cantonale di Probazione" di Berna con più di 200 volontari non

potrebbero essere ammessi in un' "Associazione Europea del volontariato penitenziario"?

b) Come l'idea di una grande "Confederazione Europea del Volontariato Giustizia" dovrebbe maturare, l'evoluzione verso questo obiettivo potrebbe essere realizzata passo passo, come per esempio:

- fondando associazioni europee secondo le loro attività, come hanno già fatto Eurochips (bambini), EMNA (alcoldipendenti) ed il "Forum europeo per la mediazione reo-vittima",
- unificando le associazioni sul piano nazionale, ove non esistono, come in Francia, Inghilterra e Germania,
- stimolando la cooperazione transnazionale come nel caso dell'ANVP-Alsazia con la SKM, Freiburg/Breisgau e dell' "Arbeitskreis Straffälligenhilfe", Aquisgrana con il Belgio e Maastricht.
- organizzando lo scambio secondo aree linguistiche (tedesco, francese), dato che la traduzione simultanea è costosa e dunque riservata soprattutto alle associazioni di categoria professionale finanziariamente solide, ai governi ed alle istituzioni europee,
- a meno che, dall'inizio, l'inglese potesse essere considerato come la "lingua franca" europea ciò che accelererebbe considerevolmente il processo d'avvicinamento tra le associazioni.

c) Una futura EAPV, come potrebbe essere **utile** e come **finanziarla**?

Il progetto italiano del 2000 aveva previsto una sorta di "piattaforma europea" on-line sui soggetti legali/penitenziari per dare al pubblico una più grande visibilità della prigione in un senso ampio. Seguendo il dibattito per più giustizia sociale nelle carceri degli anni 90 in Italia, che era sfociato nella fondazione della "Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia", l'intenzione era di portare questa discussione di fondo sul piano europeo coinvolgendo le istituzioni e le organizzazioni europee già attive nel campo sociale. Altri obiettivi erano l'ottenimento di uno stato consultativo presso il Consiglio d'Europa e lo scambio d'informazioni utili fra le numerosi associazioni e federazioni europee del volontariato penitenziario. Questo progetto "ambizioso" entrò in molti particolari incluso il suo finanziamento.

Qualunque sia la definizione finale di questa "Confederazione Europea", essa si potrebbe realizzare soltanto se si trovassero abbastanza soldi per assicurare l'importante lavoro di ricerca e di coordinazione. La realtà inevitabile è, invece, che la maggior parte delle organizzazioni di volontari hanno già problemi per autofinanziare i loro progetti attuali. Finanziare una EAPV in più?

È probabile che quest' organizzazione europea veda la luce soltanto a condizione che il Consiglio d'Europa, gli Stati nazionali e la Giustizia potessero riconoscere che i volontari penitenziari sono difatto indispensabili ed efficaci **IN MODO MISURABILE** per ridurre la recidiva o nel caso in cui la privatizzazione si accelerasse perché gli stati non hanno più soldi per finanziare il sistema penitenziario nella forma attuale. Il coinvolgimento più attivo del settore volontario diventerebbe allora indispensabile; un po' come il progetto britannico NOMS lo prevede.

La maggior parte dei Criminologi, dei membri della "Conférence Européenne de Probation", degli insegnanti e dei promotori in ambito sanitario lavorano per o sono pagati dallo Stato. Anche le loro attività a livello europeo sono dunque pagate in modo diretto o indiretto dai Governi nazionali. I volontari penitenziari, invece,

lavorano abitualmente nel settore privato. Di conseguenza, anche la loro attività sul piano europeo dovrebbe essere pagata di tasca propria, come avviene tradizionalmente per la loro attività a livello nazionale.

Il presente rapporto, abbastanza sommario, mostra già a che punto i metodi di lavoro dei volontari penitenziari differiscano nei diversi paesi europei con molte idee innovatrici. Sarebbe utile analizzarle più nel dettaglio e trarne le conclusioni per migliorare l'efficienza del volontariato giustizia dappertutto. L'obiettivo sarebbe un più grande coinvolgimento della società civile ed un "networking" più attivo fra le associazioni a livello europeo offrendo i servizi dei quali **i detenuti hanno bisogno per il loro reinserimento e non soltanto quelli che lo Stato ed il volontariato tradizionale sono disposti a fornire**. Soltanto un'organizzazione internazionale ben strutturata ed attrezzata e con obiettivi chiaramente definiti, potrebbe eseguire lo scambio delle informazioni tra le associazioni nazionali che lavorano nello stesso campo o in modo complementare.

d) Non dovrebbe essere troppo difficile mettersi d'accordo su una sorta di **Manifesto del volontariato penitenziario europeo** perché quasi tutte le organizzazioni locali, regionali, nazionali, umanitarie, religiose, laiche, specializzate o generali operano più o meno sugli stessi principi umanitari. L'immagine pubblica però e la maniera di operare della nuova EAPV potrebbero causare problemi. Dovrebbe:

- lavorare in stretta collaborazione con le amministrazioni penitenziarie nazionali, da cui provengono essenzialmente i fondi per il loro funzionamento e da cui dipendono i volontari per il loro lavoro quotidiano?
- affermare in pubblico i suoi principi umanitari, opporsi a certe pratiche inaccettabili nelle carceri, criticare il fatto che la maggioranza dei paesi europei non hanno una politica coerente d'inserimento sociale dei detenuti e far conoscere l'opinione del volontariato carcerario europeo sul piano internazionale – detto altrimenti, dovrebbe essere più “militante”, avere una funzione di lobbista, come era stato previsto nel progetto italiano del 2000?
- provare a funzionare come una ONG dinamica, efficiente e multinazionale o limitarsi ad un “ufficio di scambio amministrativo” con contatti sporadici fra i direttori delle organizzazioni nazionali (che cambiano funzione frequentemente e che sono in ogni caso sovraccarichi)?
- per semplificare la comunicazione interna, utilizzare l'inglese come lingua comune dall'inizio; ciò che urterebbe, senza dubbio, la sensibilità nazionale di alcuni aderenti (l'esperienza di Eurochips e dell'EPEA sarebbe istruttiva)?

e) Nell'Europa occidentale, le associazioni del volontariato giustizia fanno parte integrante del tessuto sociale da molto tempo. Invece la situazione nell'Europa dell'Est (i cui paesi hanno varato ugualmente le 108 Regole) è sconosciuta. Seguendo lo spirito del preambolo all'Unione Europea con il principio delle “nazioni che si avvicinano sempre più – ever closer union” (e del quale le 108 Regole penitenziarie sono una prova visibile), spetterebbe forse alla nuova AEPV (sponsorizzata idealmente dal Consiglio d'Europa),

- condurre un'indagine simile a quella presente al fine di conoscere la situazione del Volontariato penitenziario in quei paesi,
- incoraggiare in modo molto pratico iniziative per fondare delle associazioni nazionali (d'altronde, gli evangelisti americani dell' “International Prison Fellowship” sono attivi in Europa Orientale da molti anni. Non hanno aspettato

le nuove regole penitenziarie, ma hanno cominciato a lavorare secondo le loro proprie convinzioni missionarie).

13. Come si finanziano le associazioni del volontariato penitenziario?

C'è una grande diversità a seconda delle loro strutture. Dato che le informazioni precise sono rare, la presente indagine non tenta di speculare su questo tema importante:

- In generale, nelle piccole associazioni "tutto-volontari", nel migliore dei casi, le indennità di rappresentanza sono rimborsate ,
- le Associazioni "tutto-volontari" più importanti impiegano, a parte la direzione volontaria, una persona a tempo pieno o almeno part-time. Sussidi dallo Stato, dalle regioni, dalle fondazioni; delle dotazioni uniche e le quote sociali da parte dei membri coprono le spese (spesso a stento).
- A parte i volontari, le organizzazioni più importanti danno lavoro a persone amministrative full-time ed a professionisti specializzati. Hanno contratti di prestazione di servizio con l'amministrazione penitenziaria o l'assistenza pubblica per l'istruzione generale o professionale, la sorveglianza di lavori di interesse collettivo, la tossicodipendenza, gli stranieri, la probazione, ecc. Queste associazioni si finanziano grazie ad importi forfettari e tassi giornalieri che provengono dal loro lavoro sociale che lo stato non è capace o non vuole effettuare.
- Per assicurare la continuità delle associazioni no-profit penitenziarie, la ricerca di sempre nuove risorse finanziarie è vitale. Fondazioni, banche, società calcistiche e compagnie commerciali ed industriali di ogni tipo sono contattate nello stesso modo in cui le grandi associazioni umanitarie come "Médecins Sans Frontière", UNICEF ed OXFAM lo praticano da molto tempo.
- Pare che soltanto un'infima parte dell'imposte per la chiesa in Germania, Austria e Svizzera, l'otto per mille in Italia e l'IFPS in Spagna giungano alle associazioni religiose penitenziarie attraverso le chiese.
- Ci sono altre organizzazioni "no profit" e ditte commerciali ed industriali che lavorano nell'ambito penitenziario in cui il volontariato, stipendi regolari, indennità di rappresentanza e guadagno commerciale non possono sempre essere distinti con certezza. Questo vale particolarmente nel caso in cui professionisti e volontari lavorano in funzioni simili in enti sociali Onlus d'assistenza pubblica o per compagnie che producono beni industriali dentro o fuori dalla prigione.

Fatto sta che le associazioni coinvolte nel volontariato penitenziario ottengono sovvenzioni ben scarse per l'importante lavoro che effettuano. I circa 150.000 volontari penitenziari **non ottengono il becco in un quattrino** o, nel migliore dei casi, il rimborso delle spese di viaggio (in Francia l'indennità di kilometraggio può essere incorporata nella "dichiarazione dei redditi" a fine anno).

14. Di seguito alcuni punti dell'indagine completa scritta in inglese:

Informazioni contestuali:

Statistiche:

- Dimostrazione che negli ultimi 10 anni, la percentuale dei prigionieri in Europa occidentale è cresciuta molto più rapidamente dei reati denunciati alla polizia,
- Vari studi sulla recidiva in Europa concordano sulle tendenze di base: rischio massimo nel caso di delinquenti giovani tossicodipendenti nonché per quelli violenti. Il tasso della ricaduta è più importante per gli ex carcerati rispetto ai condannati a pene alternative, a lavori collettivi ed alla probazione.
- Chi sono i prigionieri e quali sarebbero, secondo loro, le misure essenziali d'aiuto, perché possano riuscire a condurre una vita "onesta"? Alcune statistiche dalla

- Francia, dalla Scozia, dall' Austria e dagli Stati Uniti.
- 3 tavole con dati statistici sulla situazione carceraria in Europa occidentale.

Organizzazioni internazionali penitenziarie:

- Il lavoro del Consiglio d'Europa ed i progetti per il futuro,
- L' International Prison Fellowship e la sua attività evangelista in tutto il mondo,
- Varie federazioni sul piano europeo esistono già in campi specializzati (Eurochips, EMNA, European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice).

Privatizzazione:

Questo capitolo tenta di mettere in evidenza il legame fra il volontariato penitenziario ed il trend inesorabile verso compagnie private che costruiscono prigioni ed assumono una moltitudine di servizi precedentemente eseguiti dai funzionari dello stato.

Gli Stati Uniti:

Nel dopoguerra, l' America era stata il precursore per molti aspetti della vita moderna, inclusa la criminalità e l'innovazione del sistema carcerario. Questo capitolo tenta d'abbozzare le conseguenze della "tolleranza zero", l'alto tasso d'imprigionamento e le grosse differenze etniche. C'è anche un capitolo sulle numerose chiese evangeliste e le loro associazioni in campo penitenziario.

Varie informazioni e documenti:

- Commenti sulle 108 Regole Europee e le ripercussioni probabili sui sistemi carcerari in tutta l'Europa ed il contributo modesto previsto per il volontariato,
- Influenza dei massmedia sulla giurisprudenza ed il sistema penitenziario,
- Una tesi di dottorato che ha come tema le predisposizioni etiche del volontario penitenziario,
- Varie indagini sulle malattie mentali, la violenza sessuale e le conseguenze dell'incarceramento sulla recidiva paragonato alle pene sostitutive,
- Il ruolo centrale del volontariato nel futuro "Management of offenders - NOMS",
- Il teatro nella carcere ed annotazioni sul tema "Migrazione ed imprigionamento",
- In maggio 2008 il congresso annuale del "Forum europeo della criminalità applicata" aveva luogo a Strasburgo. Il tema era "l'impegno del volontariato e la criminalità in Europa". Un riassunto si trova nel capitolo 25.

Rapporti secondo paesi:

FRANCIA

- L'amministrazione penitenziaria centrale SPIP (Service Pénitentiaire d'Insertion et de Probation) organizza tanto il sistema chiuso quanto quello della semilibertà e la Probazione.
- Oltre alle associazioni locali ci sono alcune organizzazioni importanti che lavorano sul piano nazionale, come la "Associations Nationale des visiteurs de prison - ANVP", la CIMADE, GENEPI, FREP, AUXILIA così come le federazioni FNARS, FARAPEJ ed UFRAMA,
- La discussione attorno alle orientazioni nel sistema carcerario è condotta in modo molto controverso sulla stampa e sui siti delle associazioni volontarie.
- Il "Groupe National de Concertation Prison" che comporta 9 associazioni e federazioni importanti del volontariato penitenziario, organizza una volta l'anno una settimana d'azioni, durante la quale il pubblico è informato sul mondo carcerario.

GERMANIA

- Le Amministrazioni Penitenziarie dipendono tradizionalmente dai governi dei 16 Länder e nel futuro anche la legislazione carceraria sarà varata dai Länder. Gli “Ehrenamtliche Mitarbeiter” (volontari penitenziari) lavorano piuttosto a livello locale e regionale. A parte la BAG-S non c’è una confederazione nazionale come in Italia.
- Dal 1977, l’obiettivo principale della legislazione penale era la “risocializzazione” del detenuto e non l’espiazione della sentenza. Tutti i documenti ufficiali riflettono quest’orientamento. Ultimamente però, le considerazioni di sicurezza sembrano essere diventate di nuovo prioritarie.
- Il lavoro del volontariato penitenziario tedesco è meno segmentato. Molte associazioni offrono delle attività complementari dalla Prevenzione all’assistenza giuridica ed amministrativa, all’ascolto, all’aiuto alla famiglia, alla sorveglianza di lavori collettivi fino alla probatione in certi Länder.
- Un’indagine indipendente sul lavoro dei volontari penitenziari in Nordrhein-Westphalen analizza la loro attività e mostra la valutazione favorevole da parte dei professionisti (D20).
- La “Freie Hilfe Berlin” ha pubblicato un elenco di 160 associazioni carcerarie con l’indicazione dei settori e della regione geografica d’attività.
- La privatizzazione della probatione statale è cominciata in Baden-Württemberg,
- Un’indagine dell’università di Tübingen analizza nel dettaglio la situazione delle associazioni implicate nel sistema penitenziario sul tema “l’assistenza ai detenuti costretta al cambiamento”. Risultati finali fine 2008.

INGHILTERRA E GALLES

- Gli inglesi hanno seguito l’esempio americano con la conseguenza che hanno oggi il tasso di detenzione più alto in Europa con 148 su 100.000 (Italia 67), una stampa “tabloid” molto virulente ed un tasso di recidiva alto malgrado un investimento importante nelle misure di reinserimento.
- La “National Association of Official Prison Visitors” è un’associazione simile all’ANVP francese, con più di 1000 volontari,
- La “Independent Custody Visiting Association – ICVA” è un’organizzazione di volontari che verifica che le persone arrestate ed incarcerate ai posti di polizia siano trattate secondo le regole,
- Il “Shannon Trust” impiega volontari e detenuti qualificati per insegnare la lettura agli analfabeti. I Samaritans cooperano con prigionieri per evitare suicidi (peer support scheme).
- NOMS è una iniziativa governamentale per ridurre la recidiva al cui centro si trova il volontario penitenziario in una funzione di tutore. Coinvolgimento anche di prigionieri idonei come parte della loro propria resocializzazione.

SCOZIA

- In Inghilterra, Scozia ed Irlanda i “Centri d’accoglienza dei visitatori” (Prison Visitors Centres) sono delle istituzioni molto discusse e sponsorizzate. In Scozia la “Women’s Royal Voluntary Service” gestisce otto di questi centri.
- HOPE e SACRO sono 2 associazioni di volontari che coprono la maggior parte dell’aiuto ai detenuti.

ITALIA

- Il Volontariato Penitenziario italiano è ben organizzato non solamente attraverso Confederazione cattolica SEAC che riunisce 80 associazioni, ma soprattutto

- mediante la “Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia” che raggruppa quasi tutte le organizzazioni importanti che intervengono nella vita carceraria in Italia.
- La “Fondazione Italiana per il Volontariato - FIVOL” è un istituto specializzato nel Volontariato che ha messo a punto un programma di software che è operativo in quasi tutte le prigioni italiane. Il sistema di programmazione permette non solamente la registrazione quantitativa dei volontari nelle prigioni, ma tenta anche di valutare il loro lavoro secondo l’ apprezzamento dei professionisti e dei prigionieri. Un sistema unico per conoscere il volontariato penitenziario.
 - Il “Forum Europeo Volontariato Giustizia” dell’ anno 2000 (It13) sembra essere il primo tentativo di progettare “un’ Associazione Europea del volontariato penitenziario” in un contesto sociale generale.
 - I contributi ai congressi e seminari come quelli che si trovano sui siti, sono di un alto livello tematico.

SVIZZERA, AUSTRIA

- La maggioranza dei volontari lavorano in seno ai servizi cantonali di probazione, come quello di Berna. Corsi introduttivi di 54 ore per i principianti.
- Una compagnia privata, Neustart, è incaricata dallo Stato di tutta la Probazione e di servizi annessi. I costi di gestione sono considerevolmente più bassi perché questa ditta lavora secondo i principi di una compagnia commerciale e perché il 60 % degli impiegati sono dei volontari. Neustart ha cominciato ad insediarsi anche in Germania.
- “Schritt für Schritt – un passo dopo l’altro” è un’indagine sponsorizzata dall’Unione Europea che ha come soggetto la discriminazione dei detenuti in cerca di un posto di lavoro. Le statistiche che accompagnano questo rapporto mostrano la situazione precaria dei carcerati.

SPAGNA

- L’atteggiamento apertamente critico degli esponenti della politica e dei giudici responsabili dell’alto livello d’incarceramento e del sovraffollamento carcerario è notevole. Su internet c’è un inventario dettagliato di 60 pagine delle associazioni che intervengono con determinati programmi nelle prigioni spagnole. Un esempio unico d’informazione pubblica.
- La Pastoral Penitenziaria cattolica con 2500 volontari, oltre ai cappellani, lavora su tutti i livelli della vita carceraria;
- Ma c’è anche una moltitudine d’associazioni laiche che coprono un’ampia gamma di fabbisogni dei detenuti. La lotta contro l’alcoolismo e la tossicodipendenza sembra essere particolarmente intensa.
- Nel 2007, è stato fondato il “Consejo Social Penitenziario” che riunisce le NGO più importanti, istituzioni statali nonché l’amministrazione penitenziaria.

SCANDINAVIA E FINLANDIA

- La Croce Rossa ha quasi l’esclusività del prendersi cura dei detenuti.
- La Danimarca in particolare ha condotto in passato una politica carceraria esemplare che era ricompensata con tassi moderati di ricaduta.
- Nelle statistiche stupiscono le numerose “evasioni”. Di fatto non si tratta di evasioni drammatiche, ma della non reintegrazione in prigione dopo le visite di finesettimana che fanno parte del sistema scandinavo di risocializzazione.
- Kriminalvarden, l’amministrazione penitenziaria svedese, tenta di rimediare alle mancanze nel campo della cultura e dell’istruzione offrendo una moltitudine di corsi generali, professionali e culturali.

- Tenendo conto dello sviluppo sociale e morale della società, la Finlandia potrebbe servire come modello per l'adattamento graduale del sistema giudiziario e penitenziario. L'indagine sulla recidiva riflette la realtà in tutta l'Europa.

OLANDA, BELGIO

- La correzione di un atteggiamento tradizionalmente liberale della società è visibile soprattutto per quanto riguarda la droga e la delinquenza giovanile,
- Bonjo è una confederazione di più di 70 associazioni volontarie penitenziarie che agisce come interfaccia con le autorità, le lega fra di loro e serve generalmente come punto di riferimento del volontariato penitenziario.
- Exodus, attraverso il principio di "vivere, lavorare, amicizie, una prospettiva per il futuro", è esemplare per il reinserimento di ex detenuti nella società.
- Quello che colpisce in Belgio è l'ampia offerta d'istruzione generale e professionale da parte delle associazioni volontarie come la FAFEP, ADEPPI, Insert e Derode Antriciet.
- C'è una moltitudine d'associazioni volontarie a Bruxelles ed in Vallonia.

Molti particolari di queste "Conclusioni" rimarranno oscuri senza leggere l'indagine in inglese di circa 115 pagine, che comprende 5 capitoli d'informazione contestuale ed i rapporti sui 19 paesi. L'insieme dell'indagine è accessibile consultando la home page di "<http://visiteurs.prison.free.fr/>". Molti "documenti di sostegno" che costituiscono la base del rapporto generale, si possono trovare su internet.

B – Contextual information

March 2007
Update 4/2008

B1 - GENERAL STATISTICS

Non-professional prison visitors should be prudent with both general and comparative statistics published by official institutions, in enquiries and even more by newspapers. Some of the reasons are

- Crime figures are reported by the national police who act under the authority of governments driven at times by electoral and other considerations. The methodology varies from one country to another too. A common system of measuring and reporting by the European countries on criminal statistics will be in place by 2010 for the “Space 1 statistics” and Eurostat.
- Reporting on prison data is not unified on the European level and even less world-wide, because national data may include (or not), for example, detainees in psychiatric, juvenile and detoxification institutions, detention centres for foreigners, those in police custody and those followed by electronic supervision.

Therefore, statistics for the same country are more likely to be exact, whereas data comparing different countries can be “indicative” only.

On European level, the “Space 1” statistics of the Council of Europe, survey 2005, published in 2007 (Stat1) are the most dependable data and should be consulted for detailed numbers. Taking into account the above reservations, 3 tables were composed in this section:

TABLE A - is a survey of crime figures in 2005 and the evolution since 1995.

TABLE B - details the prison population in Western Europe with the evolution between 1995 and 2006.

TABLE C - shows the latest update in 12/2007 with the evolution between 1998 and 2007.

1. However the details may be, it is a fact that the prison population has grown much quicker than the number of reported crimes:

<u>in %</u>	<u>Variation of total crimes</u>		<u>Variation of Prison Population</u>	
	<u>1991-2001</u>	<u>1995-2005</u>	<u>1991-2001</u>	<u>1995-2006</u>
England/Wales	-11	+ 9	+ 45	+57
Scotland	-27	-12	+27	+26
France	+8	+3	- 3	+1
Italy	-18	+13	+70	+24
Holland	+13	+/- 0	+105	+105
Spain	+3	+34	+28	+60
Switzerland	-28	+2	+13	+8
Norway		+3		+27
Sweden		+8		+29
Finland		-12		+31
Denmark		-20		+22
Ireland		-1		+50
Belgium		-6		+27
Germany		-4		+19
Luxembourg		-11		+64
Austria		+24		+42
Portugal		+20		+4
		-----		-----
	Average increase	+ 3,5 %		+ 34,9 %

« Der Spiegel » reports on 21.4.08 that between 1993 and 2006, the total number of reported crimes in Germany has diminished by 7 % (of which burglary – 53% and theft of cars - 83%), but violence with bodily injury has increased by + 83%. 46% of the population feel less secure today than in the past (in England the comparative figure is 83 %).

2. In 11/2007 and on the basis of “Space 1”, EUROSTAT reports for 14 EU member states the following tendencies per year between 1995 and 2005 :
 - The average yearly increase for all crimes is 0,6 % with a peak in 2002,
 - Types of crime which *increased*: robbery +4,9 %, drug trafficking + 4,2 %, violent crime +4,1%,
 - Types of crime which *decreased*: domestic burglary -3%, homicide -3,2%, theft of motor vehicles -4,8 %.

3. On the basis of the same 2005 statistics of “Space 1”, the French CESDIP (Centre de Recherche Sociologique sur le droit et les institutions pénales) published in 3/2007 an analysis on « Entrées en prison et durées de détention – la diversité pénitentiaire en Europe » (Stat3). Extract of the average values :
 - a) Rate of prison population :
 - Lowest – Denmark, Finland, Slovenia between 56 and 76 per 100.000 people
 - Average – Germany, Italy between 91 and 102 “
 - Highest – the 3 Baltic states between 233 and 327 “
 - b) Variation per year of the rate of prison population between 2000 and 2005:
 - Decrease: Czech Republic, Rumania, Lithuania -2,8 % to - 5,2%
 - Stagnant: Hungary, Germany, Switzerland - 0,1% to + 0,2 %
 - Increase: Holland, Luxembourg, England +7,9 % to +12,4%
 - c) Average length of detention
 - Less than 5 months: Luxembourg, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, England,
 - More than 12 months: Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal.

4. A research report (Stat4) sponsored by the European Commission and carried out by public opinion institutes such as Gallup, Max-Planck Gesellschaft and the Italian INICRI, was published in 1/2007 under the title “The burden of crime in the EU – a comparative analysis of the European crime safety survey EUICS – 2005”. The aim was to determine statistically several aspects; for example:
 - general crime rates (highest: England, Ireland, Estonia, Netherlands;
lowest: Spain, Hungary, Portugal),
 - the crime rates for assault (highest: England, Ireland, Netherlands;
lowest: Italy, Portugal, Hungary),
 - sexual violence (highest: Ireland, Sweden, Germany;
lowest: Hungary, Spain, France),
 - “hate crimes against minorities” (highest: France, Denmark, England;
lowest: Italy, Portugal, Greece), etc.

But Europeans were asked as well about their fears of such crimes, the reporting of them to the police (average 40-50%) and the perception of the police supposed to combat crime (the most critical were the Poles and Estonians; the most positive the Finns, Danes and Austrians).

5. National Statistics are available from, for example
 - the website of the UK Home Office “crimereduction” (Stat5)
 - Kriminalstatistik of the “Bundeskriminalamt”, Wiesbaden (Germany)
 - Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik, Bundesamt für Polizei (Fedpol), Switzerland

- ISTAT – le statistiche dell’amministrazione penitenziaria e della Giustizia,
- CESDIP and INSEE in France.

6. “Re-offending/recidivism – Strafrückfälligkeit – récidivisme – la recidiva/ricaduta – la reincidencia – recidivegevaar” is no doubt one of the most controversial subjects in the whole penal system, among criminologists and in the media, because it has been generally on the increase everywhere for some time, it is costly and no traditional means of combating it, no extra money for additional programs and no harsher punishment seem to have made much difference. The invariably high re-offending rates must of course be seen in the context of more reporting of crime to the police, more arrests carried out, more remand prisoners, more and longer prison sentences.

The 111-page document of 3/2008 published by the UK Tory party, which aims at cutting re-offending by 20 % by 2016 through a “rehabilitation revolution”, is the most recent attempt by politicians to deal with this ill-defined and apparently insoluble problem. A number of studies have been conducted world-wide on the subject with different approaches so that their figures are difficult to compare; for example:

- a) “Adult Reconviction in Northern Ireland in 2003” published in 8/2007 (Stat6) states that
 - 2 years after release from prison 19 % of the non-custodial people re-offended, but 51 % of those who were imprisoned,
 - Of the 18-20-year-old incarcerated delinquents 69 % re-offended, but of the non-custodial group only 31%,
 - People who were in jail for theft 66% re-offended, but of those sentenced for sexual crimes only 13%,
 - Of the non-custodial reconvictions those for robbery were highest (48%), those for sexual offences lowest (2%),
 - The more reconvictions a person has had, whether spent in prison or on probation, the more likely the probability was that he would fall back into crime again.

- b) The so-called Halliday-Report of 2001 for Scotland indicates the following key figures for re-offences within 2 years of release:
 - 60 % of incarcerated people were reconvicted and
 - 58 % of those who had served a probation order,
 - 42 % who were serving a community service,
 - 40 % who had received fines,
 - 55 % of the under 21s.

- c) A German study by Heinz/Jehle/Sutterer covering the period 1994-98 and involving 947.348 convictions was published in 2005 by the Ministry of Justice (Stat7). It specifies that within 5 years after release
 - 45% of those who had benefited from a suspended sentence re-offended, but 56% of those who were incarcerated,
 - 78 % of young delinquents with a firm prison sentence fell back into crime.
 - 73 % of those sentenced for homicide did not re-offend whatever the offence,
 - 70 % of those condemned to paying a fine did not re-offend.

- d) A study by the Finnish Criminal Sanction Agency (Rikosseuraamusvirasto) for prisoners of the years 1993-2001 (the details of which are on internet), sums up as follows (Stat8):
 - over 50 % returned to prison within 5 years,
 - the proportion of recidivists is increasing,
 - the majority of first-timers did non re-offended,
 - 80/90% of young offenders return to prison at least once,

- people sentenced for homicide and sexual delinquency re-offend less frequently than those who commit other crimes.
- e) General re-offending rates talk of 67 to 70 % for the USA, 60/65 % for England, 58 % for New Zealand, 46% to 60 % for Sweden, 58 % for Scotland and 27 % Denmark. In the USA and after 3 years of release, the recidivism rates are supposed to be 70% for robbers, 78 % for motor cycle thieves, 70% for possessing and selling arms illegally.
- f) In France 56% of ex-prisoners re-offend within 5 years; but such general, accumulated figures do not make much sense, according to Professor Tournier, because the differences among the categories are too important. Following his analysis of people freed in 1996-97 (Stat9), he says that
- incarcerated underage people had a close to 100% probability of returning to prison,
 - as had 81% of the jobless people under 30, sentenced previously for violence,
 - but the probability fell close to zero for people without a previous conviction, who were over the age of 30 and with a steady job. For murder the probability of falling back into the same crime was 2 per 1000.
 - Overall, those who were incarcerated re-offended more frequently than those who benefited from a suspended prison sentence and community work.
- g) The “Howard League” asked in 5/2006 delinquents what would help them NOT to re-offend. The replies were (Stat10):
- having a steady job - 55 %,
 - having stable accommodation – 26 %,
 - having stable friendships – 24 %,
 - having a child – 20 %,
 - having a family-like relation – 20 %,
 - managing their drug (ab)use – 17 %,
 - managing their alcohol (ab)use – 15 %.

In 2005 Professor Tournier (CNRS, Paris University I) and Patrick Colin of Strasburg University founded the GERE (Groupe d’étude de la récidive en Europe) with the aim of collecting scientific data on the subject which should be the basis for less opinionated and more factual decision making in future. Criminologists from Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and Italy are also part of this group . During 2006/7 several conferences took place on the subject (Stat11) .

There are other studies on “Recidivism”, such as

- in German: Stefan Harendorf, Univeristy Göttingen, 2007 “Rückfalligkeit und kriminelle Karrieren von Gewalttätern“,
- in Spanish: „Penas alternativas y Reincidencia – un estudio empirico“, 2006, Editorial Aranzadi,
- in Italian: “Indulto e recidiva” tries to assess re-offending further to the release of 22.000 prisoners in July 2006, an event which stirred up Italy at the time.
- in French: “Evaluation de la récidive. Questions de méthode » (Tournier). The Magistrate Serge Portelli published in 2005 “La Récidive – mobiliser l’intelligence, non la peur” and in 2008 “Récidivistes” (Editions Grasset).
- in English : « Unemployment and Reoffending », Apex Scotland, 4/2007 and “Why’s and How’s of measuring jail recidivism”, 6/2006, Urban Institute (USA).

7. Who are the people in prison?

In a report of 7/2004 by the French Parliament (rapport Léonard), the following percentages are mentioned (Stat12):

- 60 % of all prisoners have an educational level equivalent to the end of elementary schooling (études primaires),
- 30 % have reading problems,
- 20 % are illiterate (the rate is 3 times higher than for people outside prison),
- 65 % have no profession,
- 15 % have no permanent home or are homeless,
- 16 % are “indigent” which means that they have less than Euro 45,- per month at their disposal for general expenses,
- 20 % of the detainees had less than Euro 8,- remaining from their earnings in prison when they were released (enquiry 1997),
- 40 % of the incoming detainees have had no medical help 12 months prior to their detention,
- 33 % of the newcomers have had an accumulated consumption of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and antipsychotic treatment,
- 27 % of the minors took drugs regularly prior to imprisonment,
- 50 % of the detainees suffer from a mental handicap,
- 10 % say that they had regular psychological treatment 12 months before incarceration.

It is likely that these percentages apply in other European countries too.

	Total Crimes reported 2005	1995	+/- %	rate variation 2000-2005	homicide completed number	completed rate 100.000	country's capital	violent crime	robbery	drug trafficking
Norway	275.684	267.925	+ 3	+2,9	33	0,87	1,79	21.381	1.448	17.118
Sweden	1.241.843	1.145.945	+ 8	+4,6	83	1,0	?	97.485	9.398	4.670
Finland	339.715	381.612	- 12	+6,0	114	2,3	2,32	37.105	1.814	5.177
Denmark	432.704	538.963	- 20	+4,8	70	1,31	2.0	19.135	5.199	961
England/Wales	5.556.513	5.100.241	+ 9	+3,0	766	1,59	2,64	1.220.198	98.204	25.279
Scotland	417.785	475.697	- 12	+3,0	101	2,31	2,41	28.407	3.553	6.913
Ireland	101.659	102.484	- 1	-	58	1,28	2,26	8.790	1.146	2.674
Netherlands	1.228.271	1.226.700	+/- 0	+8,5	198	1,37	4,43	110.509	15.463	15.305
Belgium	989.153	1.015.011	- 6	-	173	1,85	3,28	99.800	21.234	12.408
			(2000)							
Germany	6.391.715	6.668.715	- 4	+0,1	804	0,98	1,92	212.832	54.841	72.002
Luxembourg	25.32	28.380	- 11	-	4	0,66	0,87	2.367	351	1.326
Austria	605.272	486.433	+ 24	-	54	0,67	1,13	148.748	4.770	2.337
Switzerland	352.723	346.634	+ 2	+0,1	75	1,03	1,36	11.544	2.595	7.076
Italy	2.579.124	2.267.488	+ 13	+1,6	601	1,13	1,12	135.681	65.724	32.059
Spain	2.230.906	1.659.026	+ 34	+5,1	518	1,34	1,82	112.426	90.104	11.968
Portugal	392.174	326.829	+ 20	- 1,8	133	1,36	0,60	23.241	20.183	3.535
France	3.775.838	3.665.320	+ 3	+3,6	976	1,63	1,71	307.501	124.600	6.108
For comparison:										
Russia (2001)						22,05	18,38			
USA (2001)						5,56	42,87			
Columbia						61,78				
South Africa						49,60				

“Prison Population in Western Europe”

TABLE B

March 2007

Source: Prison Brief - International Centre for Prison Studies, London (update 10/2006)

/2008

Country	Prison population		+/- in %	prison pop. rate per 100.000		Remand prisoners in %	Women %	Youths %	foreigners %	Occupation rate %
	Total 2006	1995		2006	1995					
Norway	3048	2398	+27	66	55	15,9	4,8	0,3	17,2	92,1
Sweden	7450	5764	+29	82	65	20,3	5,2	0,2	26,2	102,7
Finland	3954	3018	+31	75	59	11,6	6,3	0,1	8,0	112,4
Denmark	4198	3438	+22	77	66	25,2	4,6	0,6	17,5	95,3
England/ Wales	79861	50962	+57	148	99	16,6	5,6	3,2	12,5	112,8
Scotland	7131	5657	+26	139	111	21,7	4,5	2,6	1,3	111,5
Ireland	3080	2054	+50	72	57	15,9	3,5	1,7	9,0	98,5
Netherlands	21013	10249	+105	128	66	30,0	8,7	9,7	31,7	95,6
Belgium	9597	7561	+27	91	75	73,2	4,2	0,2	42,0	110,6
Germany	78581	66146	+19	95	81	18,6	5,2	4,0	28,2	98,0
Luxemburg	768	469	+64	167	114	41,8	4,9	1,4	75,0	110,3
Austria	8766	6180	+42	105	77	22,6	5,3	2,3	45,1	107,2
Switzerland	6111	5655	+8	83	80	39,0	5,4	0,8	70,5	93,4
Italy	61721	49641	+24	104	87	35,9	4,8	0,7	33,2	131,5
Spain	64215	40157	+60	145	102	24,2	7,9	0	29,7	129,5
Portugal	12870	12343	+4	121	124	22,1	7,1	1,1	18,5	104,3
France	52009	51623	+1	85	89	31,5	3,6	1,1	21,4	109,9
Russia	869.814	920.685	-6	611	622	16,9	6,7	2,5	1,7	79,5
USA	2.186.230	1.585.586	+38	738	600	21,2	8,9	0,4	6,4	107,9
Turkey	65.458	49.895	+31	91	82	47,7	3,3	2,7	2,3	77,4
Poland	87.901	62.719	+40	230	163	16,9	2,9	1,3	0,7	122,1

PRISON POPULATION IN WESTERN EUROPE

TABLE C

4/2008

Source: European Council,
Space Survey - 2005

Source: Prison Brief – International Centre for Prison Studies, London (update 10.12.2007)

Country	Prison population Total		Prison pop. Rate per 100.000		Remand prisoners in %	Women in %	Youth in %	Foreigners in %	Occupation rate in %	detention time in months	evasion per 10.000 prisoners
	1998	2007	1998	2007							
Norway	2519	3533	57	75	19,8	5,5	0,3	19,5	96,8	3,3	33,6
Sweden	5290	7175	60	79	22,2	4,1	0,2	27,5	106,3	3,6	49,1
Finland	2569	3595	50	68	14,0	7,0	0,1	8,5	100,2	6,5	55,1
Denmark	3413	3626	64	67	27,0	5,4	0,1	22,6	90,4	2,8	63,8
England + Wales	65298	80229	126	148	16,1	5,4	3,0	13,9	112,2	5,8	5,8
Scotland	6082	7261	120	142	22,1	4,8	2,6	1,3	114,1	2,1	4,6
Ireland	2648	3080	71	72	15,9	3,5	1,7	9,0	98,5	0	7,7
Netherlands	13333	21013	85	128	30,0	8,7	9,7	31,7	95,6	3,9	3,5
Belgium	8264	9597	81	91	37,2	4,2	0,2	42,0	110,6	7,3	32,5
Germany	78592	76629	96	93	17,4	5,3	4,5	28,2	95,8	7,4	
Austria	6962	8991	87	108	23,3	4,9	1,8	43,1	104,3	6,8	
Luxembourg	392	744	92	160	41,5	4,0	1,1	72,7	106,9		
Switzerland	6041	5888	85	79	39,1	5,7	0,9	69,0	87,3	1,2	
Italy	49050	39348	85	67	57,1	4,3	0,7	33,9	138,9	8,2	3,2
Spain	44763	66129	114	147	23,2	8,3	0	32,7	133,7	16,7	2,2
Portugal	14598	12803	146	120	22,7	7,0	1,1	20,2	103,1	28,7	20,6
France (1.1.07)	50744	58402	86	95	30,6	3,7	1,1	19,7	115,4	8,1	3,9
Russia	1009863	889598	688	628	16,5	7,1	2,5	2,7	86,2		
USA	1816931	2245189	669	750	21,2	9,1	0,4	6,2	106,9		
Canada	37401	34244	126	107	31,5	5,0	6,2	?	106,9		
Poland	57382	89805	148	236	14,8	3,1	1,3	0,7	119,1		
Turkey	64907	82742	102	112	61,5	3,7	3,4	2,3	77,4		

B – Contextual Information :

March 2007

Update 4/2008

B2 - International Organisations working in a Prison Environment

1. The most universal Confederation seems to be the “INTERNATIONAL CORRECTION AND PRISON ASSOCIATION – ICPA “ (Org1) with headquarters in Canada. Its members, amongst others, are
 - all the major North-American Organisations such as:
 - + APPA (American Probation and Parole Association),
 - + APAI (Association of Paroling Authorities International)
 - + ATTIC (Supervision, Wisconsin)
 - European Organisations such as:
 - + the “Conférence Européenne de la probation – CEP”,
 - + Eurochips – European Committee of imprisoned parents
 - + European Forum for Victim-offender Mediation and Restorative Justice
 - + International Centre for the Prevention of Crime
 - + the “International Red Cross” – Prison Visitors section
 - + EPEA (European Prison Education Association),
 - + International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS), London,
 - + Avocats sans Frontière,
 - Prison visiting organisations such as:
 - + “International Prison Fellowship” (American)
 - + “International Prison Chaplains Association - IPCA,
 - + “Volunteers for Prison Inmates (VPI)”, Canadian, founded in 1997,
 - + “Volunteers of America (VOA)”, spiritually based,
 - + “Association of Elisabeth Fry Societies” with their 25 member associations across Canada.
 - the Governments of 70 countries and their Prison Administrations.
2. The intergovernmental EUROPEAN COUNCIL (Org1A) is the highest European institution which works towards “a European identity based on national diversity and common values”. With regard to prison reforms, it is active in the following areas:
 - on the basis of the United Nations minimal Rules for the treatment of prisoners of 1955, the European Council conformed to them in a resolution of 1973. In 1987 specific “European Prison Rules” were developed and approved by 25 member states. Following the progression of European integration and the change of social patterns, the “108 New European Prison Rules” were approved in 2006 by the 46 member states.
 - the « European Committee for the prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment - CPT », the “European Court of Human Rights” and the “Human Rights Commissioner” all work for the protection of the fundamental rights, including those of the prisoners.
 - The “Conferences of Prison Directors – CDAP” assemble every 2 years prison governors, representatives of prison administrations and ministries, governmental organisations and NGOs, to discuss “prison administration in an increasingly complex environment” (theme of the last meeting in 2007 in Vienna).

- “Penal systems and sanctions concerning delinquent youths” is in preparation and will be published in 2008 in form of “Rules – Recommendations”. In view of the unsatisfactory development of recidivism, a common European initiative on Probation work is in preparation by the “Council of penological co-operation - PC-CP”.
 - The “SPACE 1” statistics contain the essential figures on crime and detention. As the methods of reporting diverge from one country to another, the numbers of the past require reinterpretation. A unification of methodology is being discussed and should be introduced by 2010.
3. The “CONFERENCE PERMANENTE EUROPEENNE DE LA PROBATION – CEP” (Org2) comprises the Official Social Services of 33 European countries and a number of voluntary organisations involved in Prison and Probation work, such as the French “Service Pénitentiaire d’Insertion et de Probation – SPIP”, « Reclassering Nederland”, the Swedish Kriminalvården, the “National Probation Service for England and Wales”, the “Schweizerische Vereinigung der Bewährungshilfe”, the French FNARS, the Commission Royale des Patronages, Belgium, the Dutch Stichting Verslavingsreclassering, the Institut de Reinserciò Social, Barcelona, the Deutsche Bewährungs-, Gerichts- und Straffälligenhilfe (DBH), Köln, the Salvation Army, Holland, the Austrian „Verein Neustart“ and others.
 4. There is a list of about 300 NGOs approved by the Council of Europe (OR3), among them
 - + The “European Prison Education Association (EPEA),
 - + Caritas International
 - + The European Council of Quakers
 - + The international Movement of ATD Quart Monde,
 but no known organisation of prison volunteers is mentioned. The approval conditions for NGOs by the European Council appear to be rather stringent (ORG3A).
 5. INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS involved in prison life are, for example:
 - a) “The Quakers” started prison visiting around 1776 in Pennsylvania, where their headquarters still are today. Through Quakers, such as Elizabeth Fry and Sarah Smith, the idea of Prison Visiting was introduced in the UK at the beginning of the 19th century. The “Quaker Council of European Affairs”, which organises their multiple activities in Europe, was founded in 1979 and is located in Brussels. The description of the “Quaker Chaplain” and “Prison Visitor” is defined in document (Org4). The Quakers are very active in the debate on prison reforms and have published reports, as for example, on the Danish Penal System in 2006 (Org5), a 112- page assessment on “Women in prison – Review of the conditions in Member States of the Council of Europe” in 2/2007 and “a Gender Critique of the European Prison Rules” of 56 pages in 3/2006 (Org6).
 - b) The association “Saint Vincent de Paul” (Org7) goes back to the saint who worked in the Paris area in around 1600 for the poor and needy (rather like the recently deceased Abbé Pierre). The Association was founded in 1833 in Paris. 590.000 volunteers are working today in 131 countries, many of them in a prison environment.

- c) The “International Red Cross” started its humanitarian action in 1863 to alleviate the consequences of war and imprisonment. Thanks to its fiercely defended status of neutrality, the ICRC (+ red Crescent today) is today a recognized moral authority worldwide and enters prisons in Myanmar, the Central African Republic, Uzbekistan and Cuba. 12.000 members work in 80 countries. In 2006, 480.000 visits were carried out in 2600 prisons. It was up to the ICRC to denounce the inhuman treatment at the Abou Graib Prison in Baghdad and finance the changes, to oppose the detention conditions at Guantanamo Bay and work for human rights in Afghan Prisons (Org8) which are all highly sensitive and dangerous assignments. The joint Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in 5/2007 in Istanbul reaffirmed the convergent views of their actions in favour of Health, Social matters and Migration, including prisoners. The very deep involvement of the ICRC in prison matters can be gathered on Internet by articles such as “prisoners and visitors” (Org9) or “Health and human rights in prisons”(Org10).
- d) “The International Prison Fellowship” (Fraternité Internationale des Prisons). (Org11). This organisation was founded in 1979 by one of the ex-counsellors of President Nixon, Chuck Colson, after serving a prison sentence following the Watergate affair. The IPF defines itself as “faith-based”. Messages published on the internet concerning their prison activities, for example in Norway and the Ukraine, reflect their evangelical spirit. In Ethiopia, 20 new preachers were consecrated recently in the presence of the American Ambassador. In New Zealand, the IPF is participating actively in the forthcoming penal reform (Org12).
The “IPF” is a very dynamic and unconventional organisation which specializes in prison visiting. It follows its former detainees who, after having left prison, often find their place within the evangelical communities (a form of “lasting probation”). Beyond the main activity which is the support of prison chaplaincy (“the work of the church behind bars”), there are programs such as the “Angel Tree” which deals with the children of prisoners, the promotion of faith-based prisons (APAC), the medical “Global Assistance Program”, the “Sycamore Tree Project” which tries to reconcile groups of victims with offenders and the “Week of prayer and transformation”. The IPF is active worldwide with 100.000 volunteers in 110 countries (another source talks of 50.000 prison volunteers in 88 countries). In Europe they are present in Bulgaria, England, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Lithuania, Malta, Holland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Russia, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Ukraine. The last congress was held in 7/2007 in Toronto under the theme “Where love and justice meet”.
- e) “Alpha for prison” (Org13) is basically a 10-week, 15-session introductory course to Christian faith for non-Christians or non-church goers. The key person of this “effective evangelism through the local church” is Rev. Paul Cowley, ex-offender and ex-professional soldier who says that he knows that his message works, because it made him find the right way. He was ordained by the Anglican Church in 2002. In the last 25 years, the Alpha courses have been introduced and taught by the prison chaplains in 80 % of British prisons and in 75 countries. Apart from “Alpha for Prisons” there are on offer courses for the Young, the Campus, the Military, the Catholics, future couples, follow-up and challenging life-style courses. In addition, there are more than 100 different titles of books, cassettes, videos, kits and songbooks in about 30

languages. The “Caring for ex-offenders” movement has grown out of the “Alpha for Prisons” courses. As they are complementary, the “Prison Fellowship” and “Alpha” work frequently together. In their evangelical keenness, these organisations meet frequently with opposition from secular prison administrations, as for example, in the Dartmoor prison (UK) in 2006, when the Alpha courses were suspended (Org14).

- f) The “International prison Chaplains Association - IPCA” (Org15) was founded in Switzerland in 1985 and is active today in 70 countries divided into 6 regions. The headquarters are in Sweden, the President is Mrs. Britta Winberg. Mainly ordained Ministers are working in this ecumenical Christian organisation which is funded predominantly by the protestant Churches. Amicable co-operation with the “Prison Fellowship” and the catholic ICCPPC. On their website, IPCA explains the “spirit of Bossey” which means the awareness of the prison chaplains in their often lonely task, their internationalism and their wish for a world-wide movement. The message is somewhat “evangelical”, because they describe their mission as “Uniting, encouraging and equipping a global network of prison chaplains as they share God’s love, and restoring justice”. The 2005 conference took place in Cornwall, Ont. and gathered 326 prison chaplains. The motto of the conference was “We are not alone” (Org16).
- g) The “ICCPCC” (International Commission for Catholic Prison Pastoral Care) is the International Organisation of Catholic Prison Chaplains (headquarters in the Netherlands). Founded in 1950, this organisation counts today 105 member countries and has a consultative status at the United Nations and elsewhere. Its aim is “to contribute to prison life on every level”. (Org17)
- h) The “Church of Scientology” (Org18) says on its website that their members visit 45.000 prisoners worldwide. According to “Prison.eu.Org”, the Scientologists have been working since 1996 in and around prisons through organisations such as Le Chemin du Bonheur, Applied Scholastics, Able International and Narconon. Criminon has a Prison Rehabilitation Program called “Second Chance” which is introduced in a number of American Prisons. Its efficiency is hotly disputed by conventional psychologists, criminologists and administrations. Narconon says (Org19) that in parts of Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Switzerland the Narconon method has received official recognition as a drug rehabilitation program. Therefore it became eligible for government and local funding.
- i) The “European Prison Education Association – EPEA” (Org20) goes back to a Scandinavian initiative for the promotion of education in prison “following the spirit of the recommendations published by the Council of Europe”. Members are prison educators, administrators and other professionals. Initially there were only 3 national organisations: FOKO, Norway, IPEA, Ireland and IPEA, France. Today there are 850 members in 41 countries. Their last Congress took place in Dublin in July 2007. Their present project is the “Virtual European Prison School” which should encourage prisoners to “lifelong learning with the aim of a lasting reintegration into society”.

- j) EUROCHIPS (European Committee for children of imprisoned parents) is a European-wide initiative to boost awareness of the precarious situation of children whose parents are imprisoned (Org21). Initiated and funded by the Dutch Foundation Bernard van Leer, Eurochips has member organisations today in most European countries, such as the Relais Parents-Enfants in France and Belgium, Action for Prisoners' Families in GB or "Bambini senza sbarre" in Italy. The organisation is very active at the Council of Europe. Its latest project is the publication of a "Handbook of Practice and Experience for children with imprisoned parents". 700.000 children in the European Union are separated from their incarcerated parents. Eurochips acts in accordance with the UN Convention of 1989 and the "Charter of Fundamental Rights of Children" within the European Union of 2000.
- k) The "European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice" with headquarters in Belgium unites individuals, professional and voluntary organisations of 25 European countries who work for the promotion and best practice in this field (Org22).
Some of the member organisations are CRISI and Istituto Don Calabria (Italy), Sunnmoek Rad and Telemark Median Service (Norway), Victim Support and Sacro (Scotland), Mikkeli Median Service (Finland), Le Radian and Mediante (Belgium), Fairmittlung (Germany), An Garda Siochana (Ireland), Victim Support Nederland, Neustart (Austria), etc.
- l) EMNA – European Mutual-help Network for alcohol-related problems – (Org23) unites most of the national organisations specialized in this field, such as Vie Libre (France), Länkernas Riksforbund (Sweden), Freundeskreise für Suchtkrankenhilfe, Kreuzbund and Blaues Kreuz (Germany), IOGT (Denmark), Tactus and InTact (Netherlands), Rio (Norway), Associazione Italiana Club Alcolisti di trattamento AICAT (Italy), Federación de Alcohólicos Rehabilitados de España – FARE, etc.
- k) The "International Prison Dharma Group" (Buddhist) works in French, German, Irish, Dutch and British Prisons (Org24). They say that they visit 25.000 prisoners in 900 prisons. The "International Association of Yoga Therapists" is very much linked with Buddhism. "Yoga in Prison" is a 66-page document published in April 2006. (Org25). "Mahayana" is a Buddhist Prison Organisation of Tibetan tradition, founded in 1996. They says that it has taught 12.000 prisoners worldwide so far.
- l) On Google, one can find 31 international Organisations (Org26) involved in prison work.
- m) The "Foreign Prisoner Support Service – FPSS – Save a life" publishes (Org27) on internet 4 pages of organisations working for incarcerated people both at home and abroad (Sweden, Holland, Middle East, Cambodia, Cuba, Australia, Thailand, Angola, etc).

B – Contextual Information :

March 2007
Update 4/2008

B3 - The Privatisation of Prisons and Prison Services

The link between “Prison Volunteers” and the privatisation of prisons does not seem evident at first sight. But it is real:

- Many prisons are overpopulated and old,
- The media, the public and populist politicians think that more incarcerations and for longer periods are the only effective means of combating criminality and re-offending. Therefore, new prisons and more efficient prison administrations seem to be needed,
- But the money available for social projects in government budgets diminishes everywhere due to the rising cost of energy, the ever-more-aging population, etc.,
- With the growing fear of Muslim fundamentalism, the fight against illegal immigration from the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe, the increase of violence and delinquency amongst young people and drug offenders, the rise of the prison population seems a logical consequence (Standard & Poor’s foresees a global growth of 3 to 5 % per year),
- The civil servants who predominantly run the prisons today, are generally considered as inefficient, too expensive, having too many privileges and too little motivation – therefore, private companies offer their services and are welcomed by governments always short of money.

The solution to these problems is the “PPP” (Public Private Partnership) which means that the private sector

- a) finances and builds the prisons and/or provides the general services, such as food, laundry, general maintenance. Only the core activities (management and surveillance of the detainees) remain in the hands of the state, or
- b) private companies build the prisons and afterwards not only manage all the services, but also become responsible for security, administration of the detainees, social services, education, leisure activities, prison visitors, transfer and re-socialisation of the prisoners.

The University of Greenwich (GB) seems to have specialized in the observation of the “Public Private Partnership” sector. It publishes on internet 6 times a year a fairly detailed study on the global development of PPPs.

PPPs represent a very convenient solution for indebted national states, because these do not need to spend up-front large sums of money on the construction of new prisons, and they have to pay only after the private companies have actually carried out the agreed services (Priv1). Many prison administrations, experts and politicians observe with scepticism this trend towards the privatisation of a domain which is so closely linked with the fundamental human rights of freedom and justice. The usual ethical and legal reproach is that the state condemns people through the verdicts of judges and then gets rid of its responsibility by transferring the expiation of the punishment to a private company.

In the USA, one frequently encounters the term “PRISON INDUSTRY”. In 2003, 6,3 % (= 94.360) of all prisoners (some 1.500.000 at the time), were incarcerated in “private prisons”. According to a Texan official, the services by private companies (Priv2) are 20 % less expensive (\$ 40 to 50 per detainee per day), which is half of the cost in France, GB and

Germany where the daily rate was Euro 80,- to 100,- in 2006. Per Prison Fellowship the rate for State-run prisons in the USA is \$ 20.000 per year/detainee = \$ 55,- per day. In addition, it seems, that the private companies offer more attractive educational and leisure programs (including “military drill-type ones” for the young) and are reputed to be more effective with re-offenders too. The “private” prisons dealt proportionately with twice as many re-offenders (the “real” criminals) as the public sector. In Texas, 40 prisons are privately run with a capacity of 30.000 inmates which house about 12 % of the total prison population of 152.000. In Florida with its 84.000 inmates in 2005, the increase of the prison population was 3,6 % in one year (2005), 19,2 % in 5 years and 37 % in 10 years. Behind the “Prison Industry” stand powerful private companies such as the Correction Corporation of America with 63 prisons, the Cornell Correction Corp with 55 prisons in 12 States in 2000, the Prison Reality Trust with 50 prisons, the Wackenhut Corrections, etc. According to “Business Week”, the stocks of “Correction Corp. of America” rose by 26 % in the first 2 months of 2006. Business prospects are excellent nationally and internationally. .

In Germany, the construction company Bilfinger has built privately financed prisons at Burg and Chemnitz (Priv3). Serco is involved in the Hünefeld and “Kötter-Justizleistungen” in the Offenburg prison.

The French Parliament changed the law in 2004 allowing the outsourcing of services not directly linked with security. In 2006, the Bouygues consortium Themis obtained authorisation for the construction of 3 new prisons. Shareholders: Dexia/Royal Bank of Scotland 40 % each, Bouygues 19 %; 1700 beds, opening 2009 (Priv 4). In 2/2008, Bouygues (the French civil engineering giant) obtained a contract for building before 2011 and managing entirely 3 more prisons with 3500 places in Nantes, Lille, and Réan. The buildings will be transferred into state property after 27 years of operation. According to ICPS, France is very advanced with regard to the “Public Private Partnership” in which the prison administration keeps the core activity (surveillance, administration of the detainees, social services), and the remainder is managed by private companies. In this “dual-management” set-up, the construction of 13.000 places was launched in 1986 (Chalandon) and an additional 13200 in 1994 (Programme Méhaignerie). Apart from Bouygues, the French civil engineering company, SODEXHO is also very active in this field. They run “restaurant services and facilities management” (Priv3A) in 6 Spanish prisons, 14 in France, 16 in Italy, 38 in Holland, 8 in Portugal, 7 in Scotland, etc. Sodexo provides work and professional formation to the detainees through their restaurant services and gets involved in professional formation, such as the SIGES project (horticulture, vegetable gardening) at the Liancourt prison in France.

In Belgium, the market will become lucrative soon, because most of the 33 prisons are more than 100 years old.

Since 1997, 18 of the 140 English prisons have been built or are managed by Falck, Premier Prison Ltd (a partnership of the American Wackenhut and SERCO), UKDS (subsidiary of the American CCA), Onley, Global Solutions, Moreton Prison Services and Group 4 (a subsidiary of the Swedish Securitas International).

At Nottingham prison, 30 % of the private staff changed in one year. The problems concerning “private prisons” are frequently brought up in Parliament and even the Archbishop of Canterbury has condemned these privatisations, but the Blair government decided that all new prisons would be privately built or run (Priv4). It appears that for Voluntary Prison Visitors, there is little difference between state and privately run prisons,

because the personnel dealing with “social” activities in prison, is often recruited from the “social” services of the state.

The former communist countries of eastern Europe represent an ideal clientele for the PPP sector, because most of their prisons are run down and the conditions of incarceration are frequently criticized by the “European Committee for the Prevention of Torture”, the United Nations and Amnesty International. These “new European” countries in transition from post-communism to a liberal economy, offer excellent perspectives for investors in the “prison industry”.

In a study of 2004, the ICPS (Priv5) thought that the privatisation of prison services would be a passing phenomenon. The information provided by Greenwich University seems to indicate the contrary.

NEUSTART, a private Austrian company, has carried out not only probation work for many years in Austria, but is also involved in associate activities (see section Switzerland/Austria). In 2006, it extended its activities to Baden-Wurtemberg (Germany) which provoked strong resistance from the unions of the civil servants working for the prison administration (see report by the “Deutschlandradio” in section “Germany” – Priv 6). For Neustart, to be successful and competitive, it

- must limit the employment of civil servants,
- involve more volunteer workers by granting them more freedom of action, responsibility and general “work satisfaction” (significant cost reduction, because voluntary workers are paid expenses only) and
- work in an “unbureaucratic” fashion as private companies do.

In view of the additional effort since 1999 to reduce re-offending in England (which, in fact, resulted in a steady increase), the British Government proposed in 1/2007 a complete overhaul of the State Probation Services, with part of the funding going to private companies and voluntary associations (Priv7).

In England, Germany, Austria, the USA, Australia and New Zealand, voluntary prison visitors already work under the authority of private companies. In future years, it is likely that many more prisons will be completely privatized and that probation and education work will be carried out more by private companies and the voluntary sector, which will increase, no doubt, the already existing tensions with the prison administration. Only time will tell whether this tendency will contribute to improving the principal goal of incarceration: the re-socialisation of the delinquents.

In France, “Les Prisons de la misère” (Priv8) was published in 1999 by a well-known writer on prison matters, Loïc Wacquant (Professor at Berkely) . Prison.Eu.Org contributes a comparative study with the title “La privatisation des prisons – 3 enjeux” (Priv9).

“Against repression, against prisons”, a Berlin-based association, sums up the situation with the conclusion “je mehr Eingesperrete , desto mehr Gewinn – the more detainees, the more profit” (Priv10).

B – Contextual Information :

March 2007
Update 4/2008

B4 - The situation in the USA

Although this enquiry deals with Western Europe, looking briefly at the situation in the USA is useful, because often “what happens in the USA today may well happen in Europe tomorrow”. Example: “Prison visiting” was an idea of the East-coast Quakers and the electronic bracelet was invented in the US in 1985.

The “broken-window principle” (called also “zero tolerance”) promoted in the early 1990s by the former Mayor of New York, Mr. Giuliani and his very media-aware Chief of Police, Mr. Bratton (US1), has had a great impact in the USA and partly in Europe too. It basically means that, if a window is knocked in, it must be repaired at once, because otherwise, thugs will feel encouraged to destroy the others too. With regard to legal matters, it pushes Police, Judges and normal citizens to report and go after ALL offences and punish their authors. As a consequence, due to more and longer sentences, the prisons have filled up steadily in the last 20 years . This policy was successful, at least on paper (US2), because the crimes and offences registered by the police seem to have dropped in the USA between 1991 and 2001 from 15.000.000 to 12.000.000 (although it is also true to say that in Canada, which had not followed the American example, the crime rate fell in the same proportions). The European crime rate remained fairly static over the same period.

There does not seem to exist any in-depth study which proves that this repressive policy has had a beneficial effects on re-offending, the percentages of which cited by the press and organisations, such as ALPHA and Prison Fellowship, vary between 67 to 70 % within 3 years of release. “Strike 3 and you are out” seems to apply not only to baseball, but to sentencing too.

In the US, the prison population rate per 100.000 (US3) has risen from 140 in 1980 to over 750 at the end of 2007 and is hence about 7 to 8 times higher than the Western European average. Between 1980 and 2003, the convictions (US4) for offences against the public order, drugs and theft, have increased only slightly, whereas those for violence have trebled (52 % of all sentences in 2002 compared with France = 14 %). Evolution (US5):

	1980	2005
- total number of condemnations	2.000.000	7.000.000
- People in prison (prison + jail)	600.000	2.200.000
- People on probation	1.100.000	4.200.000
- Conditional Release	300.000	800.000
- Young offenders		100.000

This means that 7.300.000 people (or 2,4 % of the total population) live in the USA under legal supervision (in Western Europe 0,2 to 0,4%).

By detailing the ratios of the prisoners according to ethnic groups, the US Authorities publish statistics which are, from a French point of view, “politically incorrect” (but they apply undoubtedly to some European countries too).

Here is an analysis of the US prison population on 30.6.06 (always per 100.000 - (US6) :

	Whites -----	Latinos -----	Blacks -----
Total number incarcerated	409	1038	2468
Total number of Males	737	1862	4789
Males 25-29 years only	1685	3912	11695
Males 25-29 years (% of total population)	1,6 %	3,9 %	11,7 %

This means that 6 times more blacks are incarcerated than whites and 11,7 % of the total black 25-29 year olds were behind bars in 2006.

“Human Rights Watch” publishes a thorough analysis of the situation in 2003 under the title “Incarcerated America” (US7). “The Sentencing Project” of 7/2007 on “Racial, ethnic prison disparity” (US7A) states in detail not only the broad variations in racial disparity among the 50 states, but details the “uneven justice” to which the minorities are exposed.

In federal America, each state has its own prison administration. According to the ICPS, out of a total of 5049 prisons in 2000, 3365 were “local jails”, 1558 state and 146 federal prisons.

The “Ohio Dept of Rehabilitation and Correction” (US8) explains the functioning of their prisons and the conditions for visiting inmates. “Befrienders or volunteer visitors” are mentioned once in 6 pages. Already on arrival, each detainee has to establish a list of visitors he wants to see: “family, friends, lawyer, chaplain”. The word “voluntary prison visitor” is not mentioned.

The North Carolina Dept of Corrections publishes comprehensive guide-lines on “Volunteers in Prison”. Among sensible generalities it is suggested that “Volunteers are useful to ease workloads of prison staff members” (US9).

Jack Cowley of the “Alpha USA-Office of Prisons and Re-Entry” made a statement of testimony in 2005 in front of the “Commission on Safety and Abuse of America’s Prisons” which reflects some essential problems (US11). He said:

- 70 % of the released detainees re-offend, 93 % return to the community.
- We lock up people with whom we are angry rather than of whom we are scared, because they are dangerous.
- The crime rate and the number of prison staff go down; the prison population goes up.
- There are more and more prisoners with mental health problems.
- Offenders stay in prison longer and have given up hope of a normal life outside.
- Staff treat re-offenders as “worst-of-the-worst”. Security by force is more prevalent than measures of re-entry. Increased tension between prisoners and staff due to confined and violent environment. Rumours/lies circulate and damage re-socialisation efforts.
- Nobody is accountable for the judicial failure to correct the detainees.
- Once the detainee leaves prison, he meets with so many obligations (family, underpaid job, bad accommodation, compensation for the victim, parole fees) that he has problems overcoming them. He starts feeling that prison was not that bad, because everything was provided. Prison is no longer a scare, but an acceptable alternative to freedom.
- Ex-inmates who do NOT re-offend do so despite their negative prison experience. The scare does not work.
- Imagine what would happen, if the actors of the juridical/penal system were personally held responsible for reducing the re-offending rate. They would start to implement the most efficient ways of imprisonment and probation instead of catching the detainee in administrative “do’s and don’ts”. Example: currently in most US-States a volunteer is not allowed to contact the prisoner’s family and see him after release, although the mentoring relationship after release plays a major role in his success or failure of re-entry”.

IPCA indicates for the USA that (US12):

- 66 % of all offenders are rearrested within 3 years,
- 54 % have no high-school diploma,
- Recidivism is 20 to 60% lower for those participating in educational, vocational or work programs,
- 8 to 16 % have a serious mental disorder and 70 % a substance abuse problem (dual diagnosis), but most prisons are not equipped for treatment of such cases,
- 20 % of the prisoners are released with Community Supervision,
- Appropriate co-ordinated treatment can reduce recidivism by 30 %,
- 45 % of the 200.000 parolees return to prison for parole violations.

There is ample evidence (Andrews and Bonta, Harrison, Walmsley etc) in about 200 enquiries with statistically relevant sampling that “non-residential sanctions” compared with imprisonment produce between 3 and 23 % less re-offending. Rehabilitation according to the “risk, needs and responsivity principles” produces, if combined, between a 26 to 32 % reduction of re-offending compared with imprisoned people without help. Cognitive-behavioural methods (change in behaviour, thinking and relationships) yielded a reduction of 23% in re-offending compared with those prisoners who entered and left prison with no rehabilitation effort. Prison + half-way houses resulted in a 17 % reduction of re-offending. All these facts are documented in detail and are widely publicised.

Although the USA represent only 5 % of the world population (US12A), 25 % of all prisoners worldwide are incarcerated in America. The disproportionately high US prison population is bewildering all the more as 90 % of the Americans say that they are religious. A possible explanation might be a very narrow interpretation of Hebrews 12:6 “For whom the Lord loves he chastens/punishes and whips every son whom he receives” (?).

Volunteer prison visitors are mainly part of Religious Organisations:

- “the American Correction Chaplains” ACCA – The chaplains are paid by the Prison Administration to insure that all prisoners are given spiritual assistance in their own faith. They recruit their own volunteers according to need.
- “the American Catholic Chaplains Association” - ACCCA. The number of prison chaplains dwindles. Whereas in 1980 virtually all Prison Chaplains were priests, in 2001 only half of the 183 Chaplains were ordained. Therefore, essential services such as saying mass, hearing confession or anointing the sick cannot be performed. .
- the protestants from IPCA and the Quakers,
- the Prison Fellowship and “Alpha for prison” (evangelists),
- The Kairos Prison Ministry (US13) is an ecumenical organisation, based in Florida, which is an offspring of the Cursillo movement. 20.000 volunteers work world-wide They offer courses of initiation to Christianity and “lasting re-entry of prisoners into society”,
- the Patriots of the “Volunteers of America” (US14)
- the Scientologists have a “second chance rehabilitation program” within their Criminon Organisation which runs in several US prisons; hotly disputed,
- local associations such as the “Prison Padres” or the “Chicagoland Prison Outreach”.

Most Evangelical Churches (or movements) are united in the umbrella organisation COPE which is in turn part of the “International Network of Prison Ministries”. The INPM has a website with more than 3000 entries. Many of the churches have resounding names such as Jesus Inside, the Lord loseth the prisoner, Exodus Ministries, Gone Fishing, Jesus is the way, Faith Fellowship, General Council of God, First Assembly of God, Good New Prison Ministry, World-wide Voice in the Wilderness, Whispering Hills Church of Christ or “Brothers Keeper”, a Massachusetts church which goes back to 1980 and Frank Catania, a former prisoner who had become an evangelist, etc.

The Prison Fellowship (Slogan: Changing Lives, Minds and communities through Jesus Christ) with its dynamic organisation is omnipresent on Internet with job offers, documents of faith, projects such as contacting individually 14.000 detainees in Southern California in April 2007 to reduce recidivism, the recruiting of volunteers “how to help” (US15) and the very factual “do’s and don’ts” for prison volunteers (US16).

With less money available for State “Re-entry programs”, faith-based organisations, such the Prison Fellowship, offer Christian Rehabilitation Programs in prisons which caused considerable upheaval last year in the USA. Per a CNN report, the “InnerChange Freedom Initiative” (US17) is available on a voluntary basis theoretically to all detainees with less than 2 years before release, except for sex offenders and inmates with a bad disciplinary record. The “Carol Vance Unit” in Texas was founded in 1997 and is one of the faith-based prison facilities where the chosen inmates spend their days studying, working and praying, helped by evangelical volunteers. The “Correction Corporation of America” which runs 63 private prisons has accommodated 1700 inmates in 24 prisons enabling them to follow these programs. The State subsidized these courses with 3 million \$.

A lawsuit by the “Americans United for Separation of Church and State” contended that state funds were used for the purpose of religious indoctrination. As, in addition, only 6 % of the catholic prisoners (compared with the 20% Catholics of the total prison population) and probably no Muslims took part, a federal judge in Iowa agreed with the complaint and ordered the halt of the program and repayment of 1,5 Million \$ to the State. The Prison Fellowship appealed affirming that the InnerChange program produced far better re-offending results (apparently only 10 % re-offended in Florida). An independent study showed, however, that released inmates with a similarly favourable personal background, achieved the same low re-offending rates.

One characteristic of the faith-based re-entry programs is that the assigned volunteer mentor provides counselling during incarceration and after release, assists with job hunting, housing, administration, family problems etc. whereas normal inmates leave prison with only \$ 50,- from the administration and “the directions to the nearest bus station”.

The Florida Dept. of Correction created the first faith-based residential program of re-education in 1999 in a max. security prison. The Kairos Prison Ministry (US18) which was founded in 1976 and employs 12.000 volunteers who work largely with the Community sector, runs the program. To participate in it, the prisoner has no other obligation than to dedicate the evenings and weekends to study and group activities, to renounce bad behaviour, such as viewing pornography, bullying, swearing and smoking. Participants can be agnostics or of no Christian faith. Key to the course is Anger Management, working for a daily living, the experience of relationships, parenting, victim awareness and learning to be tolerant. The participants live in separate dormitories, but eat and work with the other inmates. Usually a volunteer from the local church accompanies the participants with visits once a week for 6 months (Godparent).

A 3-year pilot program “Ready 4 work” by the Government and private groups resulted, it appears, 3 years after release in a re-offending rate of only 30 %.

There are religious lobby and information groups such as the “Religious Intelligence” and the “DeMoss Group”. Among the 24 faith-based movements of the “Alpha links” (US19) are, for example:

- “Child Evangelism Fellowship” which promotes correspondence between imprisoned parents and their children. It appears that the “Mailbox Club” operates in 150 countries and involves 5 Million children each year.
- “Fellowship (Motorbike) Riders” provide prison ministry through their church based affiliates.

- The “Morning Star Ministry” deals mainly with the indigenous Native American inmates for education, bible study and cross-cultural issues
- “Youth direct Ministries” conducts in-prison events in youth facilities.
- “Epiphany Ministry” provides small group and one-on-one follow-up in juvenile prisons and promotes the involvement of volunteers. Etc.

There are about 40 non-confessional organisations (US20) mentioned on the Website “The real cost of prison”. This blog gathers information and comments on the prison situation in the USA. The language is most direct and crude. Subjects: bigots, drugs, difficult visiting, rape, living conditions, repression, physical and mental health problems, prison industry, etc.

Under “American Voluntary Prison Visitors” one can find associations such as

- AIM – Incarcerated mothers are helped to maintain the mother-child link,
- California Moratorium Project – Stop all private and public construction of Prisons for 5 years. Use money for alternatives to imprisonment.
- Castle of Hope for lost souls – founded in 2002, this is an addict support group, former alcoholics, ex-convicts, abused children, all lost souls,
- Critical Resistance Organisation – against prison industry complex. They say that the more prisons there are, the quicker they will be filled.
- FAMM (Families against Mandatory Minimums), lobby for fair sentencing,
- AMICUS, Minneapolis – help to inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders,
- All of us or none – combat life-long discrimination, help prisoners, ex-prisoners,
- Inside Out – exploring issues of crime and justice in prison,
- The Prison Foundation, Washington – promotes Arts and education, alternatives to prison,
- California Prison Focus – Regular visits to 2 prisons, militate in favour of better treatment of the inmates, (US21),
- AmeriCorps VISTA Re-entry Initiative – 40 members work in 15 urban areas with ex-prisoners to facilitate housing, education, life skills to lower the recidivism rate(US22)
- “Think outside the Cage” (US23) is a Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition of 112 organisations involved in a drug policy reform, women in prison, recidivism, etc.
- The Hancock County Jail looks from the outside like a country mansion. Instead of going to large prisons, volunteers assist inmates in these pleasant surroundings.
- PARC – wants to abolish all prisons. They present the cases of 40 political prisoners.
- AFSC – The “American Friend Service Committee” provides advocacy, prisoner and family support, grass roots education and is against the industrial prison complex,
- Books not Bars – is an association which aims at transforming the entire criminal justice system,
- California Coalition of Political and Women Prisoners –
- AICAP/AIFAP – help for incarcerated foreign prisoners in America,
- Families of Prisoners – exchange of information and consolation,
- and finally, there are several websites for “Pen Pals”.

The “Family and Correction Network - FCN” (US24) is a large organisation specializing in the support of more than 150.000 families of prisoners per year.

The “Women’s Prison Association – WPA” in New York (US25) represented some 98.000 female prisoners in 2003. Their annual report is very analytical and militant. We learn that in 2006, 112.000 (or 134 per 100.000) women were imprisoned, that women represent 7,2 % of the total prison population, that 66 % of them had children and that there are 3 times as many black women in prison as whites. Such a nation-wide association does not appear to exist for incarcerated MEN.

Crime.org is part of the big “grassroots” organisation. After a rather long analysis (US26) of the social problems of criminality, the violent character of American society, too many and too long condemnations and the problem of fire arms, the article comes, nevertheless, to the conclusion, that there are few alternatives. There seems to exist a general consensus among Americans that the present tough policy of “zero tolerance” and the resulting high prison population is “regrettable, but just and unavoidable”.

The Probation Services (US27) in the USA are usually attached to the Circuit Courts (as for example the one in Cook near Chicago) and are separate for youths and adults. One probation officer usually deals with 60 clients. Volunteers account for about 30 % of the probation service and come from 350 associations. The big difference from Europe is that 90 % of the convictions involve fire arms. The Probation officers supervise the community service, work in mediation, reinforced supervision and offer programs such as “Juvenile Drug treatment”, Family Reunification, Juvenile Sex Offending, Anti-violence, “Street Dreams Employment” for 16/18 year old youths with good prospects of successfully overcoming the probation period (from workshop: Bewährungshilfe, Bayern).

Extracts from a private prison trip report in 3/2008:

The author was surprised

- * about the “banalisation” of crime and imprisonment being perceived as part of normal life (particularly true for low-class black and latin Americans),
 - * that violence is presented as “nothing more than reflecting American society”.
 - * Children from 12 years onwards can find themselves implicated in the prison/probation system for futile reasons,
 - * Low-paid jobs of \$ 5,- to 8,- per hour for the unskilled worker, do not permit people to life on. They need a second job or additional income (from drugs for example), to compensate the victim, pay for parole fees and feed the family.
-
- The “points system” for young inmates is based on “losing” points, and therefore favours, whereas striving for improvement is not rewarded through “winning” points.
 - Someone living under probation has to pay \$ 85,- for the cost of the probation officer which means that on a low-paid income level, he has little proper income.
 - Although drugs in prison are heavily penalised, they are frequent. Big business in prison are cigarettes at \$ 25,- a piece with no penal consequences.
 - Prison food is free, but served only until 4 pm. After that, the detainee can order additional food up to \$ 75,- per month by means of a central touch panel.
 - In spite of the heavy implication of fire arm in crime, the second amendment of the American constitution is frequently cited, because “people kill people, not fire arms kill people”, “I would fail in my role as a father, if I could not defend my family with a gun” and “the central government, knowing that the people are armed, would not dare to go against them” (?).
 - One prison place costs between 12.000 and 40.000 \$ per year. Prison Guards can retire at the age of 52 with a pension of more than 50 % of their last salary.

Anyone involved in prisons and the relationship between the guards and detainees should know about Professor Philip Zimbardo’s “Stanford Prison Experiment” of 1971. It concludes that, given the right environment, the readiness to fulfil the expectations of the superiors and the unlimited power of the authorities over the prisoners, the human species is capable of the worst. Although this “experiment” is still hotly disputed, the Abou Graib prison scandal is considered as a proof of the professor’s troubling theory.

B5 - Miscellaneous Documents and Information

1. The 108 European Prison Rules (Div1) published by the European Council
 - a) mention only once the Voluntary Workers (para 89.2): “Competent Volunteers should be encouraged, whenever possible, to contribute to the activities of the detainee”.
 - b) Chapters 7 and 90.2 says that “civil society should be encouraged to participate in prison life, whenever appropriate”.
 - c) Chapter 21.1 specifies that “the prisoners should be authorized to communicate as frequently as possible with outside organisations, and receive visits from their members (“outside organisations” = prison volunteers?)
A large part is reserved for the importance of education in prison (Chapter 28 and 206.2), religion (Chapter 29) and purpose and training of prison staff (72.2), etc.

Even if the term “prison visitor” never appears and the contribution of the volunteers goes largely unmentioned, these “prison rules” which in fact are “recommendations to be incorporated into the national legislations” are immensely important, because “re-socialisation” is clearly defined as the aim of incarceration and, for example, an educational and reconciliatory role is attributed to prison staff beyond their security attributions. Had united “prison voluntary associations” spoken to their national governments (preferably even linked on a European level), it is likely that a more proactive part would have been attributed to their work.

Nevertheless, these “prison rules”, although not binding, will influence greatly the European Prison Administrations for many years to come. Comments on their significance are available, for example, in English written by the Quakers, in German by Prof. Dünkel of the University of Greifswald (Div1A) and in French on the OIP and Prison.eu.org websites. At least in France, the RPE (Règles pénitentiaires européennes) are considered as firm guide lines by the French Prison Administration and not only “vague recommendations”.

2. In his “Contextual Report” (Div2) on the new 108 European Prison Rules, Professor Andrew Coyle of the ICPS gives an overview of the situation in European prisons. He reflects on the aim of imprisonment and advocates a change in the role prison staff plays today, etc.. He also talks about the NGOs (Page 22), but only in the context of education (example Génépi) and the families of prisoners. Anybody who wants to understand the essence of the 108 “prison rules” should read this report. Andrew Coyle, a former Prison Governor, also wrote in 2002 a very detailed manual on “Human Rights Approach to Prison Management” (Div3). In 2001, he gave a presentation on the occasion of the congress of the “International Prison Chaplains Association Europe” on “Restorative Justice in a Prison setting” (Div4).
3. In their “Guidance Note No.12” (Div5) with the title “Encouraging the Involvement of Civil Society”, the IPCS estimates that a penitentiary reform is not possible without the strong support of civil society and defines the main actors: organisations for penal reform and women’s rights, religious institutions, lawyers, the media, the NGOs and the “befrienders”. The message is that prisons need to be “demilitarized” and considered as “democratic and human” institutions which are a normal part of society.

4. The “Dissel Report” (Div 6) written by a South-African delegation, analyses the penal systems in Denmark, Holland and the UK after touring these countries in 1995. Although this report is now somehow dated, it is interesting, because the facts are observed by non-Europeans in need of urgent solutions. Immediately following the abolition of apartheid, South Africa is in quest of national reconciliation; it lives in a violent, multiracial society, is of course aware of the apparently very successful American “broken-window/zero tolerance” theory, but also wants to learn from European experiences.

5. PRIMA (DIV7) – Policies and Strategies for Prison Management – is a group of prison administrators within the Council of Europe which reflects on prison matters and works in favour of the adaptation of prisons to the new European Rules.

6. In 2006, Dr Preusker (Germany) gave a presentation (Div8) in Switzerland on the subject of “Tensions between the media and the justice system”. Some of the main points were:
 - The principal aim of the German Federal law of 1977 was the “re-socialisation” of the detainee instead of punishment and repression. Unfortunately, the support of the public for this humanitarian law is diminishing today. Former Chancellor Schröder remarked for example that “a sexual delinquent ought to stay in prison forever”.
 - Incarceration does NOT improve a detainee and make him fit for life outside prison. On the contrary, it destroys his life and considerably increases the risk of re-offending.
 - In the tabloid press, Springer with the “Bildzeitung” and other newspapers, has a market share of 81 % of the German “popular” press and represents, thus, a formidable force in the manipulation of public opinion.
 - The press insinuates that more and longer prison sentences could resolve the problems of criminality, and in particular those of re-offending.
 - Prisons are described as “luxury hotels” and “dolce vita behind bars”. Everybody who has access to prisons, knows that the contrary is true.
 - The influence of the press on sentencing is evident: in the 1960s, rape offenders were sentenced to 2 to 5 years imprisonment. In the 1990s only 40 % of the pronounced sentences corresponded to that time span. Against their better judgement, Conditional Release is rarely granted by the authorities concerned (psychologists, judges, administration) for fear of possible re-offending and the reaction of the press.
 - The media stimulate violence amongst the wider population (kick boxing, faits-divers, news, films, TV, computer games, etc.). Violence and crime have become commonplace in the perception particularly of young people.
 - The media are not interested in the facts which prove that detainees and people with suspended sentences re-offend less.

Finally, Dr. Preusker appealed to prison directors to co-operate with the press by regularly supplying factual information to journalists instead of excluding them from prison life (the detainees are part of society and not hidden away!).

The tense relationship between public-image-sensitive politicians and the tabloid press on one side and many actors of the Justice System on the other, is illustrated in England by the epic battle Lord Justice Woolf fought courageously for many years (Div9) .

As an example of the popular wish for “more and longer punishments”, one could take the Daily Mail article “What planet are judges living on” of January 2008 (Div10) or the “Broken Britain Campaign” by the SUN in February 2008 kindled by the Conservative Party leader (Div11).

7. An example of political manipulation of penal matters was the regional elections of Jan 2008 in Hessen/Germany, in which Prime Minister Koch, introduced as his principal argument against the opposition the stiffening of the Youth Penal Legislation when he realized that he risked losing. He used as a pretext the aggression of an elderly gentleman in the Munich underground by 2 youths “with a migrant background”. An extensive discussion followed in the media all over Germany. According to “Der Spiegel” (Div12) 52 to 65 % of the German population favour tougher actions against juvenile offenders (max prison sentence to be increased from 10 to 15 years), although 79 % of the people say that they do not fear foreign youths. 70 % said that they considered US-style boot camps as unfit for the re-socialisation of youth offenders. Mr. Koch’s populist style provoked rejection not only in his own party (the Christian CDU), but among the population too. He lost 12 % of his voters compared with 5 years ago.
8. The report (Div13) of a congress in 2004 at Ceske Budejovice (Tchechia) is interesting mainly because experts from Western and Eastern Europe came together to exchange their experiences. The theme was “Concerns of the soul – tensions between offence, guilt, human dignity and security”. Marie-Christine ter Harkd’Ursuel (chaplain in Brussels) formulated the very pertinent “wish for a (wiedergutmachenden, versöhnenden) repairing and conciliatory justice system”.
9. In 2006, Anne-Marie Klopp (Düsseldorf) gave a presentation in Munich on “The families of detainees in a European context” (Div14). She demonstrates working habits in different European countries, the different ways of helping families and children in Germany, France and Switzerland. The European countries are certainly closer today in certain areas, but each country is jealously preserving the sovereignty over its judiciary. Examples are the refusal of the highest German jurisdiction (Bundesgerichtshof) for the automatic extradition of German nationals to other European countries and the establishment of a so-called “common EU terror list” There is still a lot of co-ordination work to be done amongst the European countries.
10. In 2006, the “Minister of Corrections” of New Zealand undertook an information journey to Holland, Finland and the UK . Kim Workman, director of “Prison Fellowship”, New Zealand, was part of the official delegation. The findings in his published trip report (DIV15) confirm the wish of his organisation to contribute effectively to the penal reform in preparation in his country. The direct language of this report is far from the silence and tacit conformity of most European voluntary prison organisations in the ongoing battle for a more efficient and modern prison system.
11. Relatively few women are incarcerated (see section “Statistics”). In Holland they count for 8,7 % of the whole prison population, 5,2 % in Germany, 3,6 % in France and 8,7 % in the USA. In 2004, “Les Pénélopes” (Div 16) published a study on “Women in European prisons” detailing their main types of offences (which are proportionately rather different from those of the men): murder, drug trafficking, violence against children, financial offences and, naturally, residence permits in the context of illegal prostitution. The conditions of detention, the separation from their children, 3 to 4 times more cases of aids compared with men, quickly rising drug dependence, lack of education and acts of violence within the family make a prison

stay particularly tough for women. The author, Dominique Foufelle, discusses several books on the subject.

“Female Prisons in Europe” is a series of reports on the conditions of detention in 16 countries published on internet . The report for Belgium (Div 17), for example, comprises 5 pages.

The Quakers have published an international study on “Women in prison” and so has Prof. Dünkler of Greifswald University (Germany) in 2005.

Many associations of voluntary prison visitors are working in Europe to help women in prison and after their release, for example: Women in Prison (UK), Acope (Spain), Hope (Scotland), Parcours de Femmes (France) – see “Conclusions”.

12. « International Centre for Prison Studies - ICPS » which is part of King’s College, London, is no doubt the most competent institution on prison matters in the world. The numerous contributions by Andrew Coyle, Baroness Stern, Rob Allen and others as well as the up-to-date statistics not only show what the present situation is, but also what a more equitable judiciary and a more modern, just and efficient prison system ought to look like in the future.
13. The Catalan theologian, chemist and prison visitor Edison Fañanás-Lanau is working at present on a doctorate which has as the subject the ethical predispositions (Div18) a volunteer should have for his work in prison. Based on research in several European and foreign prisons, he tries to define different models according to the predominant ethos of the social environment. Such an analysis focused on Voluntary Prison Visitors does not seem to exist so far. In 10/2007 he presented a summary of his work on the occasion of a seminar at Rottenburg/Germany.
14. The “European Committee on Crime Problems – CDPC” – “Council for Penological Co-operation – PC-CP” at Strasburg is the focal organisation for all European prison matters. It was this committee which negotiated the “108 Prison Rules” and published them in 1/2006. Projects in preparation cover recommendations on remand detention, sentencing delinquent youth and probation/reintegration into society (Div19).
15. The European Commission (SANCO) published in 10/2007 a 300-page Study on “Mentally disordered persons in European Prisons” carried out by the “Institute of Mental Health”, Mannheim (Germany) – (Div20). Depending on the assessment method, 30 to 70 % of the prisoners in European jails have a mental handicap. The prison as an institution is largely ignored by society, and the mentally ill who have become criminal, are considered even less. The authors call the lack of reliable data, of assessment methods agreed in common and of qualified personnel working in European prisons “nothing less than dramatic”. This intentional ignoring of the blatant facts results in increased re-offending, less safety for the public and increased cost for the tax payer. Screening processes at entry, during incarceration and before release are not in place in most countries to decide on the most adequate types of treatment. The confined and rough living conditions in prison frequently provoke mental disorder. The vast majority of European prisons are not equipped for the mentally fragile and ill which causes great problems to the prison administration. Fascinating reading not only for the professionals, but for prison volunteers too who are in frequent touch with these detainees.
16. In 1987 the “European Convention for the Prevention of Torture” (Div21) was signed by more than 40 member countries of the Council of Europe. The aim was to prevent degrading treatment of people deprived of their civil liberties in prisons, detained in police stations, in psychiatric hospitals or in youth re-education centres. The convention stipulates that at least 2 members of the delegation are allowed to visit any place and are allowed to talk to anyone in order to assess the treatment of the

detainees. On an average, 6 countries are visited per year. The average length per report is 100 pages. These visits by independent commissioners and their subsequent reports have usually a considerable impact on the national authorities and the public, as, for example, the one in 2004 on Danish, in 2005 on Norwegian prison conditions and the one by Gil-Robles in September 2005 on France. The new “108 Prison Rules” will be an important basis against which the inspectors will be able to check whether the actual detention conditions are in conformance with the new legislation.

17. Three rather original Studies were published in the USA:

- “Returning Home: Understanding the Challenges of Prisoner Re-entry”, a Maryland Pilot Study with findings from Baltimore which involved a sample of 235 males and 89 females. The complete report is available on the website of the “Urban Institute” (Div22).
- “The Culture of Prison Sexual Violence” dated 11/2006 is a 300-page Report (Div23) sponsored by the Federal Department of Justice. The sample of participants involved 564 inmates in 30 prisons. 70 % of the women and 42 % of the men were perceived to engage in homosexual conduct. Some 65 % of the prisoners said that they were aware of inmate-staff mutual sex relationships. 28/35 % of the interviewed people knew of rape among inmates reported to the staff. 9 % of the women and 21% of the men said that they lived in permanent threat of rape. Very detailed study. There does not seem to exist a similar report on the subject in Europe.
- “Prison and Punishment – Rethinking of Prison Sex Life: Self expression and Safety” by the Columbia Journal of Gender and Law which covers the same subject(Div24).

18. The University of Lausanne undertook in 2006 a 73-page study on a most controversial subject in penal matters, “the effects of custodial vs non-custodial sentences on re-offending” (Div25). A systematic “review of the state of knowledge”. The evaluation is based on 3000 abstracts, 23 general studies, 5 studies with controlled design and 27 comparisons. In broad terms, the result is that in 11 of 13 significant comparisons re-offending is lower after non-custodial sentences. However, in 14 of 27 comparisons there is little difference between the 2 types of sanctions. In contrast to the majority of results, 2 out of 27 comparisons are in favour of custodial sentences, because they apparently resulted in less re-offending. A rather rigorous summary to bring some light into a crucial and hotly disputed subject.

19. On the website of the “Conférence Européenne de Probation – CEP” (Div26) one can find “brief” and “full” reports of seminars and workshops going back to 1996 on a variety of themes such as

- “Volunteers in the Criminal Justice System” – 1999,
- “Co-operation to reduce re-offending”, situation in 2002 in 11 countries (Div27),
- “Electronic Monitoring in Europe” – 2003
- “Preventing Sex Offending” – 2006.

There is ample information on almost all subjects covering prison administration, probation and their actors on a European level.

20. “Changing Futures: The Potential Role for Volunteering in the Rehabilitation of Offenders” compounded in 2007 by Joanna Machin and Nick Ockenden of the British Institute of Volunteering Research, is a 6-page summary (Div28). It is written in the context of the UK government’s intention to grant the voluntary sector a central role in its frantic effort to reduce re-offending. Although the background of this study is English/Welsh with the creation of the “National Offender Management Service –

NOMS” and the “Offender Management Bill”, many aspects are similar in other European countries. In conjunction with the employers, communities and the faith-based associations, the volunteers and monitors are now put at the centre of the project for a durable integration of offenders into the community. With an “end-to-end” follow-up by a single Offender Manager for one delinquent, which starts during incarceration and lasts at least one year after release, the government tries to inverse the tendency in re-offending.

The study estimates that there are at least 6000 volunteers of faith-based organisations working in English/Welsh prisons, 800 as members of the “Independent Monitoring Boards”, and 7 % of the inmates are supporting their peers in various ways (Samaritan listener scheme, mentoring, sports, “first night project”, advice on education, work and prison rules). Suitable inmates are recruited by Chaplains and the administration, a system not without problems, but which represents a huge potential both for the “prisoners as volunteers”, their fellow detainees - and the Government, because of cost reduction. .

The lack of comprehensive evidence of the effect of volunteering in prison is mentioned in the study as well as the difficulty of quantifying volunteer work. 7 “pathways” are prioritized to reduce re-offending, self-assessment and motivation by the voluntary prison visitors and the sometimes conflicting relationship with the staff are discussed. Interesting reading for all prison volunteers!

21. The British Home Office published in 1998 a 4-part comparative “Study on Prison and Probation Administrations” (Div29) in the UK, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, Scotland and other countries. Although this comparison is in parts obsolete now, it shows the divergent concepts of “all-state” administration and probation models via a state-funded “private sector” (Netherlands), to fully private probation as in Austria.
22. Prison volunteers are involved in many sectors such as the help for families and children, education, legal aid, job hunting, fighting dependence, giving moral and administrative support, supporting foreigners, supervision of community services and probation etc. The Arts in Jail and their positive effects on the detainees for their re-socialisation are getting more and more popular. Taken at random there are
 - SMALL GROUPS, such as
 - . the “Association Pulsart” whose volunteers teach adult delinquents at the Villepinte prison (exhibition in 12/2006),
 - . “Les Ateliers créatifs des Femmes – ACFE” at the Swiss Champ-Dollon prison (exhibition of Ceramics in Mai 2007),
 - . The “Art-ig – Kunst im Gefängnis”-Initiative at the womens’ prison at Vechta/Germany with yearly exhibitions since 1993;
 - . The “Prison Arts Foundation” started in 1996 which functions in 3 Northern Ireland prisons,
 - . The volunteers around the artist Arno Lindenberg who initiates women detainees of the Köln-Ossendorf prison into fine art with the slogan “everyone can paint” The result was a well-frequented exhibition with 100 paintings in 2006.
 - . “Kunst kennt geen Tralies” – See Belgium.
 - LARGE groups and Federations such as
 - . The “Koestler Trust” (Arts by Offenders) in London which goes back to the author Arthur Koestler and which organises awards and exhibitions in 49 art forms. It had in 2007 4802 entries for competition and sold 2000 art works. Such a huge organisation can only be run thanks to a string of sponsors, donors, partners, experts and volunteers,

- . “Escape Artists – UK” is a charity which tries to rehabilitate ex-prisoners and marginalized people through art-based activities.
- . The “Ann Peaker Centre” regroups artistic activities in a prison environment all over the UK (Joining the dots, Arts on the out),
- . The “Prison Arts Network – PAN” has 170 members throughout Europe, is sponsored by the EU Socrates Project and linked with the “Prison Arts education Network”.
- . EPEA has a similar Art teaching program called “Grundtvig Actions”.

23. Theatre in prison is probably the most advanced way of self-affirmation for a detainee. Such theatre activities have sprung up everywhere in Europe in the last 20 years such as:

- “Compagnia della Fortezza” at Volterra (Italy) and the “Centro Nazionale teatro e carcere”, the Ticvin Teatro in Milano and CETEC in Rome. NEWO is a private company which has mainly an advisory function for private companies and it is part of the European Social Fund.
- The “Théâtre de l’Opprimé” in France works generally with disadvantaged people, including prisoners. Participation in International Theatre Festivals.
- Riksteatern is a NGO which works on local level throughout Sweden,
- In the UK there are theatre companies such as GEESE, GRAEae, CARDBOARD CITIZIENS (the homeless), CLEAN BREAK (for women whose lives have been affected by the criminal justice system) and CHICKEN SHED of South Gate (London) which produces ballets, musicals, plays and mime performances. A group of volunteers sponsors the company within the youth prevention and re-socialisation program.
- “Teatro Yeses” was founded in 1985 and plays regularly in Madrid.
- “Aufbruch” at the Berlin-Tegel prison is a very dynamic theatre company which has performed 20 plays in the last 10 years. The last performances were “Ikarus – Abflug Tegel”, “Atriden” with texts by Sophocles, Sartre, Anouilh and Gerhard Hauptmann and “Räuber – Götz” with reference to Goethe’s “Götz von Berlechingen”. “Aufbruch” is a very militant company which tries to spread the awareness of criminality and prison among the public throughout Germany.

This paragraph on Art and Theatre in prison would not be complete without mentioning the dissertation written in 2004 by Michael D. McCamish with the unusual title “The Theatre of Prison: Power and Resistance, family and the production of illegality, starring the California Department of Corrections”(Div30). On 180 pages he describes the failure of the prison system, the “implication of the media, politicians, the private sector and a fearfully uninformed public”. He describes his volunteer work at San Quentin state prison and his European visiting tour of most of the above Prison Theatre Companies. He talks of Foucault and Power, the race, gender, age, mental and general health problems, segregation and prisoners’ hierarchies, etc. Most interesting reading for anyone interested in the subject.

24. Migration is a hotly disputed phenomenon. The massive influx of North Africans and Albanians into Italy, black Africans and Asians from former French and British colonies into Western Europe, the disproportionate rate of “young delinquents with a migrant background” and the “Russlanddeutschen” in Germany, and the accelerated arrival of Eastern Europeans in search of work in the West, have resulted in high proportions of foreigners in Western European jails (43% in Austria, 69 % in Switzerland, 73 % in Luxembourg).

Going one step further into the ethnic composition of the prison population, American reports say (see section USA), that there are at least 6 times more blacks in prison than whites. English statistics (Div32) indicate that black and Asian people are liable 10

times more to racially motivated offences than whites and that 12 to 15% of the prisoners in English jails are black although they represent only 1,8 % of the total population. In London blacks are 8 times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police than whites and the increase of these police moves from one year to the next was only +8% for whites, but +30% for blacks and even +40% for Asians (Indians, Pakistanis).

A 200-page report on “Securitisation and religious divides in Europe – Muslims in Western Europe after 9/11” presented by European scholars to the European Commission in 2006 and published in 4/2007 (Div33) tries to shed light into this highly complex problem.

Jean-Yves Henry confirms on the ANVP website (Div34) in an article with the title “The easily blamed foreigners and immigrants in Europe’s prisons”, the visible evidence that at least 2/3 of the French prison population is “coloured”. If French statistics specify only 19,7% foreigners in their prisons, then this has to do with the “right to citizenship by virtue of birth of all migrant children – droit du sol – Recht des Bodens”) which somehow embellishes the French statistics. England has 13,9% and Scotland only 1,3% (!) foreigners in jail, although the proportion of “coloured” British citizens is far higher.

How well are white Western European prison visitors informed and trained to cope with the problem of ethnicity and faith, as Muslim, black and foreign volunteers are extremely rare?

25. Between May 22nd and 24th 2008, a convention, organised by the “Europäisches Forum für angewandte Kriminalpolitik – applied criminal politics”, Düsseldorf, took place in Strasbourg on “Les Citoyens européens acteurs de la paix – politiques criminelles et engagements bénévoles en Europe – voluntary commitment in European criminal policies”. Participants came from Belo-Russia, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Germany. Essential contributions were:

- During a visit to the “European Court of Human Rights”, Judge Françoise Tulkens explained the origins of this institution, its proceedings, the important articles of the “European Convention on Human Rights” (Div 35) and the latest cases (on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the “Human Rights Charter”, Amnesty International demanded on 28.5.08 that all national governments should apologize to its citizens for failing to implement the agreed fundamental rights).
- Wolfgang Krell, Augsburg developed the idea of a “Europe going towards a common civil society” on the basis of the “Strachwitz triangle” with the different roles of the State, the economy and civil society as the main actors in democracy. He advocated intervention from civil society (Selbstermächtigung = self entitlement) by civil society every time the state failed to do so; the learning from other countries, the creation of a European legal framework for NGOs and the promotion of Europhile popular media” (Div36).
- Prof. Dr. Günter Rieger, Stuttgart spoke on the “commitment of the citizens within criminal policy” and the “Putman-theory”, according to which delinquency develops slower in closer-knit societies (social capital). He developed his ideas along 5 subjects (contribution of civil society to security and social peace, the historic right and need for a strong voluntary sector, its possibilities of intervention on many levels, the complementarity of the professional and voluntary sector in “joint ventures”). The “professionalisation” of assistance to detainees started after 1945 and diminished the role of volunteer organisations. He said that professionals could never fulfil the multiple needs of the detainees. Volunteers, he added, were not obliged to be “efficient in an economic sense”, but, due to their conciliatory

role, indispensable for the integration of detainees; this all the more as social workers could be active only 30 % of their time due to heavy administrative requirements (Div37).

- ACCORD (penal and family mediation, Franco-German co-operation in penal matters), UFRAMA (prison visitors centres) and CARITAS (children of prisoners), all active in Alsace, presented their ways of working, their successes and problems.
- Then followed the presentation of prison volunteer work in 5 countries:
 - * Claire Capron, a prison visitor for 13 years in Belgium (Div38) talked about the working conditions in Brussels jails, her book which describes types of detainees and problems all prison visitors encounter and the ongoing enquiry she launched among her fellow-prison visitors about “what works and what frustrates”.
 - * Gabriela Imhof of the Probation Service, Bern, discussed the lack of cohesion in Swiss prison services due to the federal structure of the country; the way the 215 prison visitors co-operate with 25 officers within her service; the 54 hours of initial courses that volunteers have to undergo before approval and the valuable role they play within the whole penitentiary system.
 - * Raphael Bonte (ANVP), France stressed the importance for the detainee to keep in touch with a person from “outside”, the commitment of the prison visitor to sustain this service and of the ANVP to accomplish its role within society (projet associatif). In spite of the sometimes uneasy co-operation with the authorities largely ignored by the media, the work of the prison volunteers is valuable for the re-socialisation of detainees and, therefore, for society as a whole. Surprisingly the French prison administration is trying to conform to the “108 prison rules”, for example with the recent nomination of the “Independent Controller” who will cover the task of the English “Monitoring Boards” and the German “Anstaltsbeiräte” (Div39).
 - * Dr Vaclav Jiricka (psychologist) who works in the Czech prison of Liberec then talked about the ambiguous situation of volunteering in his country before 1989, the slowly developing ONGs (example Hestia) which were 57 in 2004 and are 312 in 2008. However, there is no voluntary prison visiting as in the West. Since 1994 Chaplains, mainly from the Catholic Church, operate in most prisons (Div40) largely in the way they do in Western Europe.
 - * Christa Brinckmann of the “Katholischer Gefängnisverein”, Düsseldorf gave a moving account of her work by opposing the points of view of prison officers and detainees. Compared with traditional prison visiting in France or in England, the very free and varied activities in and outside prison are typical of the German way of prison volunteering. The slogan of her association is “supporting instead of locking away; reintegrating instead of excluding” (Div41). Details see “section Germany”.

The convention ended with two workshops on prison conditions and prevention. The next congress will take place in 2009 in Prag. Most of the above presentations can be consulted in French and German under www.europaforum-kriminalpolitik.org.

ITALY

Judging by the documentation available on Internet, the voluntary sector is very much present in public life. Per an enquiry in "Repubblica" of 1/2008, 71 % of Italians trust the voluntary associations, but only 49 % the Church, 25 % the Government and 14 % the parties. The co-operation of a great variety of religious and non-confessional associations on regional and national level and the consequent discussion on prison matters, is very lively.

In a dissertation, Maria-Chiara Costa (It1) describes the "Volontariato nel carcere; le associazioni presenti in Toscana" (Prison Volunteers: the associations working in Tuscany). From its origins in the middle ages via the work houses in England, the Salpêtrière in Paris, the social and legislative situation at the time of the Italian Unification in 1861 and up to the Second World War, the author describes the evolution of the attitude of society and governments towards prisoners. The penal reform of 1975 introduced article 27 into the Italian Constitution which says that "the expiation of a sentence must never be carried out by treatment contrary to human dignity". The supplement "Gozzini" of 1986 and the legislation concerning the voluntary workers of 1991 were all passed at a time of great social and political unrest and instability (Ginsborg: "Storia d'Italia dal dopoguerra ad oggi"). She describes the 2 types of prison visitors according to law No. 266, the diversification of the voluntary organisations and their conflicting relationship with the prison authorities, and presents in detail 10 associations operating in Tuscany.

As in other countries, Italy has many prison problems: overpopulation, decaying buildings, lack of a coherent concept for the re-socialisation of detainees, too many remand prisoners due to the very slow working of the whole justice system, a high portion of drug-dependent inmates for whom it is difficult to find adequate alternatives to incarceration. It is not easy for the administration to conform to law No. 27 which obliges the authorities to offer suitable schooling, professional formation and work to a prison population composed of a high portion of illegal immigrants and the special background of organized crime and political favouritism (Mafia, Camorra, `Ndrangheta, sacra corona unita, institutionalized corruption under the Democrazia Cristiana and the Craxi governments uncovered by the magistrate Di Pietro in what has become known as the "Mani pulite"). In Italy too, there is the permanent conflict between the logic of suspended sentences, probation and community service on one side, and the demand by the public for more security and harsher sentences on the other.

Together with Spain, Italy seems to be the only Western European country in which most voluntary prison associations are regrouped (It2). The initiative for a "Conferenza Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia- CNVG" goes back to 1993, with the first national congress in 1996 and its formal foundation in 1998. The evolution towards a more centralized Confederation was, of course, accompanied by the fears of the religious, lay and specialized volunteer organisations of "losing their autonomy". The problem was largely solved by the foundation of "regional delegations" (which is easy in Italy, because the 20 "regioni" are historically grown and fairly autonomous administrative entities). Agreeing on innovative aims and defining them in the federation's articles which would also encompass, for example, Restorative Justice, the effective formation of 7 regional associations and a research project on prison volunteers organisations, sponsored by the Ministry for Social Affairs, were the next tasks. In 1999 a protocol of understanding was signed with the Ministry of Justice which stipulated that the CNVG members could work in Italian prisons in culture, sports, education

and general support with the aim of a better re-integration of the detainees into society. Mediation between perpetrators and their victims which had been reserved until then to the Judiciary, became a matter for volunteers too after signing an understanding with the state and regional legal entities. The more diversified role of the “volontario di assistenti” in the penal, mediation and prison systems explains the longer preparation of the Italian volunteers for their tasks.

In 2000 FIVOL, the state organisation for all voluntary activity, documented that the contribution of the prison volunteers, particularly when trained and organised in associations, was indispensable, because it could address the individual needs of the detainees for a better integration into society. The government had envisaged a vast amnesty to relieve the overcrowded prisons, but the CNVG insisted that such an act would be reasonable only if accompanied by adequate re-integrative measures. To raise public awareness of the true penitentiary situation, the CNVG organised a series of art demonstrations under the slogan “Oltre il muro del sogno – beyond the wall of dream” which aimed at explaining new ways of successful re-socialisation and that they were in the interest of the whole society. Associations other than those involved in traditional prison activities, such as those promoting legal reforms, the fight against the mafia and helping the young, joined the CNVG. In 2000 the prison administration sent a circular notice to all social services confirming that co-operation with the voluntary sector was recommended. The creation of the CNVG is rooted in the specific Italian social environment around 1990 and the realisation that only through unification of the voluntary prison organisations, could enough strength be obtained to make an impact on the prevailing, rather desolate situation. The driving force behind this unification was Livio Ferrari, former president of SEAC and first president of the CNVG.

The importance of the CNVG can be measured by their last 3-day General Assembly in May 2007 in Rome which was organised around the theme “Percorsi di giustizia, codice penale e inclusione sociale – evolutions in the judiciary, penal law and social integration” (It3). 5 ministers and undersecretaries of state, professors, the prison administration, the social services of Rome, the RAI and, of course, delegates of many member associations participated in 5 working groups and general presentations. In contrast to the usually short and business-like general assemblies of most prison volunteer organisations, this most impressive program was amply discussed in the media.

Nationally operating members of the CNVG are for example:

- ARCI ARIA di ORA which is part of the ARCI organisation (Associazione Recreativa Culturale Italiana), works for re-socialisation through debates, cultural projects, call centres (pronto intervento detenuti) and “kits” of information (corredi) for people in need.
- ANTIGONE has a kind of watch dog function which verifies that the laws are applied inside the Italian prisons. With the permission of the administration, inspectors of Antigone visit prisons and publish reports and books such as “il carcere trasparente – the transparent prison”. Strong links with the European CPT in Strasburg.
- SEAC (Segretariato Ente Assistenza Carceraria), is a federation of more than 80 catholic prison visiting associations (It4 /4A) founded in 1967 and divided into 14 regional delegations. In the texts published by SEAC, recurring key words are social peace, fight against social exclusion, the meaning of sentencing and the fallacy of imprisonment as a deterrent, understanding prison as a prolongation of

society and the benefits of alternatives to incarceration. The principle of Restorative Justice plays a great part in their reflections and actions towards meaningful and lasting re-socialization. SEAC regrets the stop-gap, secondary role the volunteers have been attributed by the professional sector and with which many voluntary workers are quite content, instead of intervening more actively in the debate and action concerning the marginalisation, misery and poverty of whole layers of society. As the major organisation of the Italian prison volunteers, SEAC reflects repeatedly on their hinge-function between prisoners and society outside and their sometimes strained relationship with the state institutions which follow their own logic and interests.

From the basic traditional Christian vocation of prison visiting, this organisation developed after the prison reforms of 1975 and 1986 into a militant organisation in dialogue with the state and regional authorities for a better medical service in prison, more restorative justice for adults, more re-socialisation measures and a more active contribution of the voluntary sector within the Judiciary.

Prime Minister Prodi attended their Annual Assembly in 2006 (It5) during which he stressed the importance of alternatives to prison sentences. The wish for stimulating public debate in their annual assemblies and seminars is evident, as for example the one in 6/2007 at Asiago with the theme “Quale giustizia tra vendetta e perdono – la società di fronte al carcere” - what justice between vengeance and forgiveness – society confronted with prison” (It6).

- ASSOCIAZIONE SAN VINCENZO DI PAOLI is part of the world-wide organisation and works with more than 100 volunteers in 8 of the 20 “regioni”. They have launched the initiative “adotta un detenuto – adopt a detainee” to involve people outside more in what happens in the prisons. Their magazine is called “La San Vincenzo” (It7).
- CARITAS ITALIANA has been working since 1971 in Italian prisons through the chaplains and volunteers. With the weight of the catholic church behind it, Caritas denounced the misery in prisons very early. In 1998, together with other associations, they created the “Fondazione Carcere e Lavoro” with the particular intention of restoring the dignity of (ex-) detainees through work.
- LIBERA regroups more than 600 associations in and outside prison all over Italy. It informs the institutions and the public about the working methods of the mafia, its involvement in the national economy, the recuperation of confiscated property from the mafia and, for implicated individuals, how to get out of the system.
- FIVOL – (Fondazione Nazionale per il Volontariato), founded in 1991, is a national research institute for the general promotion of the voluntary sector which establishes for the CNVG studies and annual reports on the activities of prison volunteers (rivelazioni). This Institute will cease its activity in its present form.
- “COMMITATO PER IL TELEFONO AZZURRO” - Founded in 1987, this association defends children’s rights in general and children in jail with their mother in particular. Advice by telephone and denunciation of abuses.

The CNVG comments frequently on prison matters through its website and through releases to the press as, for example, in 2005 when it complained openly (It8) that the prison

administration did not recognize how useful the voluntary prison visitors were for the whole of society and that the volunteers still depended largely on the good will of the individual prison directors. According to the CNVG, the prisons, as they are organised at present, are incapable of humanizing themselves without the help of civil society. Other interventions were in 6/2007, on the disappointing proposals on alternative methods of sanctioning (commissione Pisapia) and the rejection of the government's intention to transfer the control of the "open" penal system to the "polizia penitenziaria". The social workers of the UEPE (Ufficio per esecuzione penale esterna) rejected the integration the prison police into an essentially "reconciliatory" social service (It9/10).

Per a FIVOL study (It11) there are some 351 associations working for detainees and ex-prisoners of which more than half were founded after 1988. 45 % of them are active in the Northern regions and 62 % of them are faith-based. 40 % of these associations comprise less than 10 volunteers. 8500 people work for these associations of which 50 % are active volunteers. They work 11700 hours per week with 27000 detainees involved. The "4th and 5th "rivelazioni" (= enquiries/annual statistical report - It12/13) are available for consultation on internet. They comprise all movements in and out of jail of approved prison visitors in 2004/2005 in 85 % of Italian prisons (171 of 200). According to Law No. 120, there are 2 categories of "non-institutional" prison visitors:

- a) Those per Article 17: simple admission procedure; these visitors organize or participate in cultural, sports, leisure and educational activities; promotion of contacts with the world outside. These visitors can be admitted as individuals or as part of an association, they can be remunerated professionals or unpaid volunteers. Their visits may be sporadic, because they are part of certain projects which are often limited in time.
- b) Those per Article 78: they are called "volontari di assistenti or assistenti volontari". They usually work on an individual basis with the detainees, "listen and give moral support" (attivo di ascolto), and prepare them for re-entry into normal life. They may accompany their detainees for administrative visits outside prison, be in contact with their families, intervene with the social services for better conditions of detention, be consulted in case of early or conditional release. Long approval procedure. They have a more active and official role than British and French prison visitors and also follow more intensive preparatory courses.

The computer program in place permits the identification of every voluntary prison visitor and his activity, the individual organisation, frequency and duration of the visits, how many detainees are involved, whether the project is financially sponsored or not. With time, the yearly variations will show certain statistical tendencies. The system has been in place since 2001 and has functioned fully since 2004. Some of the data:

- 7800 (2005 = 8300) visitors per Art. 17 and 78 worked in 2004 in 98 % of the Italian prisons (= less 1,7 % compared with 2003).
- 100 prison visitors per Art. 78 abandoned their work in prison to become active for prisoners after release (looking for jobs, helping families). Nevertheless, there was an overall increase of the prison volunteers of + 28,3 % between 2001 and 2005.

- In 2003 there were 54.659 detainees = 273 on an average per prison
 2004 “ 58.388 = 292 “
 2005 “ 59.523 = 298 “

- They are now geographically more equally located:
 - . In 2001, with 34% of the prisons, the North had 48% of the volunteers – which fell to 35 % in 2004,
 - . In 2001, with 45,5 % of the prisons, the South had only 15,2 % of the volunteers. In 2004, the part of the volunteers increased to 25,5 % and to 30, 1% in 2005.

- Other statistics:

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
. Number of volunteers per Art 17	6661	7064
. “ 78	1181	1279
. Ratio of detainees per volunteer	8,7	7.0

- The average number of visitors per prison per art. 17 (16 men, 17 women) is 33 working in 85 % (2005 = 87 %) of the prisons. In 23 % of the prisons only volunteers per art. 17 work. The “volontari di assistenti” work in 75 % of the prisons (in 2005 = 86,6%). Of the 1181 “assistenti”, 40 % are men and 60 % women (reduced to 51,4 % in 2005). As only 181 of the 200 prisons have participated in this enquiry, it can be estimated that the total number of “assistenti” is around 1500.

The age range of the prison visitors:

	Art. 78 only				Art. 17 and 78 together			
	-30	40-45	45-64	65+	-30	30-45	45-64	65 +
in %	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Italy average	4,5	17,4	46,1	32,1	18,7	31,5	46,4	13,4
Men	3,5	20,1	46,2	30,2	15,6	34,0	37,9	12,6
Women	5,1	15,3	45,9	33,7	21,2	29,1	35,1	14,5

Non-institutional visitors, volunteers and professionals:

	Art. 87	Art. 17	Total
	-----	-----	-----
Non-remunerated work	100 %	60 %	66,8 (2005 = 72 %)
Remunerated work	-	20,1	16,7
Non specified	-	19,9	16,5
Number of people taken into account	983	4845	5828

With regard to the FREQUENCY of the visits, we are told that 27 % (2005 25,2 %) of the “assistenti” and 18 % of the visitors per art. 17 enter prison at least twice a week. 81 % (2005 = 75,8 %) of the “assistenti” and 56 % (2005 = 59,9%) of the visitors per art. 17 go at least once a week to the prison. The details concerning the frequency of the visits are documented on 3 tables.

Another table shows the associations to which the visitors belong. 70% of them are part of voluntary organisations. There are altogether 500 local associations involved and 660 if one counts the multiple membership of some visitors:

	Total	average No. of members	Total	%
Voluntary organisations	188	67	259	38,9
Associations for social promotion	63	28	91	13,7
Cultural associations	19	2	21	3,1
Social co-operatives	67	-	67	10,1
Other associations	35	13	48	7,2
Religious associations	35	31	66	9,9
NGOs	2	-	2	0,3
Ass. for professional training	11	8	19	2,8
Unions	8	19	18	2,7
Institutional organisations	60	-	60	9;0
Commercial organisations	15	-	15	2,2
	507	159	666	100

Table No. 10 which specifies the activities of the prison visitors, is particularly interesting:

	Art. 17		Art. 78		Total replies	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cultural activities	856	19,0	97	8,9	953	17,0
Religious support and teaching	896	17,6	112	10,3	908	16,2
Psy. and moral support, listening	640	14,2	353	32,6	993	17,6
Leisure activities	605	13,4	72	6,6	677	12,1
Professional formation	491	10,9	4	0,4	495	8,8
General schooling	386	8,6	32	3,0	418	7,5
Sports activities	250	5,5	16	1,5	266	4,8
Professional Counselling	148	3,3	63	5,8	212	3,8
Family links	96	2,1	16	1,5	112	2,0
Correspondence (job, admin.)	74	1,6	22	2,0	96	1,7
Information, prevention, orientation	31	0,7	5	0,5	36	0,6
Clothes, first necessities,	22	0,5	165	15,2	177	3,3
Soc. reinsertion,	20	0,4	95	8,8	115	2,1
Intern. admin. (clothes, library)	17	0,4	14	1,3	31	0,6
Cultural mediation for foreigners	16	0,4	0	0	16	0,3
Pedagogical help	12	0,3	2	0,2	14	0,2
Discussion and "self-help" groups	10	0,2	11	1,0	21	0,4
Others	39	0,9	5	0,5	44	0,8
Total	4510	100	1084	100	5594	100
Unspecified	700	13,5	187	19,2	887	14,4
Total number analysed	5195		1271		6466	

The enquiry of 2004 tries for the first time to evaluate the acceptance of the pedagogical and educational volunteers by the professional sector and the detainees themselves (most of the replies came from the detainees). 46 % of the volunteers were considered of a "high" level, 26 % as "average" and 7 % as "insufficient".

For the volunteers involved in a “project” by the administration, the valuation was as follows:

	Art. 78		Art. 17		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Optimal, very good	125	12,8	599	10,8	724	24,0
Positive	343	35,1	1825	32,8	2168	72,0
Average	2	0,4	33	0,6	35	1,2
Insufficient	10	1,0	74	1,3	84	2,8
Not evaluated	486	50,7	3934	54,5		
	976	100	5565	100	3011	100

“Ristretti orrizzonti” is a most complete website administered by male and female detainees of the Padua prisons assisted by the prison volunteer association “Granello di Senape Padova”. It contains general prison news, information on volunteer organisations (It14) and their latest actions, background information such as “Volontari dietro le sbarre – volunteers behind bars” (It15), a dossier on suicides in prison and 175 websites of Italian and foreign volunteer organisations (It16). Among them are all kinds of associations such as:

- Associazione “la libellula”, Villafranca Veneta
- La cooperativa sociale “Giotto”, Padova
- Progetto “Un tetto per tutti, alternative al cielo a scacchi” (a roof for all, alternatives to a sky with bars”, Milano
- “Apriamo i muri”, (open the walls), Venice
- “Granello di Senape”, (Mustard grain), Venice which in 2003 obtained the first prize for “national solidarity” (premio Liciano Tavazza) together with a cheque of Euro 15000.
- “Sesta Opera San Fedele” is a Jesuit-linked volunteer association founded in 1923 which has been most influential in shaping a more positive attitude on the public and the authorities towards prisoners. It publishes “Dignitas” (It15A).
- NAGA, Milano is a lay association whose members visit prisoners, give legal advice and find accommodation,
- “l’Altro diritto” is a documentation centre for prison, deviance and marginality attached to the University of Florence,
- “Fuoriluogo.it” is a centre for information on drugs, their treatment, the social implications, facts.
- “Gruppo Abele” was founded in 1965 and fights against the marginalisation of any kind of people (foreigners, dependents, people on the road, mental health, prisoners etc.). Street work.
- LILA – Information on AIDS in and outside prison.
- “Brother Keeper” Movimento Missionario Penitenziario (It17) – seems to be the only US Evangelist Prison Visiting Organisation in Italy. They started in 2000 and say that 15 chaplains and 70 volunteers are working today for the organisation in 7 regions.
- GAVAC, Rome is a typical prison visiting organisation in Lazio (It 18),
- The “Assistenti Volontari Penitenziari”, Piemonte (It19) comprise 13 local volunteer organisations with 250 “assistenti” who perform 25.000 visits (100.000 hours of work) per year. 3 of the members are called “ Associazione San Martino”, “Carlo Castelli” and “Cittadinaza attiva”.

Among the more than 80 Christian visiting groups united in SEAC, there are original names such as:

- “Liberi dentro” (free inside), Savigliano
- “Il Bivouac” (the Bivouac), Milano
- “Utopie Fattibili” (Feasible Utopia), Vicenza
- “Opera Pane dei Poveri” (charity bread of the poor), Padova
- “Associazione Girasole” (sunflower), Rovereto
- “Porta aperta al Carcere” (open the door of the prison), Modena
- “Ultimi degli ultimi” (last of the last), Rome
- “Insieme per ricominciare” (Together to recommence), Bari.

The regionally-active “Associazione Volontariato Penitenziario - AVP” is attached to the Florence Judiciary and comprises most of the voluntary organisations working in Tuscany (It20), such as the catholic Caritas, ARCI (non-confessional), AMPAS, Associazione per l’altro (documentation), AISME (mental health), (Nessun) No Mobbing, Il Varco, CIAO, etc. They cover a wide range of activities from prevention in schools, to job hunting for released prisoners, moral and material support and “group counselling”. Among the common projects of the past or in preparation, one can find:

- theatre “l’epidemia del bene” written by an ex-detainee and performed by “high-security” prisoners,
- “Free at last” gospel choir composed of prisoners who gave several public concerts,
- Involvement of the Tuscan Universities to help imprisoned students in their studies (in 1/2007 there were 81 university students of whom 25 were foreigners),
- “Per il trattamento intenso del lupo - For Wolf” intensive treatment of Detainees condemned for paedophilia and sexual crimes,
- “Storievasive” – intercultural project for young immigrants of the second generation, etc.

The AVP, Florence also runs “ATTAVANTE”, (It20) a recreation centre for ex-detainees and people serving alternative sentences which is open every day between 15 and 21 hours. The centre is organised by 5 full-time employees and 15 volunteers. It serves as meeting place with the families, is equipped for leisure activities, education of all types, psychological advice and legal assistance. “Attavante” (It21) is a joint project of the City of Florence together with specialized local associations. AVP, Toscana is typical for a regional Italian federation, as there are others in Veneto, Liguria, Lazio and other “regioni” . The definition of their projects is contained in the document “Il volontariato penitenziario in Toscana”, (It22) a clear and realistic analysis of their position and their aims .

In 7/2007 Lucia De Siervo, “assessore” of the Florence City Council Social Department announced the inauguration of the “Giardino degli Incontri” (Garden of the encounters) inside the Sollicciano prison (It23) , an architect-designed addition, which will allow more pleasant family visits and cultural manifestations in future. She gave then a rather extensive run-down of the social prison activities in Florence together with the projects and associations involved.

CESVOT (It24), the “Centre of the Tuscan Volunteers”, indicates in 1/2008 that Tuscany with 19 jails, has the highest prison concentration in Italy, that 60

volunteer associations operate in that region, 11 magazines are written by detainees and 15 theatre companies are active in prisons (of which the “Compagnia della Fortezza” in Volterra with their 50 detainee-actors and 21 performances in the last 20 years is probably the best known (It25).

As in Germany or Switzerland, the prison administration is very much decentralised and so are the prison volunteers. “Le due città”, the magazine of the central prison administration (It26), publishes the “Protocol of intentions” between the regional prison administration of the Veneto region and the Judiciary for minors of Venice with the regional federation “Voluntariato penitenziario del Veneto”. In Venice and Mestre, 2 voluntary associations (Incontro e Presenza and Don Lorenzo di Milani) have been charged with carrying through the project “SOS: oltre il carcere – after prison”, a reintegration project for ex-prisoners in 4 phases (It27).

In 17 of the 206 Italian prisons no volunteers are working and 7 of them are in Sicily. ASVOPE, the Prison Visiting Association of Palermo said in 4/2007 that only 201 volunteers work in the 26 Sicilian prisons with 3712 inmates; and that they are present in the big prisons only. The reason is that “solidarity is not in the culture of the Sicilians and the people live in fear”.

The “Centro di Ascolto Francescano” at Rovigo (a provincial town of 60.000 inhabitants) could serve as an example of the diversity of voluntary social services to the needy in general and (ex)prisoners in particular (It28):

In 1988, the founders of this association wanted to offer “proximity and presence” to marginalized people. As the local authorities failed to provide valid solutions, a group of young people, following the Franciscan example of “undertaking courageous initiatives”, carried out their project, because “what the leper was to Saint Francis at his time, are the aids-infected, drug addicts, homeless, disabled and prisoners today”. The authorities and society in general were disposed to help the “easily improvable” people, but turned a blind eye on the others. Today the “Centro” offers the following services (see also their very complete website):

- **a 24-hour service** which gives simple information and addresses for immediate help. On a longer term basis are offered accommodation, treatment for dependencies, work, education, medical advice. Specialized staff is available certain days for advice on a variety of problems such as aids, alcohol, mental problems, prison etc.
- **Prison Service** – In the Rovigo prison, volunteers work in both the men’s and women’s section. Apart from the usual services for prisoners and their families, they run an outside prison project of professional education with authorized detainees. Co-operation with specialized prison services for health and social affairs. The local prison volunteer association is located at the “Centro” where they meet once a month exchanging views and receiving information. Since 1997, the detainees of the local prison publish the magazine “Prospettiva Esse”.
- **Service foreigners/immigrants** – Due to its geographical location, Italy is swamped with legal and illegal immigrants. Specially trained staff advise on work, accommodation, administrative help, social security, language.
- **Laboratorio di studi** is a documentation centre at the service of its clients (the poor and needy), state and local social services and the public in general. It serves as a multicultural and multi-social meeting place for those who are open to the Christian message. Studies, consultancy, a library and data base are available.
- **Sportello luna** (for all those who do not want to come at day light) for immediate problems such as people living in illegality, prostitution, fear from the authorities,

advice on health, matrimonial violence, debts, etc.. They are made welcome, advised and cared for.

- **Sportello “Avvocati di Strada”** – This association of lawyers and legally trained personnel has worked since 2006 in several Italian towns and gives twice a week free-of-charge-legal advice to anyone who needs it.
- **Sportello a colori** is a new service which tries to help transsexuals with qualified advice and practical help. On 17.4.08 the “Centro francescano” invited to a public round-table discussion on “Transsessualità – oltre lo specchio: parliamone”.

Italian Prison Visitors, and in particular those who become “volontari di assistenti” have to undergo formation courses which last between 6 and 12 days over a period of 6 months and which look rather demanding. These courses are usually offered by “Regional Volunteer Organisations”, as for example :

- in 2004 by the AVP, Torino (It29),
- in 2006 by the associations “Speranza” and “Icaro”, Udine (It30),
- in 2007/8 by the CRVG-Trento-Alto Adige, “Non solo sbarre” (It31),
- in 2008 by LiberaMente, Cosenza, “Essere volontari dentro e fuori” (IT32),
- and several other courses organised in Tuscany by Cevot (It33) and “l’altro diritto”; il Gruppo volontario Carcere di Lucca; Controluce, Pisa and Pantagruel, Florence, etc., etc.

In Italy, as in most other European countries, the prevailing discovery is that “alternatives to incarceration - diversion” and community work are valid forms of re-socialisation, not only because they are cheaper than costly detention, but because they cause less re-offending too. The re-offending rates for Tuscany, are, it appears, 68,45 % following incarceration compared with only 19 % in case of accompanying measures. “Meno carcere e più impegno sociale” (less detention and more social measures) is the often repeated slogan. As already in 1994 in France, the prison health service was transferred in 2005 to the local hospitals.

“L’Indulto” (general pardon for sentences up to 3 years except for terrorism, child prostitution, drug trafficking etc) was a spectacular action in July 2006 when the Prodi government (It33) reduced the prison population from 60.710 to 38.847 in one month (available capacity 42.000 places). Accompanying measures (It34/35) were foreseen for only 2000 ex-prisoners with 2700 Euros state funding per person over 18 months plus 1000 Euros for the employer for professional training. Pushed by the right-wing media in the name of public security, the prisons keep filling up again. With 800 detainees in 1/2008, the Sollicciano/Tuscany prison had arrived almost at the “pre-indulto” level.

The national Confederation CNVG discussed in 2000 the project “Forum Europeo Volontariato Giustizia” (It36) in which the reasons for the foundation of a “European Association of Prison Volunteers” are defined. At the end of an integrative effort which led to the creation of the CNVG, the author wanted to carry the reflection on social and penal reforms into neighbouring countries. The reasoning was that, if some national features of society are and should remain, other aspects, such as ethnicity and marginalisation of people which leads to delinquency, are international. Never before have people migrated so much and never before have there been so many foreigners in European prisons. To guarantee their legal and human rights is part of the volunteers’ task.

Therefore, a sort of “round-table of social well-being” of European social and prison volunteers was proposed to arrive at a common understanding and concerted actions beyond national boundaries. Some of the goals were the creation of a European network for the exchange of on-line information on prison matters with the aim of attaining better conditions

for incarcerated people. Another objective was the attainment of a consultative status by the European Institutions. His 8-page project goes into details for the creation of a “Permanent Office” and its projected operating cost. With the larger perspective of social justice, of which prison is just part, he wanted to involve organisations working in the field of social exclusion, such as The Penal Reform Trust (London), OIP (Paris), the “European Committee for the Prevention of Torture” (Strasbourg) and several Universities involved in social studies. Livio Ferrari’s project covers a wide range of activities. Should a “European Federation of prisons volunteers” become reality, his project should certainly be taken into account.

The Italians pay as “church tax”, the “otto per il mille” of the taxable total income. In 2004, Euro 310.000.000 (+ 472.000.000 as state contribution) were distributed to the Catholic Church, Euro 6.700.000 to the “Valdesi” Protestants and Euro 3.600.000 to Jewish Institutions. Part of this money should have gone to the voluntary religious associations working also in prisons. It appears that 50 % of all prison visiting (including the professionals who make up about 85% of them) is financed by the State and the regional administration.

For Italian speakers, there are several articles available on internet which could interest the “Prison Volunteer”. Examples:

- “Vicino ai detenuti” by Claudio Sarzotti (Antigone) about the role of the associations in the Italian penal system (It37) .
- “Il volontariato per la persona e la giustizia”, a summary of the 2007 SEAC General Assembly by Bruno Oliviero which addresses the attitude of society, prisons and the reinsertion of offenders (It38).
- “Perché una persona sceglie di fare volontariato in un carcere – why would someone chose to be a prison visitor?” in which Don Sandor Spriano, a prison chaplain for many years and president of the “Volontari in Carcere – VIC” tries to give reasons for it. He develops his “visione della giustizia riconciliativa - the vision of a reconciliatory justice system (It39).
- In 2007 Livio Ferrari, journalist, ex-president of SEAC and the CNVP, wrote a 160-page book “In carcere, scomodi. Cultura e politiche del volontariato giustizia” (edizioni Franco Angeli) which could be translated as “Prison is no fun”. The book contains 6 chapters in which he describes, based on 17 years of experience, the ways volunteers work in prison, its environment, how the volunteers fit into the prison administration and how they interact with the staff. He talks of violence, drugs, racism and the value of poetry, the contacts with the families and ex-prisoners, the relationship with the victims, alternatives to incarceration and the occasional loneliness of voluntary prison visitor. He presents different forms of prison volunteering and the main Italian organisations and federations. This is a most complete analysis of the main aspects of voluntary prison work which he projects frequently into the greater picture of social environment, justice and politics. An addition to this book is planned which will deal more specifically with the relationship of the prisoners and the voluntary visitors (It40).
- In a 1-page article “Da che parte vogliamo stare – on which side do we want to be?” (It41), Livio Ferrari qualifies prisons as places of social vendetta, he talks of the impossibility for long-time prisoners to find a place in society again, because their psychological integrity is irretrievably lost. He says that possibly 25 % of the present detainees are dangerous and should be kept in prison for that reason, but the rest could be released. A real manifesto.

FRANCE –

The information published by the Prison Administration and the discussion in the media and on internet by the main actors on prison matters (criminologists, associations, government) are very complete and lively.

1. The document “Repères chronologiques – chronological landmarks » (Fr1) describes the evolution of the Prison administration since 1654. Some recent changes:

- 1970 Introduction of “judiciary supervision” to avert remand custody,
- 1972 Creation of the “Magistrates dealing with the adjustments of sentences – commissions d’application des peines ”,
- 1975 Development of Conditional Release and suspended sentences – sursis avec mise à l’épreuve),
- 1981 Abolition of the death penalty,
- 1983 Creation of the “Council for the prevention of delinquency”, introduction of community work (travail d’intérêt général – TIG). Project for building private prisons with “dual management” for 15.000 inmates,
- 1987 The prison service is redefined. Apart from the expiation of a pronounced sentence and the public security, re-socialisation becomes a goal. The obligation to work in prison is abolished,
- 1994 The prison health service is performed by the local hospitals so that the detainees have access to the same services as ordinary citizens,
- 1998 Law for the prevention and repression of sexual crimes (protection of minors),
- 2000 “Law for the presumption of innocence”. 2 reports on the conditions in French prisons (Floch, Hyst/Cabanel).

2. The SPIP (Service Pénitentiaire pour l’Insertion et la Probation” created in 1949 (Fr2) was reorganised in 1999. In the Paris headquarters and the 103 local branch offices (antennas) for closed and open prisons (milieu fermé/ouvert) some 2760 “Conseillers d’insertion et de probation – counsellors” (CIP) and “Social workers” (ASS) are employed. The guards and the “Conseillers” are formed at the ENAP (Ecole Nationale d’ l’Administration Pénitentaire). All prison visitors act under the authority of the local prison director, the “Conseillers” of the SPIP and the prison guards for matters of internal security.

The mission of the SPIP, and in particular of the “Conseillers”, is essentially to:

- Promote re-socialisation of the delinquents,
- Carry through the sentence pronounced by the judge,
- Help the detainee with legal matters (solicitor, judge),
- Facilitate the detainees’ access to general and vocational training and leisure activities,
- Recommend treatment in case of narcotic or alcohol dependence,
- Deal with the legal administration and report to the judge,
- Co-operate in the panels for the enforcement of the sentence (commission d’application des peines) and propose deserved mitigations of a sentence,
- Prevent a general deterioration of the detainee and maintain family links,
- Help detainees in their transition to freedom, etc.

In the “open” prison system, the SPIP works in co-operation with the “magistrate for the enforcement of sentences – JAP” for the follow-up of those delinquents who benefit from community work, suspended sentences, conditional release, probation and electronic supervision. Since 1999 (decree 776, art.D583) “on the advice of the magistrate (JAP), a voluntary prison visitor can exceptionally be asked for assistance by the prison director”.

On 1.1.2007, 23.162 prison guards were responsible for 60.400 detainees (= 1 guard per 2,6 inmates), but 2766 “Conseillers” dealt not only with the 60.400 incarcerated inmates, but also with the 145.675 people living in the “open” system. “Lien-Social” says that the lack of personnel makes the accomplishment of their mission impossible (Fr3). The number of “social” personnel would have to be at least doubled, if the SPIP were to cope with proper administration, define individual measures of re-socialisation, prepare the release from prison more carefully and follow people under probation more efficiently.

In 1/2007, the SPIP published a study under the title “50 years of evolution” (Fr4). The Ministry of Justice defined the purpose of the SPIP activities in a 5-page paper “Donner du sens à la peine pour éviter la récidive - To give meaning to a sentence/punishment in order to avert re-offending” (Fr5).

3. Every year the Prison Administration (Ministry of Justice) publishes the “Chiffres clé”, (key figures) with monthly adjustments. The latest report available on internet is dated 1.1.07 and comprises 11 pages (Fr6): Extracts:

- There are 190 prisons; 11 more will be opened in 2007/8. At present, 50600 places are available, 13200 will follow before 2011,
- 2200 staff work in the medical and psychological consultation units,
- In 2006, 86594 people were incarcerated and 85713 released. The average age was 34,5 years, the average time of incarceration 8,3 months. There were 11 escapes, 550 severe aggressions against staff, 93 suicides and 506 attempts of auto-mutilation. 30,6 % of the prisoners were on remand with an average duration of 4 months (which a public commission evaluated at 5,7 months ?!), 19,7 % were foreigners and the prison population rate was 95 per 100.000 people. The total number of inmates was 64.461 which represents an excess of 12631 and an occupancy rate of 119% (125% in May 2008).
- With regard to re-socialisation measures, 21.605 detainees followed “remunerated training” and 60,1 % vocational training, 46.785 participated in general schooling and 5.034 followed correspondence courses (Auxilia, CNED). 6.138 detainees took an exam with a success rate of 76%. 148 advisors of the employment agency ANPE-Justice dealt with 17.415 applicants for a job on leaving prison. The average sport activity per detainee was, it appears, 4 hours per week.
- With regard to religion, altogether 1015 people worked in prisons of which 332 remunerated chaplains and 683 volunteers (536 Catholics, 254 Protestants, 94 Muslims, 74 Jews, 16 orthodox). Another source (GNCP) says that the Catholic chaplaincy comprises 185 chaplains, 180 volunteers and 145 helpers. Contrary to prison visitors, Chaplains usually meet the detainees in their cells. The prisoners are allowed to follow religious courses and participate in religious services. Imams usually celebrate only the Friday prayers.
- 147 of the 190 prisons have an outside Prison Visitors’ Centre to prepare visits in the family visiting halls inside the prison. There are 25 accommodation facilities for families coming from far and 55 waiting rooms intra-muros.

4. In 2006 the following Associations of Prison Volunteers worked in partnership with the SPIP (Fr7) and received subsidies of Euro 822.954,- (+18% compared with 2005):
- * AIDES: Courses on detoxification for prisoners and their families during and after incarceration. Mediation, listening, information.
 - * ANVP (Association Nationale des Visiteurs de Prison). Essentially through « active listening » some 1100 volunteers give moral support to some 7000 detainees which the SPIP designates. The “visiteurs”, selected by the ANVP and approved by the SPIP and the prison director, follow courses in behavioural psychology, are informed by the ANVP website, participate in conferences on a departmental level and follow week-end training courses proposed by the prison administration. The approval process can last up to 9 months. Usually a voluntary prison visitor meets 1 to 2 inmates once a week for one hour in the lawyers’ parlour . Once a week in most prisons, 2 volunteers welcome the newly arrived inmates in the “quartier arrivant” and propose the ANVP’s one-to-one visits. These meetings are usually quite animated. The ANVP website provides information not only about the principles and the ways of working of the association (déontologie), but publishes monthly press reviews and comments on general problems of prison matters. For example, the ANVP offered its propositions on the new “sanctioning law and prison service” which is in preparation by the government. The headings were “Sanctioning differently”, “to accompany the detainee better” and “in favour of dignified detention conditions”. At present, the ratio “detainee:prison visitor” is 60 to 1; the ANVP intends to arrive at a ratio of 20 to 1.
 - * AUXILIA - 150 staff and 1500 teachers work 500.000 hours annually to teach handicapped people by correspondence, people out of work and prisoners (French, technical and paramedical subjects, accountancy, basic courses up to diplomas). Auxilia (Fr10) runs a “Centre for professional re-education of handicapped people” and a “Women accommodation centre for social reintegration”. Auxilia also works in Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and Spain.
 - * La CIMADE (Fr11) is an association of Protestant origin which works today as an ecumenical charity for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. 700 volunteers and 120 staff in 60 local groups deal annually with 20.000 foreigners helping them in their integration into France or to return to their country of origin. In 2005 the Cimade signed a partnership deal with the SPIP which allows their members to enter retention centres (centres de retention). 10.000 foreigners are arrested in France and sent back every year (in 2008 deportation has increased by 80%!). 2,1 % of the French prison population are illegal immigrants.
 - * CLIP (Club informatique pénitentiaire) was founded in 1985. Some 180 volunteers teach computer technology in 46 prisons. According to the Prison Administration, 1206 diplomas were obtained in 2006 (of which 125 by minors).
 - * LE COURRIER DE BOVET is an association of about 1000 volunteers who keep in touch with prisoners through correspondence (pen friends) and help illiterate people (including in prisons) with their correspondence (family, administration). As 30 % of the detainees can be considered illiterate and 20 % are foreigners, the demand for help is considerable.

- * LE SECOURS CATHOLIQUE (which is part of the worldwide Caritas Internationalis) works mainly among the needy, detainees leaving prison and those sentenced to Community Service (Fr12). Financial help, clothes, food and other basic needs are catered for. A multitude of services is offered (hostels, letters to the detainees “amitié sans visage – friendship without face”, transport of families to detention centres, service “Prison-Errance”etc.).
- * GENEPI (Groupement national d’enseignement aux personnes incarcérées) is a unique organisation in Europe. 1000 University students in 70 prisons help detainees to make up for missed schooling both in general education and special subjects. Since its foundation in 1976, 12.000 “Génépistes” have taught in prisons. On the Genepi website and in public meetings, students talk very freely about their views of prison and what it ought to be.
- * The FREP’s (Fédération Relais Enfants-Parents) essential aim is to keep alive the relationship between incarcerated parents and their children. 400 volunteers and 50 professionals regrouped in 12 regional centres, work in “expression workshops”, mediation and educational assistance. The FREP is a partner of the European EUROCHIP association.
- * FARAPEJ (Fédération des associations réflexion-action prison et justice) comprises 45 associations with 2000 members, 150 staff and 700 volunteers. They are active for (ex) prisoners and their families and work with local administrations in favour of alternative sanctions to incarceration.
- * SIDACTION (ensemble contre le Sida – together against AIDS) supports associations in their fight against AIDS and hepatitis (information, finances, treatment).
- * UFRAMA (Union des fédérations régionales d’associations de maisons d’accueil des familles et proches de personnes incarcérées) is a federation of regional associations running 85 of the 145 prison visitors centres. 80 associations are regrouped in 6 regional federations. More than 500.000 people are affected permanently by imprisonment which is 1 % of the whole population. 80 % of the staff is voluntary. “How to explain to a child why dad is in prison – le mystère de la patte bleu” is a very lively leaflet for children (F10A). The state subsidies have been reduced for some time. As the 12 new prisons will be run entirely by a private company, it is unlikely that volunteer organisations, such as UFRAMA, will be active in these prisons.
- * LA CROIX ROUGE FRANCAISE (Red Cross) (Fr11) supports the most deprived prisoners enabling them to finish their prison term in dignified conditions (50 % are without work at the moment of incarceration, 62 % of them are less than 25 years old). To prevent despair and suicide, the Red Cross has put in place a telephone helpline for prisoners, as they have existed in England, Italy and Germany for some time. The Red Cross plans the creation of accommodation facilities for ex-prisoners who find themselves in social isolation after long prison sentences. It already runs 6 hostels. In 2004, it launched the campaign “1000 TIGs” (1000 community jobs to prevent incarceration).

- * The FNARS (Fédération Nationale des Associations d'Accueil et de Réinsertion Sociale) comprises 700 voluntary and public organisations. In 1300 accommodation and service centres 16.000 places are available for people in need. 450.000 people are cared for annually. FNARS organises seminars, conferences and provides information on the social situation in France, accommodation, work, re-socialisation and legal advice.
 - * VIE LIBRE, founded in 1953, is an association of former alcoholics who accompany dependent people in their daily misery, suggest methods of curing the problem and try to lead them towards lasting re-insertion into normal life.
5. In addition to the above “official partners”, the SPIP says that 521 local and regional associations of prison volunteers existed in France in 2006 which have been subsidized by the state with Euro 3.155.723. Among them are for example:
- SOLIDAIRES – Founded in 1981, this association (Fr17) of 20 volunteers organises the Family Visitors’ Centre at the Bois d’Arcy (Yvelines) prison. On visiting days 100 to 200 family members go through this unit to visit detainees inside prison.
 - FAIRE (Insertion sociale et professionnelle des détenus) gives literacy courses and teaches professional skills. Re-socialisation.
 - MRS (Mouvement de Réinsertion Sociale) was founded in 1969. 65 volunteers in the Paris region accompany 600 released detainees annually and try to (re)adapt them to life outside prison. The MRS proposes a “responsabilisation contract” to selected detainees and promise them accommodation, training and medical help against the obligatory acceptance of one of 3 job offers and the indemnification of the victim.
 - AVISO (Association pour la visite et le soutien aux détenus et leurs familles), runs a Montpellier prison visitors’ centre.
 - PRISONNIERS SANS FRONTIERES supports volunteer associations which work in the former African French colonies to improve detention conditions (Fr18). 5000 African volunteers visited 28.000 detainees in 2006 in 75 prisons.
 - L’ARMEE DU SALUT (Salvation Army) was already active in 1928 in the Cayenne convict prison (bagne). When it was dissolved in 1946, the Salvation Army repatriated the 4000 inmates and many of them found shelter and work from 1952 onwards in the “Rademont Home”. At present, it appears that 10 Chaplains and their helpers pay 3000 visits per year to 500 detainees in 30 French prisons. They prepare Christmas gifts and organise community work. In their centres for the homeless, the Salvation Army lodge, in addition to their usual clients, many former detainees.
 - PARCOURS DES FEMMES is an association operating in the Lille region which prepares incarcerated women for release and accompanies them as long as is required to prevent re-offending. In 2006, 189 women in need were assisted. The association’s website is very complete and reflects the problems of leading imprisoned women back into society.
 - L’ASSOCIATION SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL was created in 1833 in Paris and is today an enormous charity working in 130 countries. In France, they run several Family Visitors’ Centres such as in Draguignan, Nanterre, Paris-La Santé and Maubeuge.
 - L’ESTRAN helps 500 ex prisoners after their release with a 3-weeks’ accommodation and co-ordinated help in co-operation with the social services. L’Estran is part of the the UFRAMA federation.

- FRAMAFAD (Fédération régionale des maisons d'accueil des familles et amis de détenus) runs 18 prison visitors centres in the East of France,
- ACT-UP, Paris fights against AIDS and drug dependence. Information.
- "Les petits frères des Pauvres" are part of the international federation of the "Little Brothers of the Poor". Every year in France 6500 volunteers and 380 full-time staff assist about 20.000 needy above 50 years of age. Among them are many ex prisoners who live in isolation after years of incarceration. The organisation runs hostels, day and rehabilitation centres.
- RPSA (Relais Prison Sambre Avesnois), Maubeuge has 40 active volunteers who visit prisoners and their families, run a Prison Visitors' Centre through which pass 300 people per week, and organise literacy courses.
- ACCORD, Strasbourg works with 22 people (4 professionals) in family and penal mediation and restorative justice for adolescents, aide for the victim, cross border legal matters and advice .
- Since 2001, DECLIC, Strasbourg and "Les Chemins de l'Insertion et de la Citoyenneté", Besançon have organised 6-week walks with the detainees whose imprisonment come to an end. In 2008, 10 detainees and 10 volunteers will walk 700 kms from Verdun to Strasbourg. It appears that "good hikers re-offend less".
- "Libertà" is the association for Corsican "political" prisoners, "Skazell Vreizh" for the Bretons and "Senideak" for the Basques.

There are many other local associations, some of them regrouped in FARAPEJ, such as

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - L'Espoir at Orleans | - L'Arc-en-Ciel at Douai |
| - Grand Large-Aarde at Evreux | - ASEPEL at Lyon |
| - ARAPEJ at Valence | - Ruptures, Lyon |
| - La prison dans la ville, Brest | - AFAPA, La Halte at Auxerre |
| - Les amis de l'Horeb, Toulon | - Le Cri, Marmande |
| - Repousser les murs, Loos | - L'envolée, Montreuil |
| - Association Espoir, Colmar | (free journal for prisoners). |

Apart from the CIMADE which has access to the retention centres, there are other associations which work for foreigners and refugees, such as

- GISTI (Groupe d'information et de soutien des Immigrés) specialises in legal advice for foreigners,
- MIB (Mouvement de l'Immigration et des Banlieues) fights against the « double sanction » which means imprisonment with subsequent expulsion (the outlaws of modern times),
- APTM (Association pour l'accompagnement social et administratif des Migrants et de leurs familles), Paris which works in co-operation with PAS (Plate-forme d'Accueil et de soutien aux étrangers en situation précaire) and CADA (Centre d'accueil des demandeurs d'Asile) - (Fr19).
- ANAFE (Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers).

6. There is ample information about prisons and its problems through numerous websites, such as the SPIP, ANVP, GENEPI and, for example:

- a) "L'Observatoire International Prison – OIP" (Fr20) which was founded in 1990/96 by a former detainee. The OIP not only reproduces information, laws and their projects, but

also maintains an ample library of books and thematic publications on security, health, psychiatry, addiction and comments frequently on current prison matters with a sharp tongue. This organisation considers imprisonment as a slur on human dignity. As France does not have local “Independent Monitoring Boards”, the “OIP groupes locaux d’observation” register cases of dysfunction in French prisons and report them in detail (similar to ANTIGONE in Italy). The magazine “dedans-dehors” describes the reality in French prisons through thoroughly researched articles. The OIP is a very militant organisation which launches petitions, for example, against wearing handcuffs during medical treatment in hospital, is in favour of the liberation of the “Action Directe” terrorists and organises public protest gatherings such as the one against “overcrowding in French prisons” on the 2nd October 2007.

- b) BAN PUBLIC informs the public about prisons and incarceration throughout Europe on their website “prison.eu.org”. They militate in favour of the abolition of disciplinary confinement (Fr21) and the recovery of full civil, civic and commercial rights on release from prison. A dissertation of 1998/2002 by Claire Chagnot in 5 chapters with the title “La prison et les associations” which describes the situation in France (Fr23), is published on this website.
 - c) Pierre-Victor Tournier and Annie Kensey have researched and written on most prison-related subjects, such as re-offending, overcrowding, education, remand in custody and interpretation of statistics. The CESDIP at Guyancourt, founded in 1983, is both a “laboratory” of the French state research institution (CNES) and the ministry of justice.
 - d) EXIT, Montpellier (Fr24) publishes on its website associations which can help in case of AIDS, dependence on drugs, alcohol and “double punishment” (prison + deportation). Under “prison and information” one can find
 - the website of a prison guard (which is considered a non-official website of the prison administration),
 - “Prison” is the website of Ph. Auzenet, a former protestant prison chaplain who militates in favour of more human prisons. He has written a book “Quand la justice nous casse – when the judiciary destroys us” and a fairly disillusioned article on “the re-socialisation of detainees” (Fr24A),
7. France has no official “Confederation of Prison Volunteers” although FNARS and FARAPEJ regroup quite a number of associations. However, there are 2 alliances which unite most of the bigger organisations:
- “Collectif Octobre 2001” (Fr25) was created in remembrance of the abolition of capital punishment in France in 1981. National and international organisations reflect on subjects of prison life. The “Collectif” continues to demand the abolition of the death penalty world-wide. Among its members are the “Association française de Criminologie”, Amnesty International, the “International Federation of Human Rights” as well as all the big French prison volunteer organisations.
 - The “Groupe National de Concertation Prison – GNCP” (Fr26) which comprises 9 majors organisations (ANVP, the Catholic and Protestant chaplaincy, GENEPI, FARAPEJ, FNARS, Red Cross, UFRAMA, Secours Catholique) organises a “week of actions” once a year all over France with seminars, debates, presentations,

films and exhibitions. The motto of the “14e Journées Nationales Prison” in 2007 was “La prison, c’est pas automatique – prison is not the only solution ». In 2006, the slogan was “La Prison, s’en sortir” which could be translated as “how to overcome incarceration”. If ever the French prison volunteer associations wanted to form a “National Association” similar to the Italian “Associazione Nazionale Volontariato Giustizia”; Bonjo in Holland or the new Spanish “Consejo Social Penitenciaria”, the GNCP could certainly offer a suitable framework.

8. Three events which marked the French prison milieu in these past 10 years:

- In 2000, Véronique Vasseur published a book “Médecin Chef à la Santé, Paris – Chief Medical Officer at the Paris prison la Santé” in which she describes the true conditions of incarceration, the distress of many inmates and the aberrations of the penal system. This book had a tremendous impact on the French public and generally in prison circles.
- In 2000, following the “law on the presumption of innocence”, the number of remand prisoners, which had climbed to 23.000 in the years 1995/97, should have fallen substantially. It diminished indeed to 16.000 in 2001, but was back to 22.700 in 2004. The heavy-handed use and abuse by magistrates, of keeping people on remand in custody virtually at their discretion, became evident to the public through the “affaire d’Outreau”, in which an overloaded and incompetent magistrate kept 18 people detained from between 1 to 3 years; one man committed suicide. In 2005, all suspects were acquitted with the very rare apologies of the president of the appeal court (Fr27). A report by a national commission in 2006 (Fr27A) confirmed the increasing number of remand prisoners attaining an average length of 5,7 months in 2007(the SPIP talks of only 4 months?).
- In September 2005, Gil Robles (Fr28), the European human rights commissioner, conducted an enquiry into French prisons. The report of 110 pages was very critical of general prison conditions, the treatment of foreigners and expulsion procedures. The ANVP expressed its general agreement with the findings except for the recommendation that a way out of the problem would be the construction of new prisons.

9. For foreign French speakers here are a few interesting documents on “prison visiting”:

- “Des intervenants extérieurs pour changer la prison”, Ceras 2002. A prison volunteer, a prison chaplain and a prison director discuss the meaning of incarceration and the necessary reforms (Fr29),
- “Des témoins des conditions de vie des prisonniers” in « Témoignages » (Fr30). Prison visitors describe the precarious situation of the inmates, the lack of perspective and the high risk of re-offending without outside help.
- MRAP: “Jeunes de France, racisme et discrimination dans la police, la justice et la prison ». (Fr31) Why do « foreign-looking » young people feel badly treated by the police, discriminated against in job research, and why are so many of them in prison?
- “Réinsertion des détenus” on the website “Prisons” – or why re-socialisation is not

taking place in a coherent fashion (Fr31A),

- Le “Centre d’analyses stratégiques: Contrôleur des lieux d’enfermement » (Fr32). This article talks about the forthcoming introduction of the equivalent of the decentralized and independent British “monitoring boards” (in German “Anstaltsbeiräte”). Although this function will be centralized in France and introduced only gradually, it will serve the same purpose, which is to give the detainees a person to whom they can complain about abusive treatment and unacceptable living conditions. France has been reminded repeatedly to create this function by the United Nations and the Council of Europe.
- “A qui profite la prison – who benefits from prison ? » Réseau Citoyenneté, 1/2004 (Fr33).
- « Garde et réinsertion, la gestion des prisons » (Fr34) is the report by the « Cour des Comptes – the Auditor general » of 2006 which severely criticises the conditions of imprisonment, heavy administrative procedures and the SPIP which administers the social side of prisons as well as can, but which does not have the means of putting in place a coherent system of re-socialisation.
- “Perben 2” of 2004 was a series of laws which generally tightened the existing dispositions. With regard to penal matters, the “Wasmann-Report” dealt, among 87 proposals, mainly with two:
 - * between the verdict and its enforcement, an average of 7,5 months elapsed through lack of court, prison and probation staff (people sentenced to community service were contacted not uncommonly 12 months after the verdict to start their service). The immediate employment of 1000 staff could have cleared up the backlog quickly.
 - * to ease the overcrowding of prisons and the release of prisoners without accompanying measures, the author suggested to increase the semi-detention capacity from 1900 to 5000. As only 3,5 % (299) of all French judges work as JAP (examining judge who adjust sentences for prisoners), each of them was supposed to deal with 680 detainees. As the SPIP is chronically understaffed, the well-meant alternatives to prison overstretched the judiciary’s capacity. In addition, many detainees preferred to remain in prison rather than to be subjected to electronic bracelet control, have no job and no accommodation outside. (Fr35, 35A).
- Tournier-Kensey “La Récidive des sortants de prison” (Fr36) is a follow-up study of re-offending 5 years after release. Similar studies exist in England, Finland, USA and Germany. See “statistics, chapter 6”.
- Wikipédia (Fr36A) gives on 10 pages a far less glowing account of French prisons than the Ministry of Justice does (see paragraph 2 and 3 above).

10. The annual budget of the Ministry of Justice for 2008 clearly showed Mr. Sarkozy’s determination to reform the Judiciary. Whereas the total budget increased by only 1,6%, the government allowed a 4,6 % increase for the judiciary (Fr37), among them:

- 1600 prison guards more will be hired (they were already promised in 2002),
- 400 additional posts to improve the functioning of the courts,

- Allocations to the associations of victims were increased by 14,7% and a magistrate will be appointed at every court to defend the rights of the victims,
- Before 2012, 13.000 new prison places (+24%) will be created in addition to the present 50.600,
- 156 “tribunaux d’Instance” (kind of small jurisdiction which deals in legal cases of up to Euro 8000,-) of the existing 470 will be closed which will, it appears, increase the efficiency of the judiciary (many feel that it will diminish the proximity of justice and equality of the citizens before the law).
- One Million Euros only for combating re-offending,
- Probable limitation of the number of detainees who will benefit from free legal assistance (attorneys appointed by the prison administration),
- “Intention” only to promote alternatives to imprisonment and relief measures.

A prison reform on the basis of 120 recommendations is in preparation and should be submitted to Parliament before the end of 2008 (Fr38). In the meantime, the new Minister of Justice has pushed through the “loi des peines plancher – minimal sentences” concerning re-offenders and the “retention de sûreté – keeping people in custody after termination of their sentence, if re-offending cannot be excluded” (Fr39). The tendency of the new government seems to follow more the American “zero tolerance” methods than the Scandinavian concept of integration through re-socialisation. The organisations of prison volunteers observe this tendency with reservation – and make it known on their websites.

12.6.2008 – With 63.000 detainees and 125 % overpopulation (European average 103%), the French prisons are at an all-time high. To ease this situation, the Minister of Justice announced the following measures:

- More frequent reductions of prison sentences (aménagements des peines). These « relieve measures » have been increased by 34 % in the last 12 months.
- 3040 new places will become available before the end of 2008 and individual cells will be guaranteed from 2013 onwards.
- 2500 electronic bracelets are in service today. 2000 more will be made available every year from now on. Eligible will be all people awaiting trial, those sentenced to less than 6 months or those with sentences of less than 2 years with 6 months remaining.

There is talk of “we must reduce re-offending and work towards seeing prison as a chance for re-socialisation”, but no concrete measures have been announced. Since 29.4.08 the “ SPIP-Conseillers” have followed a “movement of protest” for better pay and working conditions.

Mr. Delarue (present director of the “remand sentencing system”) has been appointed for 6 years as the new “Controleur général des prisons”, a function similar to the “independent Monitoring Boards”. As he has the reputation of not being politically aligned, he was deemed acceptable even to the usually very critical “Observatoire Européen des Prisons - OIP”.

GERMANY –

In Germany in 2006, there were approx. 79.000 detainees in 220 prisons with 40.000 guards/civil servants and at least 5000 voluntary workers. Each day of detention cost Euro 80,-. There were about 100 German detainees in French prisons in 10/2006, cared for by the consulates of Lyon, Marseilles and Strasburg. A German “Solidarity Organisation” in Paris (2, Rue Dorian) visits German prisoners on request.

Help for prisoners has a long tradition in Germany. On the occasion of a seminar organised by the voluntary organisation “Scheideweg” (protestant), Gerhard Deimling (D1) pointed out the critical attitude of Christian associations with regard to prison legislation and administration, and the advancing “professionalisation” at the expense of the involvement of civil society. Apart from individual prison visitors, there are few organisations which consist of volunteers only. Most of them work today within larger organisations administered by full-time staff. A constant preoccupation is finding the resources through subsidies and sponsoring. Most of the “freie Träger” (voluntary agencies) offer a range of complementary services from prevention of crime to probation and beyond.

There are several characteristics unique to the German penal system:

- a) Until 2006, the Central Government (Bund) was responsible for penal legislation. Following the “Föderalismusreform” (Subsidiarisation of federal responsibilities), the 16 Länder became LEGISLATORS in penal matters too (D2). Prof. Maelicke qualified this legislative change as missing the main point, which should be more efficient re-socialisation. Instead, he predicted more uncoordinated and costly “red tape” to the detriment of effective rehabilitation. His “10 Thesen – assertions” (D3) give a good insight into the specific German way of reintegrating prisoners into society.
- b) In the past, the Ministries of Justice of the Länder were already responsible for the ADMINISTRATION of the prisons. They administered the prison staff, stipulated their rights and duties, the admission rules for family visits, individual prison visitors and those of associations.
 - Thus, the Ministry of Justice of Rheinland-Pfalz explains on the internet the specific and contextual conditions of prison visiting on 11 pages (D4) to future candidates (Vollzugshelfer). We learn that in 1999, 315 volunteers were working with 3663 detainees on a one-to-one basis (Einzelbetreuung), in groups (Gruppenarbeit) or in leisure activities (Freizeitgruppen). The figures for 2006 are 340 volunteers for 4000 detainees (D5).
 - The Land of Saxony (D6) invites volunteers to work within the existing prison administration and stresses the ethical value not only for the volunteers and the detainees, but for society as a whole. 11 voluntary associations involved in prison visiting are mentioned specifically (list no doubt incomplete, because the great humanitarian and religious organisations are missing).
 - The Land Nordrhein-Westphalia published decree No. 4450 of 2.12.1977 which defines the role of prison visitors, their rights and duties. In an additional note (D7), the ministry explains in unusually non-administrative language why

voluntary prison visiting is indispensable for the good functioning of prisons and the reconciliation of the detainees with society into which they will be released one day. In 2006, about 1800 prison visitors were at the service of 18.000 detainees. The website contains ample information about the approval of official prison visitors and the conditions of prison visiting.

- In 2004, the Ministry of Justice of Baden-Wurttemberg (D8) explained the situation in their prisons. Out of a total of 9000 detainees, 2000 followed elementary and professional schooling and virtually all of them participated in leisure activities. 700 volunteers were involved in individual visiting or group activities. A number of these visitors taught general ethics and biblical studies. In spite of this considerable effort, the administration is disappointed that 45 to 56 % of the prisoners re-offend within 5 years and so did as many as 69 to 78 % of the young delinquents. 2 model prisons have been built at Creglingen and Seehaus Leonberg. The latter has received the first prize for criminal prevention among 100 projects and played a model role in the recent controversy over “criminal young people with a migrant background” (Der Spiegel 1/2008 - D9).

“Pro Justizia” summarizes in an article (D10) the meaning of voluntary work in prison (Ehrenamtliche Mitarbeit im Gefängnis), not only with regard to its main tasks (conciliation, listening, moral support), but in more concrete functions too, such as general, art and language teaching, care for families, mediation, accompaniment of witnesses, probation work, debt settlement, etc).

“Freie Hilfe Berlin”, a most dynamic association of prison volunteers, organised a convention in 11/2001 (D11), during which 130 participants discussed common aspects of prison volunteering following a study by the “Niedersachsen Institut of Criminology” together with 2 dissertations. The main subjects were the motivations of prison volunteering, work satisfaction, work load, recognition or the lack of it by society and the administration . One of the workshops discussed the delicate, but nevertheless latent problem of “whether volunteers are in competition with full-time prison staff and whether their contribution was really welcome”.

c) Some common points:

- There seems to be the feeling that most of the professionals of the judiciary system (judges, lawyers, prison administration) are unable to connect with the detainees, because the latter are “full of hate, prejudice and sentiments of revenge against society”. In some cases, the administration can reach such detainees only through people outside the penitentiary system, such as (sports) teachers, independent social workers, psychologists and volunteers.
- The German voluntary prison visitors act largely as a complement to the full-time prison staff or the full-time personnel of voluntary agencies (hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter), but their range of activities is wider and their work more varied than that of the French volunteer who works under the authority of the SPIP (Service Pénitentiaire d’Insertion et de Probation). At least the aim is more individualisation of the detainee’s needs in addition to the general measures proposed by the administration.
- The German Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch) of 1977 expressly encourages the involvement of civil society in prison matters (as do now the new European Prison Rules) and co-operation with the penal authorities. Thus, the “re-socialization” of the detainee is the principal aim of incarceration (and not the expiation of the sentence, punishment as a deterrent or the locking away of a prisoner). This

conciliatory attitude is noticeable in numerous documents and publicly-expressed points of view.

- Although the 1977 law is very explicit with regard to the need of co-operation between the penal authorities, social assistance to the detainees, probation, the employment agencies, Social Security and the involvement of the voluntary sector, tensions are frequent. There is sometimes an ambiguous relationship between the administration and the voluntary agencies, particularly when they are in competition for leisure programs, education and professional education.

Many Prison volunteers are part of the big Church, humanitarian and social organisations (most of them united in BAG-S, Bonn), such as the „Katholische Bundearbeitsgemeinschaft Straffälligenhilfe (KAG-S)“, Freiburg with 80 “Träger“ all over the country (voluntary agencies or charities in which work full-time personnel, professionals and volunteers). KAG-S works for imprisoned men (Sozialdienst kath. Männer) and women (SKF). CARITAS and the “kath. Gefängnisvereine” are part of it too.

These BIG nation-wide organisations (Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband, the Diakonie – EKS) are then organised on the level of the Länder and locally. Other REGIONAL Associations are for example:

- + the “Schleswig-Holsteinischer Verband für soziale Strafrechtspflege, Straffälligen-und Opferhilfe” which comprises not less than 43 public and voluntary associations (D12) involved in prison visiting, help for the victims, legal assistance, education (including the French Auxilia), probation etc..
- + The “Niedersächsische Gesellschaft für Straffälligenbetreuung und Bewährungshilfe“ (D14) with 135 volunteers and 40 full-timers work including, among others, the 25 Cura Reso groups and 3 foundations.
- + The “Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft ehrenamtlicher Mitarbeiter im Strafvollzug Bayern ev - LAG” (D15) lists all the prison volunteer organisations in Bavaria. Some of them are Fähre ev, Bayreuth, “die Brücke, Aschaffenburg”, das Trampolin, Schritt für Schritt, Ebrach and „die Evangelische Straffälligenhilfe München“ which works with 30 volunteers in 8 prisons around Munich (D16).

As an example for a LOCALLY operating organisation, one could pick out the “Diakonie Rosenheim” (D17) near the German/Austrian border. This regionally operating voluntary agency of protestant origin employs 200 full timers, 280 voluntary helpers and covers an area of about 50 x 50 kms. Apart from the general activities for the old, the young, the needy, immigrants, the sick and drug dependants, the “Diakonie Rosenheim” offers the following services for detainees and ex prisoners:

- a) a hostel for 35 male prison leavers who can stay up to 18 months (average stay 9 months). Work is provided either in their own workshops or with production companies nearby. Education, social environment, integrative measures for people who no longer have any attachments to their family and friends.
- b) The Diakonie has bought a former hotel (Diadonna) for 6 ex-women prisoners who are looked after by a warden and professional helpers until they are able to move on. Both the male and female prison leavers are offered a trial period to find out whether the constraints of hostel life suit them (Probewohnen).
- c) To avoid incarceration, the Diakonie organises and supervises community work and the administration of the penalties imposed by the judges. “Schwitzen statt

Sitzen” (working rather than being idle in a prison) is a widely and successfully applied prison substitution method all over Germany.

- d) The Diakonie organises “Anger Management Courses” for violence-prone males at the request of the Judiciary and the public “youth welfare agency” (Jugendamt) as a preventive or curative measure. On offer as well is advice on legal and re-socialisation matters.
- e) 18 voluntary prison visitors, headed by a full-time responsible, work in 3 prisons mainly on a one-to-one basis. They meet 12 times per year for an exchange of their experiences and attend 5 meetings per year for a thematic presentation by an expert. Professional help is available in case of need. In 2006 they helped 35 inmates with their practical needs, accompanied them to various offices outside prison before release, maintained contact with their families, sent Christmas parcels and kept in touch after the release, although usually the contact ceases when the detainee quits prison.

After approval by the Diakonie and the local Prison Administration, new prison visitors attend a 2 ½-day course before visiting their first detainee. The time between the detainee expresses the wish to see a prison visitor and the first meeting is rarely more than 2 weeks.

Social activities within the penal system are paid for by the local or state public welfare system (Sozialetat) according to a fixed rate per person (Tages/Pflegesatz). Prospecting for new sources of public and private funding to finance and expand the services of the private welfare organisations (freie Träger) , is at the heart of their preoccupations. These voluntary agencies are in favour of a fair competition with state-operated services as they feel that they can run such social service less expensively and more efficiently.

A good example for a TRADITIONAL, LOCALLY grown prison association would be the “Kath. Gefängnisverein, Düsseldorf” which was founded in 1893 and works essentially in the prison (JVA = Justizvollzugsanstalt) “Ulmer Höh”. Their general brochure (D17A) describes openly the sometimes conflicting situations between the prison volunteers, the prison administration, prison officers and the detainees. In the booklet voluntary prison visitors define their work in a very factual way and explain why they keep going in spite of all the difficulties. In 2008, the prison counts more than 600 detainees, plus 53 who live in the “open” system, and a retention centre for 78 foreign women. The prison is administered by 256 prison officers and staff. The association employs 6 full-time professionals (including 2 chaplains, 1 criminologist, 1 social educationalist, 2 social workers) and has 70 volunteers. Inside prison, the association has its own meeting room. The large offer of services is typical for German “mixed associations” (Freie Trägerorganisationen). The “kath. Gefängnisverein” offers one-to-one talks with detainees, leisure and group activities, advice in marriage and relational matters, detoxification, debt management, preparation for leaving prison, search for accommodation and work, assistance in administrative matters. The association runs also a group for mothers, partners and wives of prisoners (D17B+C). The association has published a 42-page booklet (Wegweiser) for prison leavers (D17D) and a guide for new prisoners in English and French (D17E+F). Together with the Protestant prison association, they have founded an “Information Centre” (Beratungsstelle – D17G). Since 1975 one of the chaplains, together with the help of several detainees, publishes the ULMER ECHO, a most informative and lively prisoner’s magazine of 40-50 pages (D17H/I). Future volunteers are trained by the professionals of the association in 10 evenings before official approval by the authorities. German volunteers seem to be much more free in their actions. With the

agreement of the administration, they can contact the families of prisoners, even their lawyers, accompany them outside on official visits, etc.

Separate “Prison Visitors Centres”, located outside the prisons, which are very popular in England, Scotland and France, do not seem to exist in Germany.

The “Schwarzes Kreuz – Christian aid to prisoners” at Celle (D18) is part of the protestant Diakonie too, but works NATIONWIDE and in a prison environment only. It was founded in 1925, employs 8 full-time personnel and has about 400 voluntary workers. “Schwarzes Kreuz” identifies itself clearly as “Christian” and in conformity with the spirit of the 1977 laws. They have installed a blog called „Eckstein – Forum für Angehörige von Gefangenen“.

The formation of new prison visitors, which lasts 2 years, is well defined:

- the first contacts with the prison environment are undertaken in presence of experienced prison visitors,
- the candidate must participate in seminars and forums for his theoretical and practical formation,
- at the end of such a cycle, the future prison visitor receives an official accreditation by his organisation and the prison authority to which he will be attached.

Like other German associations, “Schwarzes Kreuz” offers not only “listening and moral support”, but practical help during incarceration and after release.

A 5-page “Positionspapier” (D19) reflects on the role of prison visiting, the necessity of prison visitors as a vital link for the prisoners to the outside world, the psyche of the detainee, the volunteer’s impression of being unwanted by the prison administration, the obvious aggression-lowering effect they have on the detainees, but also the need for the volunteers’ further education to understand better the “world of prisons”. It is somewhat surprising when the paper says that volunteer prison work has a negative image in Germany. This is certainly not the case in Italy, France and England.

The “Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft - Straffälligenhilfe – BAG-S” represents 7 big Organisations (Arbeiterwohlfahrt, DHB, the catholic Caritas with its numerous local affiliations, the humanitarian Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband and its branch offices, the German Red Cross with its 35 branches active in prisons, the protestant Diakonie active in most German towns, the Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden) . Apart from its very complete website, BAG-S publishes 3 to 4 times a year all interesting national and international news concerning prisons, their legislation and the assistance to detainees (Informationsdienst Straffälligenhilfe – 1300 copies – D20). BAG-S revised in 2007 their 100-page “Wegweiser” - Guide for prisoners (D21) on the financial and organisational implications of imprisonment and the associations which can help (15.000 copies were distributed). BAG-S frequently organises seminars too, such as the one in 2005 at Bad Honnef (D22) of which the report of the different working groups was later published under the title “Spannungsvolles Ehrenamt – Stressful voluntary work” (D23). Due to the budgetary squeeze for social matters, BAG-S had to suspend its activities in 2006 for 6 months.

“Forum Strafvollzug und Straffälligenhilfe” is a magazine mainly for professionals of prison matters and the assistance to detainees. Prof. Maelicke, a well-known German Criminologist, became the editor-in-chief in 2007.

The DHB (Fachverband für Soziale Arbeit, Strafrecht und Kriminalpolitik) at Cologne counts 10.000 members and works essentially on all levels of probation, mediation and restorative justice. The DHB is the official German representative within the CEP. Apart from the core activities, the DHB is active in adjacent fields such as the prevention, causes and consequences of crime, community work, legal and practical

assistance to detainees. Their project “Lotse” (D24) supports since 1996 the volunteers within the judiciary system with a “newsletter” 4 to 5 times a year (2200 copies), seminars (57 in 2004), psychological advice and discussions with experts on local level. The DBH annual reports list member organisations and discusses fundamental problems, such as in 2003, “fundraising, the diminishing financial support by the State” according to which 70 % of the state subsidies go to 300 associations (out of around 1000). The DHB is financed by the Ministry of Justice, the Länder and partly by the European Union.

Since 1995, the Foundation “Verbrechensverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe – VUS Crime prevention and help for the detainees“, Hannover organizes annually the „Deutscher Präventionstag“, (D25) a nationwide Congress during which about 30 to 40 themes around criminality are presented by experts and discussed by delegates of the administration, professional and voluntary organisations concerned. The results of these large meetings are discussed not only by BAG-S and the “Lotse Projekt”, but by the media in general. In 2005 the Congress took place in Hannover, in 2006 in Nürnberg, in 2007 in Wiesbaden and will take place in 2008 in Leipzig.

According to BAG-S, there are at least 1000 volunteer organisations which gravitate around “assistance to detainees” inside and outside prisons. Apart from the BAG-S members, there are a multitude of local and regional associations, indicated on the Website of “knastnet” (D26), “Socialnet” (D27), “Ehrenamliche.de” (D28) and others, such as

- „Kath. Verein für soziale Dienste SKM“(affiliated with Caritas, Bochum with 25 volunteers) – (D29)
- Kath. Männerfürsorgeverein and „Zentralstelle für Straftlassene“, Munich
- Evangelisches Johanneswerk, Bielefeld
- Gefangenenhilfe Scheideweg ev, Hückeswagen is a faith-based organisation attached to the Diakonie which was founded in 1972 and has today 500 members and 300 volunteers, organises seminars in their own 3 facilities, runs 2 hostels and a metal-working company. Scheideweg is very active internationally with their own organisation in Siberia, Accra and other places around the world (D30). Very detailed website.
- „Gefährdetenhilfe Breitscheid“, faith-based association which works in 6 German prisons, founded in 1990, detoxification of young delinquents, accommodation and work on a farm and in a carpenter’s shop (cabinet making),
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft seelsorgerisch-diakonischer Gefährdetenhilfe (BSDG), is a federation of 32 protestant associations (President Friedel Pfeiffer),
- Arbeitskreis Straffälligenhilfe, Aachen (D31) which co-operates with associations in Belgium and Maastricht,
- „die rosarote Gefangenenhilfe“, Augsburg – the „pink“ prison help for homosexuals,
- Sozialverein “Die Brücke” in Munich which is specialized in the aid for young people (settlement of conflicts and debts, restorative justice, intensive after-care, accommodation, project „Graffiti“),
- “Rote Hilfe” – association of solidarity for “persecuted” political left wingers,
- „Wiechernhaus“, Wuppertal a hostel with 28 beds which offers as well vocational courses in co-operation with ARGE,
- “Humanitas” Brandenburg, a non-confessional organisation founded in 1991 which offers visits during and after detention, alternatives to imprisonment and accommodation,
- “Straffälligenhilfe, Allgäu”, is a group of volunteers who work around the Kempten prison,

- “VIA, Bochum” is an association which provides work and accommodation to young delinquents. 65 permanent employees give professional training and oversee production; they call themselves a “successful small enterprise”,
- “Gott und die Welt”, Essen is a faith-based offshoot of the foundation “Glaubens- und Lebenshilfe” founded in 1973 which offers hostels, a Gospel Centre and general help to detainees, prison leavers and their families,
- “Hamburger Fürsorgeverein” is active mainly in advice on debts and insolvency and goes on job hunting for their clients,
- “Rückenwind ev”, Bernberg offers behavioural training courses for young, socially difficult youths together with work and initiation into learning. Professionals and volunteers work together. Very explicit website. (D32)
- “Brücke”, Lippe supervises community service imposed by the Judges.
- “Verein zur Eingliederung von Straffälligen“, Giessen,
- “Hilfe für Gefährdete Kiel ev”, offers work, accommodation, jobs and advice on dependence,
- “Emmausbewegung”, ecumenical, association of ex-prisoners,
- “Garden und Therapie”, a group in the Detmold prison which believes in the therapeutic values of gardening,
- “Initiative Zelle”, Würzburg, a group of people linked to the University who organise mainly rounds of discussion in prisons,
- JUMA, Speyer, foundation of the PSD-Bank, Karlsruhe which offers alternatives to imprisonment for young people,
- “Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe”, Reutlingen offers practically the whole range of services: hostel, accommodation, restorative justice, anti-violence and drug therapies, victim support. The independent association covers 4 Landkreise (sort of district), has a budget of 3,5 Million € (of which 400.000 from sponsors and members) and employs 90 full-timers,
- “Kontakt in Krisen”, Göttingen (debt management, accommodation for 8 weeks, advice on dependence, job research, probation),
- “Probare – Verein für Straffälligenhilfe”, Prevention and rehabilitation of adult ex-prisoners,
- “Ehrenamtliche Opferhilfe Weisser Ring”, Victim Support
- Universalstiftung Helmut Ziegner (HZBB), Berlin which offers 1400 apprenticeships in 21 professions in and outside prison in 4 centres, supervised accommodation. The Berlin mayor, Mr. Wowereit, was the official speaker on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of this organisation in 2007,
- “Perspektivwechsel ev”, Frankfurt/Main (formerly “Frankfurter Gefängnisverein” founded in 1868) offers supervised accommodation for 17-25 youths, men and women in 4 houses, accommodation for visitors coming from far and advice,
- “Glückspielsucht”, Caritas, Neuss, tries to cure dependence on games of hazard,
- Stiftung Traugott Bender, Stuttgart gives financial aid and helps people with debts,
- The “Gefangenenhilfverein, Butzbach” retraces on their Website the historic development of re-socialisation during detention under the title “Behandeln oder bloss Verwahren – Curing or just storing away?”
- 2 examples of local, well-structured associations
 - a) “Chance ev”, Münster founded in 1987 is part of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband. They are strong on social integration through work (rather like Emmaüs of the Abbé Pierre in France) collecting and repairing old furniture and second-hand goods, refurbishing graves and a project called “Stundenlöhner – someone paid by the hour” (temporary jobs). Through their professional counselling group “Mabis” ex-prisoners are advised realistically about professions with good prospects of a later employment (marktorientierte Ausbildung).
 - b) “Kreis 74”, Bielefeld, founded in 1974, employs several salaried people in

addition to the 40 voluntary visitors active in 4 prisons. Kreis 74 tries to keep adolescence out of prison through their “Projekt Brücke” and victim mediation. Their restorative justice activity for adults is called “Via Dialog”.

“Urlaubszimmer - holiday room” is a temporary accommodation for the prison leavers “to take some vacations” and prepare themselves for the freedom to come.

- “Gefangenenfürsorgevereine“ or “Gefängnisvereine” are usually traditional, religious or lay voluntary associations attached to a local prison. They can be called “Lebendige Hoffnung”, Cura, Borstal Association, die Kanne, Hammer Weg, etc. Many of them were founded in the 19th century and operate, for example, at Cuxhaven, Vechta, Neumünster, Celle, Uelzen, Hanover, Hameln, Ebrach, Berlin, Siegburg, Staumühle, Colone and Frankfurt.
- The “Pfälzische Vereine für Straffälligenhilfe” in Frankthal, Zweibrücken and Landau offer most of the usual services for inmates and ex-prisoners,
- Under “abschiebehaft.de” one can find more than 50 organisations dealing with foreigners and deportation such as ProAsly, Frankfurt; Asylcafé, Mannheim; Jesuiten-Flüchtlingsdienst, Berlin; Bürengruppe, Paderborn as well as such groups in Paris, Glasgow, Switzerland, Spain and Austria.

“Ehrenamt in der Straffälligenhilfe” (D33) is an inventory of about 160 addresses of “prison volunteer organisations” published in 1/2008 by “Freie Hilfe Berlin”.

Particularly interesting is the range of activities in which the volunteers are involved: most of them visit prisoners on a one-to-one base and stay in touch with them for some time after. Many of them animate discussion groups and leisure activities, accompany detainees to courts, administrations and future employers, organise the transport of families, help in the administration of hostels and supervised accommodation. They are involved in Christmas gift preparation and letter writing, art and cooking lessons, anger management, self-help groups, social/behavioural training courses, debt management, assisting young offenders, dependence on alcohol and drugs, bible courses, basic and professional education, professional education, clothes and second-hand goods, support of detainees and their families during incarceration, release preparations and thereafter, help for homosexuals; they go on job hunting for released detainees, act as conflict and mediation councillors with the family and the victim. They are probation assistants, involved in language teaching to foreigners or their deportation, give information to the public (Öffentlichkeitsarbeit) and form new volunteers.

In 3/2006, 200 top representatives of ministries, judges, prison administrators, criminologists, chaplains, social workers and voluntary organisations met in Hanover (D33A) to discuss the meaning of sentencing, incarceration and re-socialisation in times of public demand for more punishment, when less money is available for social work and there are signs of a progressing privatisation of prison and after-care services. The dramatically sinking conditional releases (34% in 1980, 8 % in 2003) were discussed as well as the problem of more young and drug-dependent detainees, psychologically disturbed and foreign prisoners, individually adapted plans for care and education during detention and after release, the cost-efficiency calculation of intensive probation, the importance of the first/last days assistance and more interesting work in prison. Although the delegates saw no alternative to the present re-socialisation measures, they wondered whether they were politically wanted and financially feasible in the present socially tense environment.

On the website of the Ministry of Justice in Berlin in 2006, one can read information such as (D34):

- The CEP (see “Organisations”) which comprises 33 penal administrations and numerous voluntary associations from 29 countries mainly involved in probation, stated recently that “integration of prisoners is better than isolation. The delinquent outside prison on probation is preferable to incarceration.”
- “Probation with the help of volunteers and the risks involved”, seminar on 23.6.06.
- In 2005, the rate of criminality dropped by 3,6 %. The rate of solved crime cases by the police increased to 55 %.
- Penal legislation will be in future a matter for the Länder. Nobody seems to be happy with this devolution negotiated by Mr. Stoiber with the Bundesregierung (central government in Berlin),
- A study published by the German Ministry of Justice covering the period 1994-1998 and analysing the cases of 947.311 condemnations, showed the following picture 5 years later:
 - 65 % had not re-offended,
 - 73 % of people condemned for murder and homicide had not re-offended (629 out of 860)
 - 30 % of those convicted to a fine (community work) had relapsed (184.000 of 612.000),
 - 45 % of those convicted with a suspended sentence and under probation had re-offended (38.000 of 85.000), whereas
 - 56 % of those imprisoned in the same category of offences had been reconvicted (11.000 of 20.000),
 - 78 % of the young ex-detainees had re-offended.
- Opening of the semi-privatized prison Hünefeld with a 45 % financial participation by SERCO. The Kötter – Justizdienstleistungen has obtained a 5-year contract for managing the Offenburg prison. The private company will be responsible for maintenance, work for the detainees, internal telephone and purchasing, psychological/medical service, leisure and sports activities, general and professional education. Video surveillance and transport could be transferred to the Kötter company too. It appears that the annual savings will be 1 Million Euros.
- Professor Maelicke (President of BAG-S) reproaches the Federal Government and the Länder with having no vision or strategy with regard to penal matters, the social services and the voluntary sector involved (freie Sträflingshilfe).
- The 4 new Länder of former East-Germany are semi-privatizing the prison services. When will this tendency toward privatisation stop? Seminar in 3/2006 at Magdeburg.
- According to Lawrence Sherman (University of Pennsylvania), incarcerating young delinquents in ordinary prisons, “boot camps” and using the “scared straight”-method produce only more re-offending. Delinquent youngsters accompanied by experienced probation officers, the love of a girl friend, an interesting job and plenty of reading are much more efficient.
- Neustart, Austria has signed a contract with the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Justice for all state probation services (Bewährungshilfe).
- The role of prison visitors within the penal system is described in the document “Ehrenamtliche im Strafvollzug” (Prison visitors in the penal system).

- The function of the “Anstaltsbeiräte” (monitoring board) is explained. It is not said why representatives of churches, unions, schools and sports clubs are preferred to join such a supervisory institution.
- The Minister of Justice, Mrs. Zypris, paid a visit to the volunteers of “Freie Hilfe, Berlin”. This organisation offers a wide range of help: counselling, work, lodging, professional formation, leisure activities both during incarceration and after the delinquent has left prison. The Minister talked about the value of voluntary prison work for society and promised a legislative initiative in favour of suspended sentences and reinforced probation instead of simple prison sentences, etc.

As already said in the case of the “Schwarzes Kreuz”, the training of prison volunteers is important in Germany. Between 2/2006 and 4/2006, the “kath. Gefängnisverein, Düsseldorf” organized weekly seminars for future prison visitors covering a wide variety of subjects presented by experts (D35).

The University of Heidelberg “Institut für Kriminologie” publishes a “do’s and don’ts” for prison visitors (D36). “Planet Wissen” indicates on 3 pages (D37) details of “life behind bars”, such as

- Parents and friends can visit only once a month for one hour. There are no limits for voluntary prison visitors. Detainees are usually woken up at 6 am and work 8 hours per day. The cells are locked between 9 and 10 pm.
- Drugs dependency is high among prisoners: 22 % in Hungary, 86 % in Ireland, 72 % in Austria, 61 % in Portugal and Germany.
- The “Ersttäter” (first offenders) are separated from the “Wiederholungstäter” (re-offenders) who normally enters straight into the “Regelvollzug” (ordinary confinement).
- The enforcement officers are responsible for most of the prison activities: security, daily program, canteen, laundry, daily walks in the court yard, leisure activities, the organisation of visits by the families and voluntary prison visitors;
- The unemployment rate of prisoners working in the “open prison system” (offener Strafvollzug) is 15 %. Of his monthly salary, the prisoner receives pocket money immediately. Part of the salary is kept back and handed over on final leave and the remaining amount goes to the treasury as “Haftkostenbeteiligung” (contribution to the general detention fees). The daily salary of a detainee working in prison was Euro 12,- in 2006.
- 35 % of the prisoners find work within one month, although virtually none of them have a firm employment contract on release from prison (Voss).
- The general education courses are well attended by prisoners who try to obtain a professional certificate, the “Hauptschulabschluss” (kind of GCSE) and, more rarely the “Abitur” (A-level). The “Fernuniversität Hagen” offers a correspondence course “Studieren im Knast – studying in prison”
- The most popular internet chat forum is “Knast.net”. Magazines written and published by the detainees are rather frequent in Germany, such as “Lichtblick” in Berlin and “Der Riegel”, Dresden.

For an enquiry in 2/2002 (D38) with the title “5 good reasons for financing a promising project”, an independent expert interviewed 182 voluntary prison visitors and 58 civil servants working in the prisons of Nordrhein-Westphalia. The interviews lasted from 10 to 120 minutes. 13 voluntary associations active in prison work had ordered the enquiry. Examples from the 5-page “Conclusions”:

- The Central Government and the Länder finance the activities of the volunteers by paying for their formation and the general expenses,
- 100 of the 182 volunteers participate in the “Gruppenangebote” (working in groups) which comprise sports, teaching computer techniques, “life hygiene”, courses in religion, detoxification, autogenous training, preparation for leaving prison, etc. These groups count between 3 and 30 detainees.
- 121 of the 182 volunteers visited 278 detainees on an “individual” basis (Einzelbetreuung).
- 48,3 % of the prison staff thought that the involvement of voluntary workers had a positive influence on the detention conditions (Entlastung der Haftsituation). 24 % thought that the “group activities” offered were particularly welcome. 63 % of the prison staff said that the volunteers contributed favourably to re-socialisation and 55,2% to the general social behaviour of the detainees.
- The volunteers worked in prison an average of 5,15 hours per week.
- 56,9 % of the civil servants considered the voluntary workers as a useful supplement to their own programs and not as competitors. 65 % of them appreciate their positive contribution towards the general climate in prisons and 57 % consider the offer of “working groups” useful for the diversification of the activities proposed by the prison administration.
- 60 % of the volunteers participate regularly in meetings and forums on prison matters and 90 % in “continuous formation” offered by various organisations. This percentage is considerably higher than that of the “general voluntary workers” of whom only 70 % attend such additional courses.
- 85 % of the prison staff thought that voluntary prison work ought to be encouraged and financed adequately.
- In 1996, Nordrhein-Westphalia contributed Euro 613.000 to 13 volunteer organisations for their administration, formation and accompanying of detainees. In the past, the associations of volunteers self-financed their activities to a level of 10 %. This self-financing rate has risen at present to 25 %.

The “Conférence Permanente Européenne de la Probation – CEP” (DE39) organized a meeting in 1999 at Potsdam with the main topic « Methods and importance of volunteers working in the criminal justice system “. Some of the questions discussed were:

- How can the efficiency of the voluntary workers be measured compared with the professionals?
- Can one define a European standard for volunteers working in probation?,
- Is the voluntary worker a necessary evil to lighten the excessive work load of professional probation officers?

Contrary to France, work or study is an obligation in German Prisons (except for remand prisoners). Per an article in “Konzern Knast” of 8/2007 (D41) “Goods made in prisons” have become real business by which quality furniture, recycled electric motors, toys, machined precision parts, mounting sub-assemblies and others are produced at market price in competition with or for outside companies. These are real companies with balance sheets, investment planning, pay-roll and absenteeism (which can reach 20 %). In the 195 prisons there are some 800 such companies which employ 40.000 people and achieve a turnover of 200 million Euros. Some customers hide the fact that their goods have been produced in prisons; others, on the contrary, stress their social-ethical value and involvement. The detainee-worker has a monthly salary of Euro 250,- of which half is paid immediately, the other half on leaving prison. He benefits from social security, 18 days of paid holidays and a Work Certificate with a neutral heading from a NORMAL company (and can often hide, thus, that he has been in prison).

The obligation to work is theoretical. The fact is that there is not enough work for all prisoners in German jails.

Discussion in the last 5 years in German prison administration has been dominated by the “Neustart case”. The private company, which had run in exclusivity the probation services in Austria for many years, bid and obtained the contract for all state probation work in Baden-Württemberg against a competitive offer by the institutionalized probation officers (Bewährungshelfer) and the local Red Cross. All over Germany, seminars took place in 2003/2005 to analyse the new situation, the competitive offer, the professional (in)competence of the probation volunteers and the possible long-term effects. Examples:

- + the “Association of German Probation Officers” published in Aug. 2003 “Privatisation of the social services within the Judiciary – a step back in future” (D42),
- + “Straffälligenhilfe im Umbruch. Chancen und Risiken der Privatisierungsbemühungen der Justiz”, was a seminar organized by the Diakonie, Nürnberg in 7/2005.
- + VERDI, the public service union, organised in 3/2005 a hearing at Potsdam “Umbruch der staatlichen Gefängnishilfe – radical change in the state assistance for prisoners”
- + A seminar took place in 9/2006 at Lübeck under the theme “Ehrenamtliche Bewährungshilfe – voluntary probation work” where delegates from Schleswig-Holstein (Germany), Austria, Switzerland and the USA presented the working of the Probation services (42A).

Under the heading “When the State capitulates, Probation Services are put up for auction” the “Deutschlandradio” dedicated a whole program to the problem. Extracts:

- 2500 probation officers work in Germany (of which 270 in Baden-Württemberg) for a total of 160.000 individuals on probation,
- 400 people are sentenced every day in Germany; 2/3 of them (100.000 per year) are granted a suspended prison sentence. The average probation period lasts 3 years with regular reports to the judges. Detainees on conditional release are followed by the probation officers too. 70 % of offenders on probation do not recommit crimes.
- The cost for each detainee is Euro 100,- per day compared to Euro 2,- for an offender living on probation. In the beginning of the parole period, the individual must see the probation officer 2 to 4 times per week, later only once every 2 months. On an average, 1 probation officer is responsible for 90 adult or 60 juvenile offenders. These people on probation have huge personal, financial, relational and educational problems with which the officer is confronted and which take up a lot of his time; how could this kind of necessary humanitarian work can be reconciled with the financial constraints for efficiency of a private company?
- In Austria, 30 % of the offenders under probation are followed by volunteers which explains in part Neustart’s competitive bid (Euro 8.000.000), but, so far, only 100 volunteers agreed to co-operate with Neustart in Germany instead of the 400 needed.
- The professional probation officer then questioned the usefulness of “unskilled” volunteers in the highly intricate penal and judiciary system and given the tricks and complex characters of criminals of all kinds.
- The interviewed Minister of Justice insisted that the state could no longer afford a probation service with too much corporatism, immobility, too many privileges and not enough efficiency, as proven by the high rate of re-offending.
- The delegate of the unions then questioned the economical viability of the Neustart bid, as it has promised to re-employ all probation officers, maintaining their status and salary as civil servants. In future, how could less well remunerated, “private” probation staff be more effective? The state most likely thinks that it can squeeze a private company more easily than established, unionized civil servants; but there

are limits! This offer cannot work. The only way out would be for the judges to pronounce fewer suspended prison sentences and reduce, thus, the number of individuals on probation; but the judges will insist on their independence.

- The civil servants' union VERDI requested a legal appraisal of this privatisation. They regret that (for economic reasons) the imposed reorganisation hits a public sector, the financial logic and penal efficiency of which can easily be demonstrated (ratio of cost and re-offending rate between incarceration and probation).

In spite of all the objections, Neustart received, after a trial period, a contract for 10 years. Other Länder will no doubt follow; other European countries too. See "Neustart – Austria". An association called "Team Hannibal" comments on their website regularly on the drawbacks of the Neustart-privatisation in Baden-Württemberg.

The Confederation of the Baden-Württemberg "justiznahe Vereine" (free associations working close to the justice system) (D43) composed of 21 associations with 1232 members, 131 full-time personnel and many volunteers published in 2006 an activity report which shows that their program alone "Schwitzen statt Sitzen" = community work instead of incarceration, saved the State 4 Million Euros (economy of 54.577 days of costly incarceration which is 567 % more than in 2001). The association also demonstrated that their "anti-violence" courses had quadrupled in 5 years. The association offers 390 accommodations to ex-prisoners, debts counselling, psychological advice, a crime prevention program and in future restorative justice and mediation too.

Heinz Cornel wrote in 2002 a long analysis on "Beitrag der Sozialarbeit zur Abwendung der Vollstreckung von Ersatzfreiheitsstrafen durch Vermittlung und Organisation von gemeinnützigen Arbeiten – the value of Community work" (D43A) in which he describes this alternative to imprisonment in other countries and stresses the economy of it in detail. "Vernetzung – networking" is a recurring word which stresses the need for the complementarity of existing services, functions and actions of the state, professional and voluntary organisations thanks to which the delinquent should find the best way out of his problems.

The overwhelming importance of religious associations in prison activities in Germany can be explained not only by tradition and human engagement, but possibly also by the financial support the churches receive from the state. Since 1919 and even more after the Concordat of 1934, all Germans pay "Kirchensteuer" (church tax) of 8 to 9 % on the basis of their income tax (unless a person quits the church officially). Concrete example: a family with 2 children with a yearly income of Euro 35.000, which results in a taxable revenue of Euro 23.384,-, pays Euro 182,88 "church tax" per year. In 2002, the total contribution to the different churches and recognized religious organisations amounted to 8,4 billion Euros (5,05 billion through the church tax, 3,35 billion added by the state). The redistribution of this money depends on the number of fellow-believers per Land (in Saxony 85 % are Protestants, in Bavaria 70 % are Catholics). 1/3 of this "manna" is generally allocated for the social work of the churches, religious education, and the maintenance of buildings; 2/3 is destined for the salaries of the clergy and general administration. It appears that only a small portion of the Church tax goes to their "prison activities". "Church taxes" exist also in Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Spain.

There is an extensive literature on "voluntary prison work" available for German speakers - for example:

- Richard Reindl 1998 - Effektivität/Effizienz und Ethik, Straffälligenhilfe und Kriminalpolitik;

- Wera Barth 2001 - Ehrenamt in der Straffälligenhilfe
2002 - Ehrenamtliche im Berliner Strafvollzug – Motive, Anforderungen, Belastungen, Erfolge.
- Katrin Jost 2002 - Freie und ehrenamtliche Mitarbeit in und nach dem Justizvollzug,
- Cornel/Kawamura/Maelicke, 2003 – „Handbuch der Resozialisierung“ deals in 20 different subjects with the re-integration of delinquents.
- Thomas/Stelly/Kerner 11/2005 – „Forschungsprojekt: Straffälligenhilfe unter Veränderungsdruck – Voluntary Agencies under pressure for change”(D44).
This is a long-term study project by Tübingen University. Many aspects of care for prisoners have developed in recent years in a contradictory environment: less state money available for social work although the reintegration of the delinquent continues to be the prime aim of incarceration, heavier sentences, the beginning of privatisation of prison services, the weak legal position of the voluntary agencies, insufficiently defined targets in an erratically organized offer of public, semi-public, voluntary and private organisations, etc.
The study aims at analysing the present situation of more than 1000 associations with 5 case studies and statistically relevant field research. Big organisations with a high degree of professionalism and network support will be assessed against smaller, local associations with mainly voluntary helpers (a type which is supposed to be on the way out).

Up to 3/2008 two parts of this extensive analysis have been published:

- an 18-page contribution in the “Neue Praxis Edition” in 1/2006 (D45) and
- “Zwischen Rationalität und Rationalisierung – between rationality and rationalisation“ a 15-page follow-on paper in 2007 by the „Landesgruppe Baden-Württemberg in der DVJJ” (D46).

The field inquiry covering all of Germany is still outstanding. It is likely that the complete results will be available in late 2008 on www.ifk.jura.uni-tuebingen.

The detailed nature of this study should be interesting not only to the German voluntary prison associations, but to those of other countries too.

SPAIN

The Spanish prison population has grown from 35.898 in 1/1998 to 67.066 in 1/2008 which is an alarming increase of + 87 %. In spite of overcrowded prisons (rate 135%), a Prison Administration which openly criticises the Judiciary for handing out more and longer prison sentences and the construction of new prisons, the prison population has kept growing even under the Socialist government (Sp1).

Further to a request, the Ministry of the Interior “Subdirección General del Tratamiento y Gestión penitenciaria” replied in great detail in three parts:

- a) The royal decree No. 190/1996 and the law No. 6/1996 concerning the voluntary sector already reflect substantially the essence of the new “108 European Recommendations”.
- b) NGO’s involved in prison life at all levels are active (ES2) in the following fields:
 - professional counselling and job research,
 - remunerated work in prison,
 - accommodation for detainees on occasional, conditional or final leave,
 - legal counselling,
 - dependencies and illnesses (alcohol, drugs, AIDS),
 - mental and physical incapacities,
 - assistance for families and children,
 - help for foreigners,
 - programs for general and professional education, languages, culture, sports and leisure,
 - information, discussion clubs on a great variety of themes,
 - teaching of scripture and general ethics, etc.

In a decree dated 7.2.2007, the “Dirección general de Instituciones Penitenciarias” defines the areas and ways in which the NGOs work with the administration and states that the “Comisión de Seguimiento del voluntariado y ONGs” is the forum in which they meet (Es3).

- c) On 9 pages are detailed over 500 local and national Associations with their regional affiliations (Es4) . On www.ikusbide.net one can find 60 (!) pages of these voluntary organisations under the title “Programas de Intervención por ONG” (Es5) with the names, centre/prison in which they work, whether the programs are annual or biannual, title of the programs, purpose and type of activity. Some of the associations are:
 - **Asociación “Proyecto Hombre”** with 31 regional affiliations and 26 centres, was founded in 1984 under the auspices of the Catholic church. They operate according to the therapeutic community model, have programs of self-help and prevention (“rompicabeza – puzzle”). 1500 professionals and 15.000 patients are involved in several detoxification programs (Es6).
 - **Caritas** with 15 offices - drugs, re-socialisation. Their website contains among others,
 - * a 220-page study on the “Situación de los presos extranjeros en el centro Penitenciario de Topas (Salamanca)” (foreign prisoners in the Topas (Salamanca) prison”, which started in 2002 and finished in

2006. It touches on all aspects of foreigners in Spanish jails and analyses the concrete situation in the Salamanca prison” (Es7),
- * a 100-page enquiry on “Intervención sobre drogas in centros penitenciarios – interventions on drugs in prisons” (Es8),
 - * 2 studies on women prisoners in Andalucía and Catalonia (Es9),
 - * “La capellanía penitenciaria - orientaciones y criterios” (Prison Chaplaincy – orientations and criteria).
- **Cruz Roja** (Red Cross) offers through its 33 regional affiliations a whole range of services for the re-socialisation of former detainees,
 - **FEAPS** founded in 1992, is the confederation of all local and regional organisations of mentally disabled people which comprise today some 808 associations, 17 autonomous federations, 96.000 clients, 3900 centres and services, 19000 professionals and 7000 volunteers. FEAPS has worked in prison since 1999. A 108 page document “PNTCR – Guía de Intervención para personas con discapacidad intelectual afectas por el régimen penal penitenciario” provides ample information. Through their affiliations FEAPS is working with so-called “Manuales de la Buena Practica” in 11 prisons, as for example in Madrid in the prison of Alcalá Meco (Es9a). The principal aim of the FEAPS action in prison is obtaining alternatives for imprisonment, as a normal prison is not equipped for dealing with (and even less curing) the mentally incapacitated.
 - **UNAD** - founded in 1985, this is the umbrella organisation for 250 associations of volunteers working mainly for the prevention of drug abuse,
 - “**Horizontes Abiertos**” (E10) was founded 25 years ago by Padre Garralda and works generally for prisoners, their re-socialisation, children of prisoners, immigrants and disabled detainees . According to their website, there are 580 volunteers, 140 members and 8 communities. 81% of their interventions are financed by public institutions and 16% by the private sector; among them Real Madrid (Es11) and Vodaphone (Strada–Es12),
 - **Alcohólicos Anónimos** work mainly in 5 Madrid prisons,
 - 4 Associations of gypsy men (for example the Asociación Gitana Gao Lacho Drom) are active in several prisons. There are gypsy women’s associations, such “Mujeres Nakera Romi“ or the **Asociación de Mujeres Gitanas Romi**” which works in the prison of Albolote/Granada,
 - **ACOPE** (Asociación de colaboradores con las presas) which works in Madrid and Avila for women (conditional and final, release, accommodation, workshops),
 - **APEX** is the association which cares for the 1200 Spaniards in foreign jails,
 - “**Asociación La Calle**” (Es13) is active mainly in the Madrid V (Soto del Real) prison where it prepares detainees for release by teaching social and professional skills,
 - “**Ambassadors in Sport España**” teaches sport in the Albolote prison.
 - The “**Foundation Real Madrid**” finances soccer and basketball activities in the 6 Madrid prisons. In 2007 a tournament with 800 detainee players took place for the third year running (Es14).
 - “**Ambito Asociació**” works in the prisons of the Provincial Authorities of Valencia where they support groups of drug addicts and foreigners and prepare them for release with follow-up surveillance.
 - “**Amigos dentro y fuera** – friends inside and outside” work in the Madrid II prison only; the volunteers are involved in several programs.
 - “**Asociación Bidesari**”, the Basque association works in Nanclares de Oca and Basauri where they offer social integration courses,

- The “**Confraternidad Carcelaria de España**” (Es15) works with 70 volunteers and teaches production techniques to young people leaving prison.
- “**Solidarios para el Desarrollo**” is a NGO offshoot of the Complutense University which works with 2000 volunteers for the homeless and the mentally handicapped through other Spanish and South American Universities. Together with “Horizontes Abiertos” and the Andalusian association “**Enlace**” with its 60 drug dependence and aids volunteers, they organised in 6/2004 a rock concert tour together with the Atletico Madrid goal keeper Mono Burgos (Es16).
- The Catalan “**Canal.Solidario**” talks about the qualities prison volunteers should have (heart, modesty, perseverance). For those working with drug addicts a solid preparation and experience is needed. It appears that 80 % of the detainees in Andalusia have some form of addiction (Es16A).
- “**Asociación Colectivo Paréntesis**”, Murcia invites volunteers to co-operate in their “Proyecto Apolo” which comprises workshops for music, theatre, cinema, literature, handicraft and general prison visiting activities (Es17) .
- The **Students of Granada University** (Es18) mobilize volunteers around projects in the Albolote prison (computer, radio, cinema, sports, culture),
- “**Asociación DARSE**” (Es19) is Madrid-based; members have been working in prisons since 1999. They formed their own organisation in 2002 and are working now both in and outside prison with very down-to-earth actions,
- “**Girasol Levante**” (Es20) was created in 2002 in Alicante and Valencia and works in drug dependency according to the “Metodología Girasol”. This NGO promotes theatre activities in prison as part of their therapy. Workshops are called “Cuentan en la cárcel” and “el voluntariado en prisiones”. Projects in 4 Spanish cities. They say that the probability that mentally deficient people become drug addicts in prison (or addicted prisoners mentally ill) is between 43 and 50 %.
- The “**Fundición Atenea GID**” is a research institution specialized in the different forms of social exclusion such as poverty, dependencies and prison. It co-operates with the public services and the associations. Atenea was the driving force behind the unification of the Voluntary Prison Associations in the “Consejo Social Penitenciario” in 2007.

The religious associations are very much present. Some of them are:

- “**La Pastoral Penitenciaria**” (Es22). “Los Capellanes de prisión (Prison Chaplains) have been working in Spanish prisons for the last 150 years. Since 1975 they have been part of the “Comisión Episcopal de la Pastoral” under the new name of “la Pastoral Penitenciaria”. They are without doubt the most important prison visiting organisation in Spain. On the occasion of their 2005 annual congress, they published a survey of their presence in Spanish prisons: There were 52 delegations on diocese level, 585 Parish helpers, 148 chaplains, 665 associated institutions, 2793 volunteers of whom 1928 are active in prisons and 865 outside. In 166 accommodation centres, treatment of aids and detoxification are offered. The Pastoral was involved in 738 prison programs and publishes 3 magazines (Puente, C@uce, La Revistilla). In 2007, La Pastoral Penitenciaria wrote a long article about the ethical, social and religious task of their volunteers and the environment in which they work (Es23). It is part of the European ICCPPC (International Commission of Catholic Prisons Chaplains) which had its first meeting (Es24) in 1/2007 at Freising (Germany). The article “Capellandes tras las rejas” (Es25) explains the organisation and aims in detail. “Educación y prisión – consideraciones en torno a la presencia católica en el medio penitenciario español” (Es26) analyses

the legal and political initiatives of the catholic NGOs in a prison environment. Plenty of details going back to 2001.

- Testigos Jehova (**Jehovah's witnesses**) are active in 6 prisons,
- The Pastoral Penitenciara "**Amanecer**" (Es27) works only in the Burgos prison, teaches mainly religious matters, but is involved in sports activities too, prepares detainees for conditional and final release.
- the **Protestant Church** (Iglesia evangélica) works in 24 prisons.
- "**RETO a la esperanza**" with 13 provincial institutions works since 1992 in prisons and through detoxification centres for the reintegration of drug addicts. In a "co-operativa" 70 permanent staff and 180 workers offer second hand goods, furniture removal, used cars and spare parts; they refurbish apartments, do gardening, etc.
- **REMAR** runs 8 regional offices (missionary association run by pastor Miguel Diez). Detoxification, alternatives to imprisonment. They provide also essential services such as "social" canteens for prisons in Africa (Burkina Faso) and Guatemala.
- The "**Encomienda de Acción Penitenciaria**" is an offspring of the known colonial Royal Order (Real Orden de Caballeros de Santa Maria del Puig). They started their prison activity around 1990 (Es28), are part of Caritas and work closely together with the Association "Domus Pacis-Casal de la Pau" situated at Valencia. Apart from workshops and exhibitions, they are involved in prison visiting too.

In addition, there are such resounding names of prison associations as

- "Asociación Iniciativas Solidarias" which works with 8 programs in Valencia,
- "Asociación con un pie fuera" (... with one foot outside) in Madrid,
- ACOGE (make him welcome – the foreigner), in several cities
- Mujeres Progresistas "Victoria Kent", "Pura Tomas", "de Andalucia",
- Asociación Evangélica Benéfico Asistencial Nueva Vida, Santander/El Dueso,
- Basque organisations such as Aldarriketa, Drogak Erangindakoen, Etorkintza,
- Asociación Islámica Masyid an Nour,
- Grupo de Educadores de Calle y Trabajo con Menores (Street workers),
- Hermanas Mercedarias de la Caridad, who are nuns belonging the medieval order of the "Mercedarios",
- Rincón de la Esperanza Cantabra (corner of hope) in the north of Spain, etc.

Going through the information available on internet, the important number and intense activity of **associations working in mental health, aids and detoxification is quite remarkable**. UNAD said on the occasion of their last congress in 9/2007 (ES29) that detainees have 2 to 4 times more psychological problems and severe depressions and that anti-social behaviour is 10 times more frequent than with people outside. In 2/2006, AVACOS (Asociación Valanciana contra el Sida) invited to a congress at Benidorm on "La prisión, una oportunidad de cambio para la salud - prison: an opportunity for changing health conditions) and in 5/2006 the Prison Administration organised the first "Jornadas de Salud mental en el medio penitenciario" (Mental Health days in prison - Es30).

According to the "Portal Solidario – voces sin barreras" (ES31) in 2001, 132 OGNs with 2648 volunteers participated in 480 educational and leisure programs. The demand for correspondence courses had trebled in 3 years (12.000 of a total of 46.000 inmates = 27 %). PECP/UNED offers correspondence courses in which 505 students in 34 prisons participated in 2003. Auxilia, Barcelona organizes not only literacy correspondence courses, but professional education too.

Courses for prisons volunteers are offered frequently on internet and in the press, such as:

- by the University of Murcia. The law faculty has a department for volunteer and social studies which co-operates with the regional associations working with the handicapped, immigrants, homeless, prisoners, etc.(Es32),
- “La Casa encendida”, Madrid which organised a 4-day course for future “voluntarios” in 6/2006 (Es33) ,
- The “Escuela del Voluntariado” (Es34) in Madrid which organised in June 2005 a one-week course on “detainees, social exclusion and prison volunteers”,
- “Acoge” offered in 2/2004 a 4-day course in Malaga,
- The initiation courses for volunteers of the “Pastoral Penitenciaria” last generally for 16 hours; additional courses follow later. There was a 2-day seminar of Prison chaplains and volunteers in Antequera in 2007 with the objective of analysing the (episcopal) document on “prevention and re-socialisation and its applications” (Es34).

The University of Murcia in co-operation with the “Colectivo Parétesis” organised in October 2002 a “Congreso Voluntariado Penitenciario” (Es35). Working groups, presentations, the presence of several prison governors, lawyers, doctors and the active participation of volunteer groups working in a penitentiary environment made it a meaningful event (Es36) .

In March 2006, on the occasion of a “Congreso Penitenciario Internacional” at Barcelona (Es37), the Director of the Spanish prison administration, Señora Mercedes Gallizio, described the critical situation in Spanish prisons with an occupancy rate of 130 and an incarceration rate of 141 (= + 35 % in 6 years). She criticised politicians and judges, because the solution of the problem cannot be more and ever longer prison sentences. She said that 600 associations with a total of 5400 volunteers worked in Spanish prisons in co-operation with 19.000 professionals.

Compared with Northern Europe, few associations seem to be involved in “Restorative Justice and Mediation”. The Pastoral Penitenciaria addressed the problem in 2005 under the theme “Mediación y Reconciliación” (Es38).

“Eco-Lógicos” is an article (Es39) about reinsertion of detainees in the Cordoba prison through ecological projects (nature, gardens, parks). CEPTEL is a pilot project for the introduction of environmental awareness in a prison setting and its effects on the prisoners.

The “Fundición Atenea grupo GID” and the Central Prison Administration invited all ONGs and professional organisations working in and around Spanish prisons to a 2-day meeting in 3/2007 to the “Casa Encendida” in Madrid. The theme was “Jornadas de la Intervención de las ONG en Centros Penitenciarios”. The official subjects were (Es40):

- + Present and future co-operation between the Administration and the NGOs,
- + The role of the NGOs in prisons. Networking.
- + Alternatives to imprisonment; health and addictions, re-socialisation after release from prison, immigration,
- + Making the public aware of the prison situation and re-socialisation.

The most controversial problems and questions remained (Es41):

- How did Spain become the country with the highest incarceration rate in Europe?
- Why do the social prison services co-operate so little with the outside services?
- Why does the Judiciary impose so many prison sentences and why are the judges not more involved in the re-socialization effort?

- Why do complementary NGOs, working in the same prisons, not know each other?
- Why is there no co-ordination and why do most associations work in one prison only (atomización) instead of joining in a complementary network?

Although in recent years community work as an alternative to imprisonment has increased by 400% and suspended sentences with obligatory anti-violence treatment by 225%, only 13% to 18 % of the prisoners live under the different forms of “semi-freedom”, which is half the percentage of neighbouring countries. Although criminality rose only 2 – 4 %, the prison population increased by 20 % in the same period. So far, only 12 prisons practice the “open prison system”; there will be 30 more by 2012.

In 2/2008 the “Consejo Social Penitenciario” was founded. This organisation unites 527 NGOs with their more than 5000 volunteers, 300 state institutions with their ramifications and the Prison Administration . Most of the organisations have been linked to the prison administration since 1979 through the “Comisión de Seguimiento del voluntariado y ONGs”, but in a very hierarchical fashion. There were 11 founding members of the new “Consejo” which deliver most of the programs (700 in total) in 77 prisons: Acope, Caritas, UNAD, Fundación Gizakia, FEAPS, Cruz Roja, Altenea, Fundación Padre Garralda, Pastoral Penitenciaria, Solidarios par el desarrollo). The main aim is, among others, to found a “Obervatorio Penitenciario de la Reinserción” which should determine what works and what does not, the promotion of alternatives to incarceration, co-ordinate present and develop future programs and propose legal improvements (Es42).

As in Germany and Italy, there is a “church tax” (IFPF) of 0,70 % on taxable earnings. It is likely that some religious NGO’s benefit from it for their social work in prisons.

CATALONIA

Since 1984, Catalonia administers independently its 7 prisons with altogether some 8800 inmates. Instead of Spain’s high incarceration rate of 141 per 100.000 inhabitants, Catalonia has a rate of 108 only (La Vanguardia 6/2006 – Cat1).

In a response to an enquiry, the “Serveis Penitentiari” emphasised the effort by the Catalan administration to provide adequate training of all volunteers. The main conclusion of a “Seminar of prison visitors” was that specific training of volunteers who enter prisons, was necessary.

3 stages were deemed important (Cat2):

- the initiation of beginners
- the recycling of active volunteers
- further education for the future.

The main objective of the “Comisión de Formación” was the recycling of all volunteers who are part of the programs approved by the “SSPRiJJ” (Secretaria de Servicios Penitenciarios, Rehabilitación y Justicia Juvenil” during the first training sessions between 2004-2006, which would permit them to improve their knowledge through additional training courses later. The commission considered that it was the prison administration’s duty to train the volunteers adequately, allowing them to fit in with administrative functions and the programs in place. To reach this goal, the Commission drew up a specific course “Intervención en centros penitenciarios desde el voluntariado” which is based on a general teaching plan for volunteers. The course is planned so as to fit in with general volunteer courses which would enable the volunteers to take them at their personal convenience. .

In 18 training sessions between 2004-2006, 221 of the 330 voluntary workers took the recycling course at institutions such as Fundació Pere Tarrés, Federació Catalana de Voluntariat Social, Escola del Voluntariat Evangèlic and Creu roja.

At present there are 513 voluntary prison workers in Catalonia of whom 330 belong to non-confessional associations and 183 to religious organisations. In addition to the “further education plan” the Commission is working on a specific course for volunteers who are required to enter prison only sporadically and for short periods of time (the equivalent to the Italian prison visitors per art. 17).

The list of approved associations entering prisons comprises more than 30 names (Cat3), such as

- Associació Anti-Sida (there are 3 altogether in Lleida, Barcelona, Girona)
- Religious associations such as:
 - . Capellania Catòlica de Tarragona
 - . Del. Diocesana de Pastoral Penit. Bisbat de Vic at Manlú
 - . Sepap del Bisbat de Girona
 - . Pastoral Penitenciària at Lleida and Barcelona
 - . Consell evangèlic de Catalunya (in a congress report of 11/2007 it says that 55 “pastoral agents” worked in 10 penitentiary institutions and that 75 candidates followed prison visitor courses in 2007)
- Various associations such as
 - . Creu Roja a Catalunya, Girona
 - . Dona i Presò, Barcelona
 - . Escola Esportiva, Brafa at Barcelona
 - . Fundació Autònoma Solidària at Bellaterra
 - . Justícia i Pau, Barcelona
 - . Centro de Ayuda et Inserción social, Lleida
 - . Associació Ex Pres “4 camins” at Granollers, etc.

“PRESOS SIN FRONTERAS” was created in 2003 and works essentially in the La Roca del Vallès (Barcelona) prison. It is involved in professional teaching, re-socialisation programs and legal counselling (Es21)

The SEPAP-BARNA (Secretariado Diocesano del Pastoral Penitenciària – Provincia eclesiàstica de Barcelona) explains the religious significance of prison visiting and the strategy of how to work efficiently (Cat4). In a recent congress, the 123 volunteers discussed the relationship with the detainees and their families (Cat5). The person responsible for the mediation service of Sant Adrià del Besòs stressed the necessity for the victim to contribute actively to the re-socialisation of the delinquent through mutual reconciliation. The lack of prison chaplains was also discussed.

An inspection of the Catalan prisons by the Council of Europe’s CPT resulted in 2005 in stating several shortcomings (for example the lack of individual cells). The Catalan Prison Rules will be completed by 2010 (Cat6).

In 1/2005 the right to religious assistance of the detainees was defined in a decree which deals with the role of the prison chaplains, the volunteers and their organisations (Cat7).

In 1/2006 an agreement was concluded between the Spanish Ministry of Health and the Catalan Health Services to launch a campaign of prevention against aids in the Catalan prisons which included both professional and voluntary workers (Cat8).

In 9/2006, the “Observatory of the Penal System and Human Rights” of Barcelona University denounced torture and ill-treatments in Catalan prisons. It says (Cat9) that the Catalan

government (Generalitat) knows what is going on, but does not intervene. The prison guards of the CAPAC-Union which have the majority, are particularly radical and repressive.

PORTUGAL

With its 54 prisons, Portugal seems to be one of the rare European countries in which the prison population went up sharply 10 years ago, only to go down to today's level:

	<u>Prison population</u>	<u>Occupancy rate</u>
1992	9.100	93 %
1998	14.598	146 %
2007	12.803	103 %

It is likely that the investigation by the "European committee for the Prevention of Torture - CPT" in April of 1999 (Po1) and the follow-up action of the Portuguese government reported in July 2001, have something to do with this reversed tendency. The CPT paid its 7th visit to Portugal in 1/2008 (Po2) concentrating on Police stations, high security jails and psychological hospitals (report available on internet).

Although Portugal has an average rate of remand prisoners of only 20,2 %, the Portuguese press and the websites deal frequently with the problem of people being held in prison without trial (possibly in remembrance of the Salazar regime and the famous torture prison at Caxias). Example: the article in 2006 by Antonio Mesquita in the "Do Popolo". (Po3).

Amnesty International protested in 2004 to the Portuguese government, because a detainee, Albino Libanio, had been beaten up in a Lisbon prison by 10 guards in a punitive action because he had apparently not shown enough respect to a young assistant prison guard (Port 4); It appears that there was no subsequent intervention by the superiors and the prison authorities to correct the situation.

Taking into account a disproportionate increase of young and drug-dependant detainees and the new European context, Professor Freitas do Amaral und his Commission proposed in 2004 31 changes on penitentiary matters, such as more community work, the electronic bracelet, drug trafficking, treatment of dependencies and infectious diseases. Many of these measures were already incorporated in laws, but they had not yet been effectively introduced by the Prison Administration. The pending improvements should be in place by 2016 (Po5).

In reply to a request, the Portuguese Prison Administration (Port 6) specified that the activity of prison visitors is defined by decree-law No. 265/79 in article 94 "moral and religious assistance to prisoners". Chaplains of every religion, even those not attached to a particular prison, are entitled to prison access. Voluntary prison visitors and social workers need to be approved by the Ministry of Justice on the recommendation on the Prison Administration. Article No. 30 says: "All visits by outside people which improve the prisoner's health and his chances of social re-insertion or those destined to solve personal, legal or economic matters which cannot be solved by correspondence, by outside people and which cannot wait until the day of release, must be allowed".

Most of the voluntary prison visitors exercise their function out of religious belief and are members of the churches or religious associations. Their activity is covered by the law of religious freedom (No. 16 of June 22nd 2001). The prison administration guarantees the detainee both free access to a religious activity and protection from religious coercion and propaganda. Religious groups wanting to work in prisons must have the Ministry's approval.

Approximately 50 religious associations work presently in Portuguese jails, for example:

- the “Associação São Vicente de Paulo”,
- the “Centre for encounter and reflection” of the Inácio de Loyola university, associação “you have visited me”,
- “group Mateus 25” – Catholic church,
- the evangelical church “Assembleia de Deus”,
- the associação “Testemunhas de Jeova” (Jehova’s witnesses)
- “Dar a mão” (give a hand) is an association which has been working for many years in the Tires women’s prison. Manuela Ivone Cunha has written about this prison. Titles: “The female jail at Tires” and “Ways and by-ways around a women’s prison” (Po7/8),
- the “Fellowship of institutions for aid to prisoners”.

The law 71/98 provides the legal framework for the voluntary sector. The prison administration welcomes offers from the voluntary associations particularly in the field of social and cultural activities.

A manual for voluntary prison workers is in preparation which will outline not only the definition of their multiple activities, but also give guidelines on the formation of prison visitors and the programmes to be proposed by the voluntary associations. This project is being developed in co-operation with the “National Council for the promotions of the voluntary sector”.

ENGLAND AND WALES

For historic reasons, Great Britain is divided into 3 independent prison administrations: England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. As in Spain and Denmark, England worked until 5/2007 under the authority of the Home Office. The prison administration is now administered by the newly founded Ministry of Justice.

After Holland, England has followed most closely the US-style “zero tolerance” policy in the last 15 years (rather stable rate of criminality, increase of the prison population by more than 50 %). Mark Easton of BBC4 presented in 7/2007 the series “The Crime of our Lives” in which he describes the evolution of crime in British society, the reactions of the public and the law making of successive governments in the last 50 years. Result: tough penal laws were vote winners in elections; neither punitive nor more educational measures changed much the steady rise in crime until 1996. “The Guardian” qualified the overcrowded prisons “a love affair of the British judges with imprisonment” (EN1). In spite of Blair’s tough “anti-social behaviour” stance which was meant to act as a deterrent, re-offending rose from 53 % in 1993 to 59 % in 2001 and 65 % within 2 years of release in 2006.

The White Paper of 2002 “Justice for all” was based on a “mild policy of deterrent” with reasonable prison sentences, leaving space for reintegration measures and, thus, to combat re-offending. For the period 2004 – 2008 and after a very controversial national debate in parliament and the newspapers, the aims remained essentially the same, but with 2 priorities: more security for the public, compensation for the victims (EN2). We are far from the principal aims of penal legislation in Scandinavia, Italy, Germany and the “108 Prison Rules” with priority on “normalisation/reintegration of the prisoner into society”.

The website of “HM Prison Service” describes in detail the organisation of English/Welsh prisons (EN3). Thus, every prison has an “Independent Monitoring Board” (previously “Board of Visitors”) composed of independent citizens, but named by the Home Office (now Ministry of Justice). This board has the right to verify all aspects of prison management, hear complaints by prisoners, suggest changes. There are as well the functions of the “Ombudsman” and the “Chief Inspector of Prisons”.

With regard to the activities and organisations involved in prison life (EN4) , “HM Prison Service” divides them into 17 sections (Counselling on detoxification, family and victim support, probation, youth, education etc). The role of the voluntary sector, its task, significance and the associations involved are described in 3 sections:

a) **PRISON CHAPLAINCY** – every prison has a team of chaplains of different faiths, such as (EN5):

- Alpha (courses which introduce people to Christianity),
- Angulimala (support of Buddhist Prison chaplains),
- Prison Fellowship (see “international organisations),
- AQRA (Muslim), Hindu, Sikh, Jewish Prison Chaplaincies,
- Stepping Stones, Salvation Army
- and, of course, the Anglican and Catholic church.

The chaplains recruit their own volunteer helpers. According to the “Chief Inspector’s” report, there are 6500 “religious” volunteers working in 464 organisations

(EN5A). In November 2007, a number of religious associations organised together with the Ministry of Justice, Clinks and the Howard League a “Prisons Week” under the theme “Standing firm” (EN6). Such meetings are a regular occurrence.

- b) **Community Chaplaincy** (EN7). The idea of this movement comes from Canada. It is a partnership of the prison administration, the social services, the Chaplaincy and the Salvation Army together with local authorities. It appears that the volunteers are recruited mainly from faith-based organisations. The aim is the reintegration of ex-prisoners into normal life by starting the process already during incarceration followed by a kind of close follow-up once they have been released. The NAOPV is supportive of this kind of volunteering, but points out that the NAOPV Prison visitors deal with the detainees exclusively during their time in custody, whereas the Community Chaplaincy works with the prisoners mainly after their release.
- c) **Voluntary Prison Visiting** is explained (What can I do?) as “assisting the Prison Service to achieve its statement of purpose by providing a humanitarian contact, which helps to keep the prisoner in touch with the outside world”. 4 organisations are mentioned as examples (EN8):

- the “National Association of Official Prison Visitors – NAOPV” – the English equivalent of the French ANVP.
- POPYRUS – Prevention of suicides for adolescents,
- Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) – organising family visits to the detainees, help for the families, “First night in Custody” Scheme,
- Samaritans – 24-hour telephone service to prevent suicides, visits to detainees,

Subsequent to the creation of NOMS (National Offender Management Service), the principal aim of which is reducing re-offending, Baroness Scotland launched in 12/2005 the “New Guide for Volunteering in Prisons” (EN9). On that occasion, she said that “there are up to 14.000 external volunteers offering services to the prisoners and 300 working in 75 external Visitors’ Centres” (EN10). CLINK (Community Links) says that there are altogether 600 voluntary prison associations in the UK which work with offenders and more than 7000 volunteers.

Per a joint PACT-Home Office publication (EN11) volunteers can work as well in the following organisations: Restorative Justice, Victim/Offender Mediation/, Family Group meeting, Reparation, Victims Support, Probation (Mentoring, Education, Probation Board), Prison Visitors’ Centres, the Youth Justice System (Mentoring, youth offender panel) or in Policing (Independent Custody Visitor, special Constables, neighbourhood watch).

The West Midland Criminal Justice Board (EN12) specifies the same activities in their paper dated 5/2007 “Volunteer to help beat crime”. Also “What can I do?” by “Rethinking Crime and Punishment” (EN12A).

Under “Useful Organisations” in the “The Prisoners’ Information Book” some 40 Associations connected with prison life are mentioned (EN13), such as:

- Action for Prisoners’ Families – a national federation of services supporting prisoners’ families and the setting up of Prison Visitors’ Centres,
- Caring for ex-offenders – organisation which developed out of the “Alpha for Prison” faith-based courses.

- Circles of support and accountability – Voluntary group which works with sex offenders to prevent re-offending.
- Inside Out Trust – Prisoners learn skills within the restorative justice principles. Prison projects with community groups.
- Mothers' Union – Christian organisation which looks after the well-being of Families. 1000 members working in 80 prisons.
- SOVA – local volunteering, mentoring in probation, work in day centres and hostels with ex-prisoners,
- ADFAM NATIONAL - Charity, drug/alcohol abusers helpline and support. Works with courts, police, probation services, parents, visitors' centres,
- Body Positive – HIV information and therapies, free newsletter, helpline, hospital visitors' group,
- Creative and supportive Trust – education and support for women in prison and ex-offenders, prison visiting and after-care of psychiatric and drug problems,
- Female Prisoners Welfare (Hibiscus) – help foreign and British women in 8 prisons,
- From Dependency 2 Work – drug/alcohol addicts go through a training/education program and obtain a job, personal mentoring, active in 12 inner London boroughs,
- Gamblers Anonymous – against compulsive gambling,
- Inquest – Legal advice in case of a death in prison
- MIND – 238 local associations, mental distress and disorder
- Prison Phoenix Trust, Oxford teaches meditation and Yoga,
- Stoneham Housing Association – Largest provider of housing for ex-offenders (men and women).
- AVID – Immigration, foreigners to be returned to their country of origin,
- The HANSLAR Visitors Group – visits immigration detainees,
- Dover Detainee Visitor Group – Anglican, immigration
- New Bridge Foundation – 230 volunteers visit mainly long-term prisoners in 100 prisons who have no more family contacts. Works with the Employment Service and in partnership with Probation. Training in 20 prisons. Prepares detainees for release.
- Prisoners' Families and Friends – advises anyone who has a relative or friend in jail and how to keep in contact with him,
- Prison Link – works mainly for black prisoners in prison, legal advice, pre-release scheme, befriending
- Outside Chance – hard-hitting pre-release programs for young offenders, volunteers visit incarcerated young people, London area,
- Prison Reform Trust – works for better conditions in prisons, alternative sentences and registers complaints of ill-treatment, very active,
- Release – advice for drug users,
- SOFA (serious offenders families Association), support of the offender and the families during trial and until final release,
- Women in Prison – volunteers visit incarcerated women, practical help, this association runs the Holloway Remand Scheme, education, training
- Women's link – Housing, privately run, confidential accommodations,
- YMCA Partnerships in Prison – works with young people in custody and after release, 160 local associations, facilitates resettlement after release.

Under “National Support Agencies” (EN14), 52 organisations on 15 pages are indicated which work inside and outside prisons, such as

- . APEX TRUST – helps former detainees to find work, training
- . Black Prisoner Support – help for coloured people in the Manchester area, employment, education, drugs, alcohol prevention and cure,
- . Business in Prison – prepares detainees for a self-employed career after they leave prison,
- . Howard League for Penal Reform – works for more humanity in the justice system with an impressive up-to-date information service and library.

The “Prison Reform Organisation” publishes a list of public organisations and NGO’s working in and outside prison for the detainees (EN15), such as

- . BLUE DOOR – Discussion on-line about penal problems and re-insertion,
- . “Changing lives through literature” – read and discuss to change your life,
- . “Criminon” – Re-socialisation according to Mr. Hubbard (Scientology),
- . “Fine Cell work” – the detainees learn how to knit and embroider and the organisation sells the finished products outside prison, 37 volunteers worked in 22 prisons with 290 detainees in 2006,
- . “No more prison” is against imprisonment on principle and advocates alternative measures (the liberal MP Mark Houten is part of this movement. “Abolish prisons”)
- . “Out-side-in” – help for homosexual prisoners
- . “Prison! Me? No way” – youth prevention in 2000 schools and 1800 youth clubs which involved more than 4 million people in sensitive areas to save them from criminality, etc, etc.

Miscellaneous Organisations – (there are about 50 on the website of British-Prisons.co.uk – EN16):

- Goldsmiths College Students are trained and act as prison volunteers (EN17),
- CLINKS is an umbrella organisation which maintains a database of voluntary and community-based organisations working with offenders and their families (EN18) within the newly created National Offender Management Service (NOMS). These organisations are covered by Prison Service Order 4190.
- POPS (Partners of Prisoners and Family Support Groups) was founded in 1988 and supports 250,000 family members per year with a staff of 100 and 30 volunteers. It is active mainly in Family Visitor’s Centres and maintains a helpline for families. Advisory capacity to NOMS and other Institutions (EN19). “Impact” is a large-scale project looking into the reasons for discrimination in the employment of black offenders. NOMS recently sponsored for 3 years the “Community Family Link Project” in the Manchester area which is basically the rehabilitation of offenders and their families without relapsing into crime.
- NEPACS (North Eastern Prison After Care Society) is financed by the Diana Memorial Fund for the help of young people with a key family

- member in prison, Prison Visiting Centres,
- PRISONERS' FAMILIES HELPLINE works for more than 200 associations and offers information and guidance about prisons, services and local support groups in the area.
- NACRO (changing lives, reducing crime) works for the prevention of crime which gives work to 60.000 people in 200 projects with the help of 800 volunteers (EN20). Resettlement information before and after release, housing projects, training centres.
- NIACRO (Northern Ireland Care and Resettlement of Offenders) is the central volunteer organisation working in all Northern Ireland prisons.
- PRAXIS works towards more social justice and human rights for the South American community in London. The volunteers of "VAMOS JUNTOS" provide moral support to Spanish speaking prisoners.
- Christopher Morgan's "Shannon Trust" (EN21) has developed the "toe by toe reading plan" which is taught exclusively by volunteers and literate prisoners to fellow inmates in most UK and Irish prisons. 38 % of the UK prisoners are unable to read and further 29 % have only limited reading skills. In a 4 to 6 months' course they learn literacy skills which are essential for integration in society and a decent job. Another UK enquiry on 15 to 17 year old males says that 57 % have serious writing difficulties, 43 % problems with expressing themselves orally and 38 % phonological deficiencies.
- HM Prison Service list 10 more organisations under "Education and Training", such as Action Acton, Prisoner Education Trust, Safe Grounds, etc. EN22)

The "Mentoring and Befriending Foundation" (EN23) is a government-sponsored initiative for more voluntary engagement of the population, including in prisons. The foundation wants to introduce an "Approved Provider Standard", a kind of minimum qualification for the role as a "mentor or social counsellor". Critics see this movement as a more economically motivated initiative to alleviate the state budget for health, old age, mental institutions, prisoners, etc. The Prison Visitors of the NAOPV are in quite a different position as their contact with the prisoner is humanitarian only without any direct impact on rehabilitation or re-offending.

NOMS stands for the newly created "National Offender Management Service" and coordinates the organisations involved in prisoners' after-care which come from the public, private, voluntary, faith and community sector and uses even offenders as volunteers. England/Wales is subdivided in 9 regions around 7 "pathways" or areas of concern. The aim of NOMS is to "protect the public and reduce re-offending significantly by 2010" (EN24). The lavish 40-page consultation document "Volunteers can: Towards a Volunteering Strategy to Reduce Re-Offending" of 5/2007 (EN24A) is probably the most complete action plan proposed in Western Europe in the centre of which is the strongly motivated, free-of charge volunteer who works on all levels to prevent offenders to fall back into delinquency.

Critics predict that this "bureaucratic superstructure" will do little for the reduction of the prison population and re-offending, because it does not deal either with the roots of crime or the purpose of sentencing and incarceration. The introduction of the private sector in probation and the government's dissatisfaction with the prison administration is seen by many as a proof of the erroneous British penal policy for decades.

The “Independent Custody Visiting Association – ICVA” (founded in 1984) is an association of volunteers who visit police stations to verify that the rights of the detainees are respected: essentially the right of immediate assistance by a lawyer, the information of the family that the arrest has taken place and that the police have documented the detention. Police stations are places of much verbal and physical violence in the heat of a detention. The conformity of procedure (a kind of quality assurance activity) with the law is all the more important. The volunteers normally do not get involved in individual cases, such as registering personal complaints, recommending an individual lawyer or conveying messages from the detained person to the family or the employer. The ICVA is working as well in Eastern Europe and Africa (EN25).

PRISON VISITORS CENTRES (EN26) – There are about 160 in England/Wales. About half of them are run by 300 volunteers. They normally help establishing the planning of visits by families and friend, organize their transport (and the allocation of free transport), make the reception hall more friendly, offer food and refreshments and help families to cope with both the administration and their emotions when they meet the detainees.

These centres are strongly recommended by the “Auditor General” for maintaining family ties. The rules of the “Family Visiting Scheme” are clearly established (EN27) and the co-ordinating associations known (example: Prison Advice and Care Trust). On July 25th 2002, a debate took place in the House of Lords (EN28) which reflected well the hopes and realities of such centres: a prisoner in contact with his family is 6 times less likely to re-offend; only 40 % of the prisons had such centres at the time, most families have to travel more than 50 miles to see the prisoner, 45 % of the detainees lose contact with their families during detention, 125.000 children are affected by the imprisonment of a parent. The government counts on the voluntary sector to organise these centres. The associations involved are the Mothers’ Union, the Bourne Trust, POPS, Assisted Prison Visits Unit, etc). The “Prison Advice and Care Trust – PACT” runs the Pentonville Visitor Centre and the play area for visiting children (EN29). Document (En29A) enumerates the visiting conditions (how often, what to do, who can help, transport facilities, reimbursed transport fees, etc).

The “National Association of Official Prison Visitors – NAOPV” is very similar to the French ANVP both in size, functioning and principles (“listening”, “the gift of humanity and friendship”, non-confessional, paying membership, periodic meetings with the prison administration, criteria for the selection of members, etc).

Their brochures “Notes for Guidance of Prison Visitors”, “a Definitive Document on Prison Visiting” and their website (www.naopv.com), together with the “Handbook for Official Prison Visitors” published by the Ministry of Justice (EN30/31/32) are very complete. There are a few differences in how the English NAOPV and the French ANVP operate:

- a) The English prison visitor cannot intervene in favour of the detainee and his family without previous agreement by the administration. In France, this is rather a “grey” area.
- b) Where feasible, the “Official Prison Visitor – OPV” can talk with the prisoner on his “wing” or, less frequently, in his cell, whereas in France, such meeting take place exclusively in the Lawyers’ parlour. However, in some prisons, operational systems or the architecture of the prison force visiting to take place in the “Visits

Room” at the same time as family visits. Usually, provision is made in the Visits room for the “Official Prison Visitors” to meet his/her prisoner. The NAOPV prefers wing-visits for a variety of reasons which are described in their publications. Time for visits varies from one prison to another, but is generally between one and a half and two hours per session.

- c) Limited travelling expenses are reimbursed by the prison administration to the Prison Visitor, whereas in France these expenses may be taken into account only on the occasion of the “Annual Income Tax Declaration”. The NAOPV has no official office and only the General Secretary is remunerated.

The NAOPV has published a one-page note for the recruitment of candidates for prison visiting (EN33) and a most attractive, multicoloured poster which invites prisoners to seek contact with a prison visitor (EN34). The NAOPV has also begun to implement an Information Pack for prisons which includes all documentation relevant to Official prison visiting which is available through the Regional Secretaries’ Co-ordinator.

In “Prison Service Order 4410”, sent out by the Ministry of Justice, the “Official Prison Visiting Scheme” (EN35) defines the roles of the Governors/Directors of Prisons, the Liaison Officer, the Official Prison Visitor and the NAOPV. This POS covers all groups who visit prisons, other than those covered by PSO 4190 (who are under the CLINKS umbrella).

“Official Prison Visitors” are unique in that they are appointed by the Ministry of Justice through the Governor/Director of the prison and together with the “Independent Monitoring Board” are the only voluntary group who work exclusively within the prison walls. OPVs and the members of the Independent Monitoring Board are also the only volunteers who are exempt from signing Service Level Agreements with the prison where they operate.

“Reducing Prisoner Re-offending” (EN36) is a report of 2002 by the Auditor General which tries to evaluate the cost of re-offending and the financial means to fight it. One of the conclusions is for example that, in addition to the general offer of services by the prison administration and the volunteers, the individual needs of every detainee ought to be determined on arrival in prison in order to achieve a more successful re-insertion into life later. Some figures:

- 80 % of the detainees admitted that they had taken drugs the year before incarceration,
- 50 % of the prisons offer intensive detoxification measures which cost from £ 2000 to £ 7000; whereas professional training in the open prison service costs between £ 89,- and £ 1493,- per person,
- 76 % of the detainees had followed in prison elementary school courses and reached level “one” (the equivalent of a child of 11 years),
- Starting in 1999, the government spent an additional £ 155.000.000 over 3 years for the intensification of all measures helpful to reduce re-offending. Nevertheless, the rate of re-offending has increased steadily in the last 10 years.
- 50 % of all ex-detainees found work not later than 1 month after leave,
- The average total cost per legal case is £ 30.000,- and the yearly cost per detainee £ 22.000,-.

“Investing in family ties” (EN37) of 10/2005 has the same financial approach to

recidivism and sees the most efficient means of improvement chiefly through the maintenance of family ties:

- The average total cost per re-offender is £ 110.000,-,
- 45 % of the prisoners lose contact with their family after the first year of incarceration (family visits have regressed by 40 % in 4 years),
- Considering various factors, the study draws the conclusion that keeping family ties intact reduces re-offending by 50% and return to prison by 26%,
- Therefore, the creation and good running of the “Prison Visitors Centres” is all important. 50 % of them are organized by charitable organisations. The average cost per centre (including the negligible expenses for voluntary staff) is £ 40.000 per year,
- A hypothetical calculation shows that, if only 6 re-offenders could be avoided per prison thanks to the more frequent family visits, the cost efficiency on investment would be 1454% (!).

“Rethinking Crime and Punishment” by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation published in 2004, is a 75-page study (EN38) on the English prison situation. A few details:

- the number of women in prison has tripled since 1995. 50 % are mothers, 40 % received treatment for mental health problems before imprisonment,
- the short sentences of up to 6 months has tripled in 10 years,
- the annual cost for a prisoner is £ 37.500 (Euro 55.500) and £ 42.000 for a young offender. Whatever this figure may contain, the comparable cost for probation is £ 3000 and for community service £ 2000. Creating an additional prison place costs £ 100.000 (12.000 new prison places have been created in the last 10 years – partly by the private sector),
- Judges sent 64 % of offenders to prison compared with 43 % in 1990. Average sentence length has gone up because, according to the Lord Chief Justice, more pressure is coming from the public, the media, and the parliament.
- 75 % of the young offenders in prison have not attended school beyond the age of 13 years. 84 % of the 14-16 year-olds re-offend within 2 year of whom 60 % go back to jail. Within the last 5 years the proportion of young people in Prison has increased by 66 % (11.000). 50 % of the young males under 21 had a diagnosable mental disorder, 25 % are fathers, 40 % of the young female prisoners are mothers. 40 % of the young men and 27 % of the young women have been in care during their childhood compared with 2 % of the general population.

“Rethinking crime and punishment” attempts to raise the public debate on criminal and penal problems through conferences, studies and the publication of books.

The 830-page “Prison Handbook 2007” gives all details on the English prison system. The “Prison Reform Trust” together with the Prison Services have published the “Prisoner Information Book for Women and Young Offenders” (En38A) and a separate one for male inmates, “Visiting and keeping in touch” (En38B). All essential information (do’s and don’ts) which inmates ought to know about their new environment, is contained in these booklets.

The 15500 “Samaritans” (EN39) of the Anglican Church (founded around 1950 by Chad Varah) receive 5 Million phone calls per year from people in despair and run a 24 hour telephone service for detainees with the specific aim of preventing suicides. The “listener scheme” or “peer support” is a mutual aid program (care and support to

each other) in place in virtually all prisons in the UK and Ireland (203 contacts). Specific prisoners are selected by staff and trained by the Samaritans to act as a kind of “prisoner/Samaritan” with weekly confidential support meetings to detect suicide-prone inmates and deal with them in time. “Befrienders Worldwide” operates on the same principle in 40 countries.

The Samaritans are “face-to-face” visitors to prisons too. Somewhat as Caritas for the Catholic Church, the Samaritans work through charities wherever the Church of England is active (including the Commonwealth).

What is the efficiency of such an “anti-suicide service”? The European statistics (EN40) indicate the suicide rates per 100.000 prisoners: Scotland 12,0, Northern Ireland 25,3, England 12,3, versus for example Italy 10, Denmark 16,8, France 20,9, Germany 10,1, Netherlands 7,1, Spain 6,5, Sweden 11,8 and Switzerland 15,2. The suicide rate was up in 2007 by 37%. Overcrowding of the prisons is generally blamed, although the responsible minister said that “shared cells help reduce self-harm”.

In an interview on BBC on Jan 7th 2007, Dr Peter Selby, Bishop of Worcester and responsible for prison matters within the Anglican Church, severely criticised the penal policy of the government. According to him, 70 % (!) of all prisoners have one or more recognizable psychological or health problems and should not be incarcerated in general prisons. He said that the high re-offending rate is due to chronic unemployment, inadequate housing, lack of professional training and the disheartening recognition that the re-socialisation of ex-detainees after long prison sentences is very difficult. But the judges incarcerate people without discernment.

2/2007 – According to the then UK Home Secretary, Mr. Reid, the present probation system (which dealt with 162.000 clients in 2005) does not produce the expected results with regard to the improvement of the re-offending rates. Consequently, up to 10 % of the total budget for probation will go in future to the private and voluntary sector, with the aim of reducing the present re-offending rate of over 60 % (53 % according to the Unions) by at least 10 % in 2010. This measure is the consequence of the 0,4 % cases of serious re-offending of the 178.000 convicted people with a suspended sentence and living under probation (the 99,6 % of “successful” probation cases were conveniently forgotten by the tabloid press). There are 5700 life convicts in English prisons which is more than all other Western European countries together. According to the Unions, re-offending of individuals living under probation was 13 % lower compared with those who had been incarcerated.

When England discovered in July 2006 that young and educated British-born people of Pakistani origin were at the origin of the London Underground massacre and also attempted to down 10 aircraft; when Scotland Yard released the information that about 2500 mainly young Muslims were ready to commit terrorist attacks, the politicians and the media had to concede that they knew nothing about the degree of frustration of their Muslim citizens of South-Asian origin. An enquiry published on 29.1.07 among 16 to 24 year old “Asians” (EN41) tells us that

- 10 % believe that faith is the most important thing in their lives,
- 35 % would prefer to send their children to Islamic schools,
- 37 % would prefer to live under the law of the Sharia (but modernized!),
- 7 % admire radical organisations such as Al-Qaida for fighting against the West,
- 70 % would prefer their wives and girl friends to wear the veil,

- 48 % think that British society offers strong cultural and moral values, but 45 % think the contrary,
- 80 % do not agree with the foreign policy of the UK government.
- A large majority says, however, to combat extremism, British society should tackle first the REAL problems: work, education, housing, racial discrimination.

The official police procedure named “stop and search” (EN42) seems to hit mainly coloured people (as it seems to be the case all over Europe). The Home Office has tried to improve race relations (EN43) for many years, but must have ignored certain evident facts related to racism and its repercussions on everyone.

The website “muslimyouth.net” (EN44) organises “Prison Campaigns” every year which reflects the latent racial unease of the young 2nd and 3rd generation Muslims. They present 3 % of the total population in GB, but more than 10 % of the prison inmates. Their public image, the position of the Imams and prison visiting have become even more difficult with the growing fear of Islamic fundamentalism (kindled by the tabloid press).

Per the BBC, in May 2008, 5 Muslims committed suicide in the Whitemore prison. The authorities fear nation-wide riots. The prison officers’ association see as the only solution the “breaking up these Muslim gangs”, but feels helpless in view of the overcrowded prisons, the lack of linguistic skills and understanding the Muslim culture. No mentioning of the fact that civil society could possibly help.

The feedback report on “issues for foreign national prisoners” of the “National Body of Black Prisoners Support Groups” of 1/2005 (EN45) arrives at the conclusion that their work is difficult because of lack of direction by the Government for working with foreign nationals, insufficient translated information, arbitrary detention under the Immigration Act, etc.

In “Frontline”, a 5-page article “on prison reforms” R.K. Raghavan (EN46) comes to the conclusion that deterrence is inadequate to bring down criminal deviance and that reformation seems to be the only rationale for the incarceration. Although this article reflects the British situation, its principles apply probably everywhere.

An “Oxford Higher Education” paper (Sentencing and Punishment) of late 2006 reports about recent developments (EN47):

- The Prison Service had met the 6 % “Key Performance Indicator Target” for the number of escapes, basic skills teaching, resettlement, accommodation on release, number of inmates completing the Offender Behaviour Program, self-inflicted deaths, positive results of mandatory drug testing and overcrowding. However, the Service had achieved only an average of 5,7 % for the completion of sex offender treatment programs, assault and the employment of ethnic minority staff. Cost per prison place £ 28.486,-.
- The Offender Management Bill (OMS) has given more power to prison staff. For the improvement of the Prison and Probation Services, the government encourages “Public Value Partnerships” with the private and voluntary sector. Under-performing Prison and Probation Boards will be more easily challenged in future.
- The Prison Trust presented a report which is highly critical of “using prisons to warehouse the mentally ill”,
- 8000 new prison places (including on ships) will be built “to protect the public and further rebalance the criminal justice system in favour of the law-abiding majority”.

“Donovan’s view” publishes an interview (EN48) with Lord David Ramsbottom of Kensington which sheds a light on the prison situation around 2001 when he was the “Chief inspector of Prisons” and when the prison population was 66.000 instead of 82.000 today. A few extracts:

- Overcrowding was already a problem when the annual capital funding was reduced by the government from £ 300 Million down to £ 90 Million.
- One of his aims at the time was “to allow the weakest prisoner to feel safe, be encouraged to improve himself, maintain family ties and prepare properly for release”,
- He said to the “public who wanted revenge that only 26 out of the 66.000 prisoners would remain incarcerated forever. If one treats the others like animals, they will fall back into criminality when they come out – and most of them will”.
- Spending a “purposeful and active day” for a detainee means “tackling educational, behavioural and health shortcomings, but only 2500 (re-socialisation) places were provided with no clear indication of their usefulness”.
- Mandatory testing for substance abuse of 10 % only of the incoming prisoners seems somehow irrelevant, if 60 % of them were found to be injected with heroin. “All incoming prisoners need to be tested with appropriate procedures to keep prisons drug-free”.
- “Mental health should be brought under the “National Health Service –NHS”. He then repeated the “National Statistics” which indicate that 70 % of the prison population had some form of personality disorder. In addition, he indicated that out of the 2500 dangerous, severely disordered people 700 lived freely in the community and 400 in special hospitals, but 1400 in prisons, a situation for which staff was not adequately trained.
- he then addressed the lack of work opportunities, the limited “association/get together-time” per day and the importance of the Chaplaincies.

Father Patrick Cope, a priest and active for 10 years within the “Young Offender Monitoring Project”, then made basic statements which seem to be common among visitors to prisons everywhere (he visits young people 6 months before release on a one-to-one basis and accompanies them for one year after release): He said:

- That prison is not the right place for youngsters, because it reinforces their anti-authority/anti-society attitude,
- Whereas the Government kept its promise “to get tough on crime”, it failed in what it had promised to do, to “get also tough on the causes of crime”,
- Prison compounds the problems for the young inmates. Therefore, they come out no different, possibly even worse than when they went in,
- To survive in prison, mainly because of bullying, the young people have to become tougher/more aggressive to resist hardened criminals and are often punished for it by the staff. Many young people are introduced to drugs in prison,
- Without the involvement of more volunteers, the community on all levels and better training for the prison officers, he sees little improvement possible in future.

What has really changed in 2008 with regard to the situation in 2001, as stated above?

SCOTLAND –

The Scottish Penal Administration is independent of that of England/Wales, but its organisation is quite similar with “Independent Monitoring boards”, “Prison Visitors Centres” (Assisted Prison Visit Union – APVU – SC1), a “Chief Inspector”, etc.

The involvement of civil society in the Monitoring Boards and their tasks (visit every 2 weeks, listening to complaints regarding health, access to work, bullying, family visiting, proper assistance by the administration, etc) are well described in a “Progress Report” of the “Community Justice Authorities” in 2006 (Sc2). There is a report of 2007 on the “Prison Visiting Committees” and the requirements for reporting (Sc3) which makes interesting reading for those European countries (such as France) which have not yet introduced or are learning how to live with an “independent control body” for the supervision of prisons. There is a detailed description of this function in Sweden, Netherlands, England, Spain, Czech Republic, Croatia and several other European countries.

The “Citizen’s Advice Bureau” publishes (Sc4) a list of useful volunteer organisations, such as

- SACRO’s – (Sc5) main mission is to reduce conflict and offending and make communities safer. It offers “intensive” probation, supported accommodations, restorative justice for adults and youths, tries to influence the government’s policies on sentencing; street mediation, reparation through community service,
- Association Saint Vincent of Paul for a wide range of services,
- Joint Council of Welfare for Immigrants,
- HOPE – was founded in 1989. As 25 % of all prisoners never received family visits, a group of volunteers was set up near a prison; an idea which grew later into the “National Prison Visitors Scheme”. Today a few full-time staff and 130 “Hope” volunteers visit prisoners, help families, look for employment for prison leavers, teach basic skills, try to resettle ex-prisoners, care for imprisoned women, administer the Perth Visitors’ Centre and work in the Dungavel prison for illegal immigrants.
- Families Outside – helps hundredths of families of prisoners. Contact through the Scottish Prisoner’s Families Helpline.

On internet one can find the Report of the “Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland” for 2000 (Sc6) which enumerates active and approved voluntary organisations, such as

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Edinburgh and Lothian Council on Alcohol,
- APEX – a religious association involved in training and employment
- KIDS VIP to promote relationships between children and imprisoned parents
- “International Prison Fellowship”, the American evangelists,
- The Salvation Army which mainly provides accommodation in 11 centres and runs a Prison Visitors’ Centre,
- The Quakers,
- Organisations such as the Howard League for the reform of the legal system,
- the Prison Reform Trust and the Scottish Human Right Centre,

- “Toybox” – volunteers who run play schemes in prison visits rooms,
- The Samaritans with their befriending service and suicide prevention,
- The Scottish Forum on Prisons and families, etc.

The “Womens Royal Voluntary Service – WRVS” organises in Scotland 8 Prison Visitors Centres and offer clothing to leaving detainees. Every prison has its own conditions and instructions for prison visits of the family, such as the one for Edinburgh (Sc7). Voluntary Prison Visitors are appointed by the Home Office on the recommendation of the Prison Governor. The chaplains chose and approve their own helpers.

Members of the Scottish Prison Administration travelled to England, Denmark and Sweden to enquire about “Custody and Training for Female Prisoners”. Document (Sc8).

The “Scottish Office – Inspectorate of Prisons” launched in 1996 a comprehensive comparative enquiry into prison conditions visiting prisons in Canada, Massachusetts, Denmark and Sweden. Afterwards it published a “Thematic Study – The Importance of Visits in Scottish Prisons” (SC9).

The Quakers published a document (Sc9) which explains in detail the role of prison visitors (befrienders). The NAOPV is not active in Scotland.

IRELAND –

Concerning voluntary prison visiting one can find (Ir 1) the following organisations:

- The Samaritans, with their 24-hour telephone service and prison visiting, are present in most prisons,
- The International Prison Fellowship,
- The Catholic association of Saint Vincent de Paul organises several Prison Visitors’ Centres,
- the Guild of St. Philip Neri gives moral support to inmates in 5 prisons and keeps in touch with their families,
- The Quakers organise several Prison Visitors Centres (Cloverhill and Dublin)
- “Alcoholics Anonymous” and “Narcotics Anonymous” are present as in most other European countries,
- The volunteers of the “Bedford Row Project” deal mainly with the families of detainees of the Limerick prison,
- Prisoners’ Families Infoline for general information for detainees and their families,
- “Merchants quay” with post-release activities, work arrangements and legal advice,
- Of course, the Chaplaincy Service of the Catholic Church, is attached to every Irish prison,
- The US, faith-based “Brethren Volunteer Service” works in Ireland too; “Befriending people on death row” invites people to write letters to US prisoners (pen friend).

The “Irish Prison Service” has all available information on its website, including a description of Ireland’s model prison, Mountjoy.

In 2007, the Quakers published a detailed study (motherhood, health, mental health, addiction, minorities etc) on “Irish Women Detainees” (Ir2) with the unsurprising conclusion that they are “young, poor and uneducated”. In 2002, 90 % of them were imprisoned for “poverty crimes” = mainly shop lifting, and 97 % of them were held for less than 12 months. The Irish Prison Rules of 2005 do not contain a specific section on women, as is the case in England. (Ir3). In 2006, the Irish Minister of Justice gave a detailed report to the Prime Minister on the new Dóchas women’s facility (Ir4) in Mountjoy prison.

The independent “Monitoring Boards” publish annual “Visiting Committee Reports”. The Reports of Cork Prison for 2005 and Loughan House of 2006 (Ir5) are good examples.

As contextual information, Ann Costelloe’s article on “Wider perspectives in Adult Education and European Prison Rules” (Ir6) is interesting for 2 reasons:

- She is the President of the “European Prison Education Association – EPEA” which was inspired essentially by the European Rules. The Europe-wide formation of EPEA seems to progress well (see “International organisations”). It could serve as an example for the eventual foundation of a “European Prison visitors’ organisation”
- This document (Conference in 2005) is a quite comprehensive evaluation of educational needs in European prisons.

The last EPEA congress took place in July 2007 in Dublin.

SWITZERLAND

Switzerland has 26 cantons and each of them has its own independent prison administration. However, with regard to the police, penal administration and assistance to the detainees, the cantons were regrouped in 3 so-called “Konkordate” which develop common policies on prison matters, including prison visiting and probation.

Further to a request for information, the Central Prison Administration at Bern launched an enquiry. Here is an extract from their detailed reply (Sw1):

“As per Art.3 and 123 of the Swiss Federal Constitution, the cantons are competent to enforce sentences. Each canton subsequently built its own prisons and created its own penal rules and administration. On the federal level, the Swiss Penal Code defines the guidelines, objectives, sanctions and the types of prison establishments. Through subsidies, the central government contributes financially to the construction of new prisons and their maintenance. The government grants allowances for the running of special educational centres for minors and pilot schemes for young offenders and foreigners. All high security prisons function under the authority of the federal authorities.

Voluntary prisons associations active in Swiss prisons are for example:

Kantonale Strafanstalt Wauwilermoos, Egolzil

Discussion group affiliated to Caritas, Lucerne – 4 volunteers organise meetings every third week during the winter term,

Salvation Army - sporadically, max. 4 times per year or according to demand by the detainees,

Members of the Catholic pastoral group of the Canton Lucerne – according to demand, about 6 times per year.

Anstalten Thorberg, Krauchthal

Salvation Army - according to demand, not regularly

Italian Catholic Mission – usually every week

Prison Fellowship - usually every week

Music, language and computer teachers, sculptors – usually every week or two,

Auxilia - literacy teaching.

Justizvollzugsanstalt Lenzburg

Prison Fellowship Mittelland

Jesus lebt – Charity

Salvation Army – Volunteers working in the probation service of the canton of Lucerne.

Visits of all these associations take place usually every week or two.

Prison de Champ-Dollon Thônex

The 20 prison visitors, often multilingual, who come from different social and cultural backgrounds, are active in this prison. They work under the authority of the protestant and catholic prison chaplains. There are other prison visitors too who belong to associations such as “Carrefour Prison”, “Vivre sans barreaux”, or they come from the local Parish. The rule is to visit the detainee once a week.

Etablissement de Bellechasse, Sugiez

Mainly independent volunteers work in this prison. The approval to visit is valid for 2 years and granted after thorough screening by the federal and regional authorities. The “Cantonal

Probation Authorities” are responsible for assistance, formation and supervision. Visits are customary every 3 weeks; in case of a remand prisoner, every week.

The admission procedure for Swiss prison visitors is standard, but varies slightly according to the canton and the individual prison.

Websites of other Associations are:

- www.bewaehrungshilfe.ch – the probation service
- www.refkirchenbeju.ch – Coordination of the pastoral prison services
- www.vereinneustart.ch – Neustart in Basle, offers prison visiting, help for prisoners, semi-liberty lodgings and communal work.
-
-

General information about the Swiss prison system can be obtained under www.prisons.ch.”

As in Germany, many prison volunteers belong to religious organisations (Sw2) as above and in addition, for example, to

- Partage de l’Evangile en Prison, Sion
- Gefährdetenhilfe, Bern at Oberönz
- Gefährdetenhilfe Chur and Ostschweiz

Other organisations are

- “Carrefour Prison” which is active for prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. 2 psychologists are available for consultation. The association has installed a chalet on the parking place in front of the Champ-Dollon prison where 20 voluntary helpers co-ordinate the visits of the families 6 days a week (Sw5).
- The association “Pollicino” (Tom Thumb) in Ticcino which tries to keep the detainee – child relationship alive,
- “Prélude” – is an association founded in 2006 with aim of taking culture (music, cinema, art) into the 35 Swiss prisons (Sw6).
- Auxilia which has offered general education and language courses to the prisoners since 1984.

Apart from the above Voluntary Prison Associations, most volunteers work within the cantonal “Bewährungshilfe und alternativer Strafvollzug – Probation Offices and alternative penal systems” which operate under the authority of the “Police- and Military Directorate – department for the privation of liberty”, of which there are 10 in Switzerland. The one at Fribourg published a decree (Sw3) which defines the status of prison visitors with its “do’s and the don’t’s”. Officers and volunteers of the “Fondation Vaudoise de Probation” are attached to the prisons of Tuillière, Bellechasse and Bellevue.

The “Probation Service of the Bern Canton” seems to be particularly well organised with its 25 Probation Officers and 215 volunteers who work in 4 branch offices. They care for prisoners during incarceration, after release and during the probation phase (durchgehende Betreuung – continuous care). The service is active in traditional probation, community work (max 720 hours for delinquents with sentences of less than 6 months) and electronic monitoring (for sentences from 1 to 12 months). The “Probation Office” is obliged by law to attract sufficient volunteers and train them adequately. They must follow a 54-hour initial course before working together with one probation officer for ONE detainee. Each probation officer deals with max. 55 cases. 2 prison volunteers of the French ANVP visited this department in 12/2005 and their report (Sw4), published in “prison.eu.org”, is full with praise of what they saw. The Probation office says that “the voluntary helpers (freie Mitarbeiter) have a very personal relationship with the clients (Klientschaft) which the professionals cannot have and which would not really be appropriate for them either” (Sw4A).

Some problems seem to reoccur time and again: in certain prisons, 80% of the detainees are foreigners (average 69%), of which many are Muslims far away from the family and in a predominantly Christian environment which causes a string of every day problems. In addition, there is the confusion of the notion of “pardon” in Islam which is interpreted in different ways by different theologians. Some say that “Allah is free to forgive the repentant sinner”; others have established lists of 7 to 70 “unforgivable sins” which condemn a person forever. Neither professionals nor volunteers are prepared linguistically nor culturally to face such problems; neither in Switzerland nor anywhere else in Europe.

The conditions of remand prisoners is particularly tough, as they are locked up for 22 ½ hours per day and only one visit is allowed per week (Sw 5).

Caritas-Switzerland has sponsored a forum of experts ever since 1977. The theme for 2007 was “Straflust oder Straffrust? – vom Zustand des Schweizer Strafwesens: which could be translated as “punishment out of desire or frustration? – the situation of the Swiss penitentiary system” (Sw6)

Encouraged by the Swiss Confederation of lawyers (DJS), the inmates of the biggest Swiss prison “Poschwies/Regensdorf” have created their own website with blog.

The cultural foundation “Stapferhaus, Lenzburg” organized from March to September 2007 an art exhibition at the Zeughaus, Teufen under the theme “Strafen – to punish” (Sw7) with films and discussions on “Interrogation Techniques”, “women behind bars”, “prohibition of portables for kids”, etc.

In “Le Courier”, Geneva one can find 2 contributions on internet:

- a long report on the Champs-Dollon prison, its overcrowding (there was a revolt on 2.5.06 because there were almost 500 inmates for only 270 places) and other problems. Sandra Udriot of the “Institut d’Etudes Sociales” carried out a study on the frustrations of the prisoners, their need for more contact with the outside world, their children, means for healthy sexuality in “parlours”, prospects of further education, the individualisation of sentences, etc. (2/2005 – Sw8).
- In a remarkable article of 12/2006 by Anne Pitteloud “La Prison pour qui, pour quoi – Prison for whom, for what?” (Sw9), she describes the present prison situation in several European countries following the “tolerance zero” logic. With regard to Switzerland she says that the prevailing idea in the 80s was to “punish without prison”. Although in recent years there were fewer conditional releases and more internments under the pressure of tabloid newspapers such as “Blick” and Mr. Blocher’s nationalist party, Switzerland has reduced its prison population and the rate of imprisonment (75 per 10.000) in the last 10 years. The occupancy rate (87 %) is very low too compared with other countries.

Neustart, the Austrian probation specialists, have been working since 1975 in Basle, but have no exclusivity (Sw10). Before the partial introduction of the electronic bracelet in Austria in 2005, Neustart wrote a very complete report on the subject in Switzerland where the system had been tried in several cantons between 1999 and 2002 and subsequently introduced on canton level (Sw11).

The Confederation of Swiss Social and “social-cultural” workers is “Avenir Social”. “Schweizer Bewährungshilfe” unites all professional probation workers at both the national and cantonal level.

The European CEP will meet at Neuchâtel in 2008 for its annual meeting under the principal theme “What works: sharing experience to improve practice”.

AUSTRIA

The Ministry of Justice (AT1) stated that prison visitors can be individuals approved by prisons or they can belong to religious or non-confessional organisations, and that there is no “national federation of prison visitors”. The description of the Austrian prison administration is detailed in document (AT2).

The Austrian Embassy provided 2 very detailed brochures on the “Penal System in Austria” (AT 3+4). Unfortunately all this literature does not once mention “prison visiting”. The prisoners’ right to request religious support is mentioned and the value of sports and leisure to lower the aggressiveness of the detainee. “Group Counselling”, organised by specialized prison personnel, is particularly recommended and the central role of Neustart in various functions is described.

The “Vollzugsordnung für Justizanstalten –VZO” (AT 5) does not say anything either about volunteers, although the right of religious assistance for all faiths is mentioned in Chapter 7. 480 outside specialized professionals assist the prison staff in several fields. It appears that every prison has its own “Gefangenenfürsorgeverein” (Association of volunteers) whose members are independent or belong to charities. The diocese of Vienna seems to be very active in “Straffälligenhilfe” (help for the detainees), but there are no further details. The following associations could be found

- “Das Trampolin” – 200 members, help to prisoners and prison leavers, legal advice concerning the incarceration,
- “Evangelische Gefängnisfürsorge”, Vienna. Coaching, group discussions, music, contact with the family,
- “Blaues Kreuz”, Vienna, alcohol prevention and cure
- “s’Häferl” – self-help group of ex-prisoners sponsored by the Diakonie, Vienna for the homeless, clothes,
- Verein für Integrationshilfe für Haftentlassene, 22 homes, advice
- „Grüner Kreis“ is an association for the rehabilitation of chronic addicts
- “Gefangenenhausseelsorge”, Vienna visits detainees,
- “Soziale Gerichtshilfe Verein” visits detainees and prepares them for release,
- “Weisser Ring” specialises in victim-support (280 volunteers, 60 sponsors) and has been appointed recently in exclusivity for this activity to the detriment of “Neustart”. Member of the “European Forum for Victim Support”.
- “Gefährdetenhilfe Rheintal”, Lustenau which is part of the Diakonie.
- “Verein für Kredit und Wiedergutmachung Straffälliger“, Bregenz. debt management,
- „Gefangenenfürsorgeverein“, Feldkirch.

“Blaulicht + Graulicht” is an on-line magazine for the 28 Austrian prisons which informs interested people in very direct language about fait-divers, the rights of the prisoners and news of prison life.

NEUSTART (AT6) is a private company which was founded in 1959. The state prison administration has transferred to Neustart the exclusive rights to all probation work and associated activities. In 2007, 611 professional staff and 863 volunteers worked for the company. Volunteers receive per “customer” a lump sum of Euro 58,- + travel expenses. Neustart organises periodically beginner/refresher courses. It appears that 40 % of the offered services are performed by the voluntary members. There is a very complete website with detailed description of their tasks, offers and ways of working (AT7).

Neustart's activity report for 2004 (AT8) says, for example, that:

- 8452 people were followed on probation,
- In 8962 cases in which the judges suggested an out-of-court settlement, Neustart talked to 14992 people involved. The rate of successful settlement was 84 % in the case of minors and 71% for adults,
- Neustart has supervised 2603 people sentenced to community service,
- 624 people were followed by Neustart saving them from having to go to prison,
- 6362 people were helped to find work and accommodation,
- 6159 victims were indemnified and 209 victims of crime were assisted psychologically,
- 27346 people called on the Information Centre (SAFTLADEN) in Salzburg,
- 295 ex prisoners were lodged in Neustart hostels,
- 12413 working hours were carried out by Neustadt "customers" in their own workshops in Vienna and Linz.
- 23 regional offices are in contact with the clients.

In 2004, the total cost for these activities amounted to Euro 33.000.000.

Neustart, with the drive of a private company, works on many levels in a prison environment, including visiting prisoners to prepare their conditional release, organizing professional formation, providing legal assistance (their slogan: nie mehr allein vor Gericht – never again alone before the judge - AT9) and job research for the detainees close to final release. Neustart is active in the prevention of crime too (publicity campaign with a poster "Black sheep, white sheep) – (AT10).

The success of Neustart as a private company ("Equal" calls it an association "without legal status") is probably due to a streamlined administration with a minimum of the bureaucratic red tape which civil servants have to observe, the dynamism of motivated personnel having at its disposal complementary means of help in the same company in contrast to official probation officers with their numerous cases to handle and the limited means they dispose of. Another reason is the extensive use of volunteers who work under the authority of the Neustart professionals. The closer involvement in real cases, the greater freedom of action and more direct responsibility must be motivating. It appears that, for all these reasons, Neustart's probation work is 30 % less expensive than the public sector.

"Bewährungshilfe in Österreich" is a book of 117 pages published in 5/2007 by Viktoria Pölzl which discusses the Austrian innovative approach to probation (Neustart), including the position of the voluntary probation officers.

"Fremde im österreichischen Strafvollzug" 5/2007 by Veronika Hofinger shows the dramatic increase of foreigners in Austrian prisons from 7 % around 1980 to 43 % in 2007. The study addresses the difficulties of re-socialisation, language, deportation etc. Several other interesting studies can be downloaded from the website of the "Institut für Rechts- und Kriminalsoziologie" in Vienna.

"Schritt für Schritt – step by step" is a European Union sponsored Austrian project which tries to elucidate the employability of detainees close to release and the discrimination they suffer. Neustart is the project leader with partners such as ISOP (Innovative social projects), BAN and "Contrapunkt" as "social prison enterprises". The project is described in detail (summary in English) in the EU EQUAL Common Database (AT11). Approx. 1500 ex-prisoners were accompanied in a kind of "intensive follow-up" from prison leave

up to 6 month after including debt settlements, job hunting, therapies, education, professional training etc. The results were published in 2007 in 2 parts:

a) Brita Krucsay conducted a questionnaire action (AT12) with the results of 152 participants. Although they are statistically not representative, because proportionately not enough foreigners and too many women replied, the questions asked and the replies received seem very indicative. Examples:

- How has incarceration changed your family life? 70% of the stable relationships broke down.
- What happened to the children and what was the contact with them during incarceration? Huge difference according to whether mother or father were imprisoned. 58 % had no children.
- What did you miss during incarceration? Naturally sexual relations for men, psychological/social care for women.
- Positive experiences? Non for most of the prison leavers.
- What is important to ex-prisoners when leaving? For men advice on drugs, debt settlement, medical help. For women advice on drugs, further education, psychological/social help.
- Intentions for the long term: normal life, work, accommodation, no more legal problems.

b) The final report (AT13) on the project involved 443 people. Some of the results:

- 64% of them had only basic school education, only 28 % finished their apprenticeships and 75% were without a job at incarceration, of which 1/3 for longer than one year,
- 67 % had considerable debts, 60 % had an addiction, 27 % a serious health and 28 % a marked mental problem,
- 92 % of them had been in trouble with the law before; 68 % were in prison before, 17 % have had disciplinary problems during the incarceration, 68 % had worked in Prison,
- 60 % had gone previously through the Neustart Probation service.
- Contrary to public opinion and taking into account the legal dispositions on detention time, 80 % of the detainees remain in prison up to the last day without any reduction.

Some of the conclusions of this survey were rather evident:

- a) A regular contact between the detainee and the social worker/probation officer must start several months before release and continue the time necessary afterwards,
- b) The prison leavers who maintain a longer contact with the social services re-offend less and less quickly. The average contact maintained with a Neustart probation person was 3 ½ month.
- c) Education courses started in prison, must continue after release and lead to some kind of diploma.

For Austria in general, one can find plenty of information on young delinquents in special institutions, drug dependence and the means of cure for it, the problem of foreigners (due to Austria's exposure to the East), prevention, naturally Neustart and the actions of the Catholic Church in this domain (AT14), but little about prison visiting itself.

NETHERLANDS

In no other European country is the change from an authentically liberal society towards stricter rules more visible than in Holland. Of the 800 “Coffee Shops”, where one could buy soft drugs, 250 only remained in 2006. The rejection of the European Constitution, the murders of the nationalist leader Pim Fortuyn by a lunatic animal rights activist and of the film maker Theo van Gogh by an Islamic fanatic, the departure to the USA and return of Ayaan Hirsi Ali (controversial MP of Somali origin) and the 100 % rise of the prison population in the last 10 years, are just some of the features which have marked the past decade.

Already in 1995, the Dissel-Report (Div 4) talked of

- tightening prison conditions to prevent escape and disorder,
- harsh punishment for prisoners in possession of drugs,
- tougher sentences, more surveillance and fewer means for re-integration measures,
- building of new prisons for 11.000 inmates in 10 years.

The 2006 Report (Ne1) the Dutch Justice Ministry Report within the “European Crime and Employment Briefing” talks of

- a rehabilitation project to fight recidivism undertaken in 6 institutions, which will be introduced across the country in 2007,
- aftercare links in co-operation with 240 municipalities
- the creation of a separate juvenile sentencing institution in 2008,
- the fact that the number of offenders with serious psychological disorders and the misuse of drugs are growing. 50 % of the prison population has an addiction problem, 6 % has some form of psychosis and 10 to 15 % suffer from depression and personality disorders – and prison staff are not trained to cope with such people and problems.

With regard to the “Lelystad Detention Model”, which the Ministry defines as “an investigation of effective rehabilitation for inmates serving short sentences”, the “Guardian newspaper” (Ne2) calls it the “Dutch open Big Brother-style prison”. Thanks to an electronic wristband, the whereabouts of detainees within the prison can be checked at any time. “Emotion recognition” software alerts the guards to violent disputes so that they can intervene. The detainees who are in different places during the day (education, training, visitor, family etc) sleep at night in a 6-bed dormitory which, it appears, favours the reintegration process. A credit system which recompenses good behaviour, grants the inmate all sorts of favours (telephone, extra visits, earlier release on condition, etc). The usual ratio is 15 guards for 150 prisoners which equals a daily cost of Euro 100,- per prisoner. With the new surveillance system only 6 guards are needed which reduces the cost to Euro 70,- per prisoner. The prison administration qualifies this experimental innovation as promising. Other experts would have preferred low-risk offenders to benefit from such a surveillance system, but at home, where they could work, learn, re-adjust and be with the family.

BONJO (Ne3), founded in 1984, is a confederation of more than 70 prison volunteer organisations (Belangen Overleg Niet-Justitiegebonden Organisaties). It provides information on incarceration conditions, the legal rights of the prisoners, gives recommendations for the re-insertion of ex detainees, advises their families and operates a “helpdesk”. Bonjo stresses its independence from the government and penal administration so that it can be truly neutral

between the Justice system and the individual in conflict with the law. Bonjo is the sole representative of its member-associations to the Ministry of Justice, organizes reunions around specific projects and trains new prison visitors. Looking at its publications and website, Bonjo seems to be rather vigilant with regard to miscarriages of justice, questionable prison conditions (example: refusal of access to the prison ships Reno and Bibby Stockholm and the deaths of 11 foreigners in Schiphol prison) and the negligible subsidies the government grants the voluntary associations for their work; and all this against a background of rapidly filling prisons and the demand for additional prison volunteers.

The Bonjo Activity Report 2005 (Ne4) mentioned for example:

- The Prisons administration asks for more volunteers in a variety of areas. The number of voluntary prison workers has increased by 15 % in one year.
- Bonjo wants its member associations to co-operate more among themselves as their activities are largely complementary,
- 8 new associations joined Bonjo in 2005 (defence of the prisoners' interests, teaching, intensive probation, community work, etc),
- Bonjo tried to mediate between several associations active in the defence of detainees' rights (EORG, LGC, BBG) and the Ministry of Justice,
- Bonjo organises meetings of specialized lawyers during which they can exchange experiences and obtain the most recent developments of penitentiary law,
- In 2005, State subsidies were € 1.000.000 to be split among DOOR, Exodus, Moria, Ontmoeting, Humanitas and other Bonjo-members. (This amount increased to 1.5 million Euros in 2007). Bonjo itself received 89.000 Euros with no guarantee of state financial help for the future.
- Objectives for 2006 (Ne5) were: re-integration of the prisoners, denunciation of bad prison conditions, accommodation for prisoners leaving jail, more effective preparation for prison leavers, encourage Muslim organisations to join BONJO.

In 2006/7, BONJO received subsidies from the Oranje Fund (Ne6) for the following projects:

- Euro 29.000 for "Help! Ik sta buiten" (which could be translated as: I have left prison, I need help). This is a sort of "manual" for prison leavers with useful addresses, information and advice,
- Euro 30.000 were granted for the compilation of a guide for female ex-prisoners under the title "Op Weg naar een zonnige Toekomst – heading for a sunny future",
- Over 3 years Euro 75.000 were made available for the project "Huisbewaring Gedetineerden" which means the administration of a house/flat whilst a person is detained. Bonjo launched this project, because it is one of the main preoccupations of prisoners during and after release from jail. The organisation called for interested partners to make this project financially self-supporting within 3 years.
- Some people are lonely not only in prison, but in outside life too. Reducing their loneliness will improve their integration and avert re-offending. Bonjo now offers a "go-between" service between partners who wish to live together or simply to meet. Bonjo calls this service factually a "contact bureau". Truly innovative and far away from traditional voluntary prison activities!

Among the BONJO members are organisations such as:

- HUMANITAS (NE7) - Apart from general assistance to people in need, this organisation seems to be involved a number of prison activities. 591 volunteers helped 1528 people in 2005 and co-operated in 62 projects. Main activities:
 - organisation of family visits,
 - family support of detained people,
 - individual visits and group work,
 - helping women after their release from prison,

Projects for 2006: Creating accommodation for the homeless who live in sometimes dreadful conditions at Schiphol Airport. “Zorgboerderij”, a kind of “health farm” where victims of domestic violence will be cared for. In 2008, Humanitas was active in 12 different places in Holland.

- EXODUS (NE8) was founded in 1997 and in 2003 joined the inter-confessional aid program of the Dutch Protestant and Catholic Churches (ISNA). Thanks to subsidies from the Ministry of Justice, churches, local authorities and private donations, Exodus runs today 18 hostels and accommodation centres (Instellingen) with the help of many volunteers. Some 40.000 people leave prison every year and about 200 of them find accommodation in these hostels which function somehow like the YMCA, with individual rooms, kitchens and evening meals in common and rather strict rules (urine checks for drugs and alcohol). During the day, former detainees follow courses organised by the volunteers, look for work and lodging outside or meet with their children for whom play rooms are installed. Every 13th September (Monumentendag), Exodus has its own “open house day” to which the public is invited, former and present volunteers and ex-detainees who have spent some time in the Exodus Homes to meet the present occupants and to exchange their experiences. It appears that only 25 % of the prisoners who passed through Exodus Homes re-offend. This very positive result is said to be due to the Exodus principle of “living, working, relationships and perspectives for the future” and a “longer-than-usual” follow-up period during which the ex detainees stay in contact with the Homes and their volunteers.

The Bonjo website well reflects the central role this organisation is playing not only in Dutch voluntary prison activities, but generally in social matters and prevention. It covers in 14 sections all the essential information, from the State Prison Services to probation, to clinics for addiction, to help for ex-detainees, the families, legal help, hostels and, of course, prison visiting associations. There are more than 600 entries, 223 organisations of which the more than 70 Bonjo members. Extract:

- “Vrijwillige Bezoekersgroepen” (prison visiting and general help) at Haarlem, Oosterhoek/Grave, Rotterdam, Buiten voor Binnen, De Geniepoort, Utrecht, De Hartelborgt, De Dordtse Poorten, etc. (there are 29 of these local groups)
- „Juridisch Loket“ with its 30 affiliations gives legal advice all over Holland,
- “Nazorggroepen” with 21 affiliations in the 12 provinces works in after care (administrative help, information for detainees and families). They are affiliated to Exodus (formerly ISNA),
- “USG – Restart” is a nation-wide organisation in outplacement, job coaching, professional teaching and reintegration,
- SNWA is an organisations with 11 regional centres for mentally unstable people,
- “Delinkwentie en Samenleving” with 5 affiliations works for the re-integration of ex prisoners,
- “De Open Deur – open door”, Amsterdam, is a religious organisation with 10 affiliations,
- EORG (Ne9), Arnhem was founded in 1992 with the aim of defending the legal rights of prisoners. Their members are active in all sorts of committees and are working with action groups in support of individual cases. Now EORG has extended its services Europ-wide.

..... and there are more local groups such as

- “Bijzonder Jeugdwerk, Brabant” at Deurne who work with young delinquents,

- “Gezin in Balans” in Den Bosch help women with their reintegration into society. They have a project for women with children to find accommodation nationwide for one year.
- “PrisonLaw”, Amsterdam, offer legal advice to Dutch citizens abroad,
- “SAMAH”, Amsterdam, give single, young asylum seekers help to sort themselves out (information, lawyers, administration, work, languages),
- “Spirit”, Amsterdam, works for young delinquents,
- TWCA with 3 affiliations helps detainees to integrate professionally into society,
- YIP, Amsterdam, works for young people in African and South American prisons,
- Christian Prison Ministries (Nederland), Amsterdam, care for (ex) prisoners according to their religious beliefs,
- “Steunpunt Moslim Gedetineerden”: 20 volunteers visit prisoners,
- “Stichting Herstelling” at Muiden provides professional teaching and apprenticeship in repair and restoration shops,
- “When the Eagles learn to fly”, Den Haag, finances music and sports projects for the young together with the “Welzijns Organisatie Centrum – WOC”,
- “Bezoekergroep Vreemdelingengevangenis”, Schiphol-Oost, is a group of volunteers who try to alleviate the problems of the foreigners who arrive at the airport and are then placed in this retention centre,
- “Dress for success” has 5 affiliations. It provides appropriate clothes for women with very low income to be successful when they have to go for job interviews (!),

Other organisations are called “De Brug – the bridge” at Katwijk, “Capability” with 4 affiliations, “Centrum Maliebaan” for detoxification, “Een Nieuwe Start – a new start” at Amsterdam, “Stichting Vrijwillige Hulpverlening aan (ex)gedetineerden – VRIJ” visit detainees, write letters and help with the administration, “Halt Haaglanden”, Den Haag work in youth prevention, “Surant Bezoekergroep” at the Bijlmer prison (Amsterdam) comprises also students and former detainees, etc.

In 2003, the magazine “Diakonie en Parochie” published a very complete document of 18 pages (NE10) by Graaf Woutering on “Gevangenen Bezoeken – prison visiting”. In addition to the above information on Bonjo, Humanitas and Exodus the following seems interesting:

- In 2001, it appears that 120 chaplains and 1100 Volunteers worked in 61 prisons, 24 institutions of juvenile delinquents, 10 psychiatric clinics and 7 prisons specializing in narcotics.
- The Salvation Army (het Leger des Heils) runs 9 training centres in which people with 3 to 6 month sentences are placed as an alternative to incarceration. The Salvation Army works in 6 additional centres in their traditional fields for the homeless and young people with multiple problems,
- In spite of a considerable re-socialisation effort, re-offending was at a rate of 75 % at the time. Holland had the highest rate of juvenile (9,7%) and female detainees (8,7%) in Europe. 60 % of all prisoners were under the age of 35.
- “Verslavingzorg - Verslavingsreclassering” comprises a number of institutions where mainly faith-orientated volunteers work in detoxification. Stichting De Regenboog (Ne11) provides, for example, overnight shelters for homeless heavy drug users with showers, clothes, clean needles, something to eat, activities. The Drugspastoraat, Stichting Horeb, De Hoop and Francasa are other such organisations involved in the daily care for addicts. Jellinek, Amsterdam is a well-known private institution both for in-house and visiting patients with drug and alcohol dependence. Other private institutions/clinics working in this field are Brijder and Bouman.
- “Vincentiusvereniging” is a catholic association very active in prison life,

- STEK (Stichting Tijdelijk Eigen Kamer) is an organisation which provides temporary accommodation,
- Stichting “Tussenfasehuis” offers lodging to mothers with or without children,
- STOEL is a project of prison chaplains in the North of Holland who supply on a farm accommodation, work and treatment on a long-term basis. Strong support from volunteers and private sponsors.
- Foreigners without a chance of being granted asylum were cared for by volunteers at the extraterritorial “Grenshospitium” (which, in fact, was a prison and shut in 2007).

The inter-confessional involvement of churches in prison matters is very strong in Holland, as for example in the diocese of Limburg. Many individual prison visitors come from Parishes situated around the prison establishments.

Holland is probably the country which looks best after its incarcerated nationals abroad, because the Dutch Consulates around the world provide ample information and visit them physically. “Reclassering Nederland” published a 35-page paper on “Prison Volunteers abroad” and how to become one (Ne14).

EPAFRAS, the Christian Foundation (Ne15), says that in January 2007 at least 2550 Dutch nationals were detained in 90 countries. This organisation is sponsored by the Foreign Ministry and co-operates with the International Prison Fellowship and IPCA.

PRISONWORLD is an international association based in Holland which encourages people to write to detainees in foreign jails.

ALTUS (Ne16) is a “global Alliance” of 6 Member Organisations and 2 Associate Organisations on 5 Continents with the aim of “overseeing police stations to improve public safety and justice”. The General Secretariat is located in The Hague; affiliates are in Moscow, New York, Lagos, Santiago de Chile and Chandigarh/India. Altus seems to work on similar principles to the British “Independent Custody Visiting Association – ICVA”. According to their 2006 report, 75 police stations were inspected in 7 European countries. 2000 civilian visitors checked 450 police stations in 23 countries world-wide. All visited police stations are evaluated and a “score” is attributed. The Altus brochure says that “a complaint from a civilian to the police is free advice to do better”.

The Dutch Probation service (Stichting Reclassering Nederland) at Utrecht was completely reorganized in 1995 and operates today in a form of “state-funded”, private sector structure and entirely separate from the prison administration. The aim was cost reduction (Evans: Spotlight on probation in the Netherlands – Ne17) on one side and better re-offending results on the other. The tasks of Probation were redefined at the time. The number of State probation officers was reduced; others were replaced with part-time personnel and volunteers. 3 organisations substituted the former “National Agency”:

- the “Dutch Probation service – Reclassering Netherland” which deals with about 70 % of the customers and receives the bulk of state funding. It operates through 55 local executive units and deals with the supervision of court-ordered probation, orders, community service, employment and training programs, etc.
- The “Salvation Army” deals in 9 centres with homeless people which accounts for about 10 % of the total probation activity. Educational courses.
- The state GGZ Nederland’s probation department specializes in programs for drug addicts in 16 affiliated institutions with more than 60 officers which makes up for 20 % of the probation work.

As in Austria, Germany, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, volunteers are given a large role in probation in the Netherlands too. The Dutch tried to rethink and reorganize the Probation Service more than 10 years ago; a painful task which many countries still have ahead of them.

Holland with its fast growing prison population and traditionally outward-looking, pragmatic society has found many innovative ways of adapting voluntary prison services to the reality of our times. Therefore, should the idea of a “European Association of prison volunteers” go ahead, this country should be among the first to be analysed.

BELGIUM

According to the information (Be 1) received by the Walloon Prison Administration (the one for the Flemish-speaking provinces is separate), the legislation concerning prison chaplains and volunteers dates back to 1965 and defines in 13 paragraphs their rights and obligations (Be2). A decree dated 19.7.2001 was issued for Wallonia stipulating in chapter 5 the role of voluntary prison workers. The “Law Dupond” of 2005 tried to put the Belgian penitentiary law on a European level, but the enactments have still not been published in 2008 .

The following are approved on national level (Be3):

- the protestant and evangelical Council with altogether 65 chaplains,
- the Jewish Consistory
- the Orthodox Church
- the Executive of Belgian Muslims,
- the Catholic Chaplaincy
- the Foundation for the moral support of prisoners (La Fondation pour l’Assistance morale aux Détenus), Brussels which is a non-confessional support organisation offering moral assistance, education, accommodation and work.

Apart from the professionals, voluntary prison visitors are active in organisations such as:

- The “Fédération des Services Laïques d’Aide aux Justiciable - SLAJ” asbl in Brussels and 4 provinces (Hainault, Namur, Liège and Luxemburg). (Be4).
- In each of the 15 “arrondissements judiciaires – judiciary districts”, ASBLs (association sans but lucrative) work within the “Service d’aide aux Détenus” (Be5) under the authority of the “Ministère de la Communauté française”. Among these associations are
 - * “La Touline asbl”, Nivelles which counted in 2006 25 volunteers (Be6),
 - * “Aide et Reclassement asbl” in Huy, help for (ex) detainees, their families, drug addicts, prevention, legal advice,
 - * « APRES asbl », Brussels, professional projects, psychological help for (ex) prisoners,
 - * « Autrement », Brussels which offers groups of parole, help for remand and judged prisoners and their families,
 - * « Résilience asbl », Mons, help for detainees and their families,
 - * « Espace libre », Charleroi (Be7) offers psychological help, advice for non-incarcerated delinquents, alternatives to prison, child-parents relationship,
 - * and the « Services d’Aide aux détenus » in the remaining 9 « arrondissements judiciaires »
- There are other associations, such as
 - . “Service de Réinsertion Sociale asbl” (Be8) which works in 3 prisons of the Brussels region (Forest, St. Gilles, Berkendael) and gives psycho-social help to (remand) prisoners, their children and families. The association provides

general information on imprisonment, administrative and legal help, gives advice in case of debts, finds accommodation and looks for jobs. In a so-called “Atelier d’expression et d’écriture” the association tries to encourage both victims and offenders to write/talk about themselves in order to, hopefully, heal deep-rooted shame and frightening experiences. Meaningful texts are later published in the magazine “Jonctions”.

- . “Office de Réadaptation Sociale asbl”, Brussels offers visits, legal help to prisoners and ex-detainees,
- . “TRANSIT asbl”, Brussels deals with heavy drug users, gives them short-term accommodation, psychological and administrative help
- . REPR – Administration Communale de Schaerbeek”, help for the detainees of Schaerbeek and their families, prison visiting,
- . “Centre d’appui Bruxellois - CAB”, psychological evaluation of sex offenders in view of therapeutic treatments,
- . “Centre Médical ANADEN asbl”, Brussels, psychological help for drug and alcohol addicts, prison visits, help for their families,
- . “Relais Enfants-Parents” is part of the Eurochip federation and works in Brussels and Wallonia with children, families and imprisoned parents to maintain the family relationship,
- . “Service Communal d’Accompagnement pour primo-incarcérés – SCAP” helps in particular the first offenders in Molenbeek to find work and reintegrate society,
- . “Service d’Aide Sociale aux Détenus de l’arrondissement de Dinant asbl” works in the prisons of Dinant and Nemour for prisoners and their families, parole groups, meeting places for imprisoned fathers with their children,
- . Associations involved in making alternatives to prison (Diversion) work in practice mainly for young people are “Arpège Prélude” and “Praxis”, Liège, “Bravvo-Bravvo”, Brussels, “Espace libre” in Charleroi and the “Service de l’aide à la Jeunesse – SAJ”.
- . The “Compagnie de Charité” (Be9) was founded in 1654. It is known as well as “Visiteurs de Prison de Liège”. Their website shows full details, including their articles, but little is said about their present activities.
- . The “Commission Royale des Patronages”, Brussels (Be10), founded in 1894, is involved in giving moral support to prisoners and is active in several prisons in Flanders too. This association works also for the children of prisoners.
- . “Welzijn en Justitie” is an important organisation in Flanders.
- . The “Observatoire International des Prisons – OIP” reports on prison issues as it does in France.

REDA asbl ((Réseau détention et alternatives) is a “pluraliste” forum working in favour of alternatives to imprisonment (Be11), prison reform and “respect for human dignity”. It comprises most of the NGOs, magistrates, Chaplaincies, universities and human rights organisations and co-ordinated the “Réseau pour une réforme globale du régime carcéral” in 2000. Its Flemish equivalent is called « Nework Samenleving en Detentie ».

KUNST KENNT GEEN TRALIES (Arts sans barreaux, Art without bars –Be12) is an NGO which was founded in 2004 with the aim of not only stimulating art activities by inmates and whatever beneficial effect this might have inside prison, but to show their work outside, as a kind of tool for re-integration. In co-operation with active artists, not only conventional art work is encouraged and exhibited, but tattoos and graffiti too. Co-operation with DeRode Antraciet (education in prison).

A rather caustic report by INSERT (Be13) describes Belgian prison conditions and the measures initiated to improve them (or rather the incoherence of such measures). More than 50 % of the Belgian inmates have no professional qualification or work experience and the State does little to improve the situation. After providing general educational courses for years to prisoners, a “Development Partnership” was concluded in 2002 by INSERT with several Ministries, Administrations and NGO’s and the European commission (Equal) which operates today in 17 prisons and 28 training centres of the Walloon region. Detailed progress reports for 2005/2006 are available on Internet.

FAFEP (Fédération des Associations Francophones pour l’éducation permanente en Prison) seems to be remarkably organised according their detailed offer in 17 of the 22 prisons (professional formation, sports, music, Yoga, painting, African percussion, library, magazine, accompanied visits, etc). On 20 pages (Be14) the participating associations of this federation are enumerated (Adeppi, Aide et Reclassement, ASJ, Avanti, Ciep, Funoc etc), with their correspondents and programs per prison.

“International watch on Education in Prison” (Be15) gives an overview of the situation in Belgium. Some details:

- 75 % of the inmates have no school or professional diploma, 40 % are foreigners (50 % including the second generation), 25 % are Arab-speaking, the average age is 32.
- The 5100 prison staff should, according to the intention of the law, participate in the (re)education of the detainees and in educational projects. Unfortunately, this intention cannot be put in practice, because “their educational level is too low and they are little interested in this joint educational effort”.
- A “dossier pédagogique” should be established for every arriving detainee. This is important in case of transfer to another prison or for the evaluation of a conditional release. More papers only?
- The diplomas obtained in prison are “neutral” which means that future employers cannot see that they were obtained whilst the person was serving a sentence. As 39 % of all prisoners are on remand and can be released at any time, the motivation to start a schooling program is not very great. If such courses could be continued outside, the attendance would be more frequent and successful.
- In Flanders in 2003, the intention was to convey to a NGO the non-institutional education (Be16) of detainees (Derode Antriciet is one of these associations). “Words without Walls” is an association of volunteers who teach artistic and cultural subjects at the St. Gilles prison in Brussels where 60 % of the inmates speak neither French nor Flemish.

ADEPPI (Formation permanente pour personnes incarcérées) (Be17) is an organisation which is financed by several Belgian French-speaking institutions and which develops mainly alternative educational, artistic and cultural programs with the sole intention of “personal development by education adapted to a penitentiary environment” and meaningful preparation for life outside. Adeppi which employs 25 people (of whom 20 are full-time) works in 8 prisons, does prevention work in schools and publishes a magazine at the Nivelles prison. In a “Synthèse pédagogique prisons et droits de l’homme” (B9) of 2005, this organisation is very critical of the prison administration which makes, it appears, teaching for outside associations rather difficult. This 12-page report criticizes the insufficient follow-up of detainees, the “individual re-insertion plan” for each prisoner, because this essential

document is treated as an administrative formality and has become rather meaningless for effective re-socialisation.

“Under lock and key: in and after prison” is a dissertation by Ruth Van Rompay in 2004 (Be18) which compares the Belgian and English prison system, their purpose and effectiveness and how society copes with their offenders and ex-offenders. 65 pages of detailed analysis and recommendations.

Eliane Henri de Frahan is a prison visitor at Namur and Ardennes. She belongs to the association “Aide Sociale aux Justiciables” with 50 Volunteers. In her book “Au-delà des barreaux” she talks about her doubts, what she is trying to accomplish, her grudge against prevailing opinions and often cites Canada as the model country for re-socialisation. Her book reflects well the mood of many Voluntary Prison Visitors. (Be19).

Claire Capron who has been a prison visitor for 13 years within the above mentioned “Service de Réinsertion Sociale”, published in 3/2007 “Ce monde hors du monde – this world apart” (Be20) in which she describes the types of people and problems prison visitors everywhere encounter frequently: prison jargon, the notion of time, the difficult choices and despair of some inmates, hate, illiteracy, drug pushing, the longing for freedom, the fear of AIDS, love and loneliness, prison guards, Muslims and their additional problems This is easy and pleasant reading, full of “real prison life” and personal annotations.

Recently Claire Capron sent out to her fellow-prison visitors a questionnaire containing 22 main subjects from the usefulness of prison to conditions of incarceration, sanitary, mental and psychological care, how the prisoners envisage their release, what they think of volunteers, etc. On the basis of at least 80 replies to all these questions, she will publish the results soon. Although statistically not relevant because of the limited sampling, the conclusions will be, no doubt, interesting and controversial.

LUXEMBURG

With an incarceration rate of 175 for 100.000 inhabitants, 42 % remand prisoners and 75 % foreigners, this small and wealthy country holds a sad record. In addition, the incarceration rate has increased by 46 % in 10 years. In view of this disquieting situation, the “Centre d’Action Laïque” is working on a pedagogical project for the population from the age of 12 years upwards (Lux 1). The Catholic Church too has acknowledged the problem and established a detailed study (Lux 2).

In October 2006, the “Association Luxembourgeoise de Visiteurs de Prison – ALVP” was founded officially with the help of the ANVP, Alsace (Lux 3). The Government has published a list of all NGO which benefit from government subsidies (Lux 4) of which Caritas is responsible for the social sector. The ALVP is one of the 17 associations co-operating with Caritas, and which supports the ALVP prison visitors financially and personally.

DENMARK

The Danish penal system seems to be exemplary. Already the South-African “Dissel-Report” (Div4) of 1995 is full of praise for the Danish approach to prison administration and the results it produces. Extracts:

- Police, jurisdiction and the prison administration work under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. Such an accumulation could be questionable in an authoritarian state; in Denmark, a truly free and democratic country, this concentration of complementary public functions adds to its efficiency,
- The system has as priorities the prevention of crime and the re-insertion of the delinquent into society,
- Imprisonment, which is always a last resort, lasts on average 6 months,
- Only 3 % of the offences are violent (53% in the USA, 18 % in France). The most frequent offence is the stealing of bicycles (20 %),
- 3600 prisoners and 5000 individuals on probation are supervised by 4000 prison staff, of whom many are women. They are present not only for security reasons; they have also an educational role with the aim of re-socializing the detainee,
- The prisoners in the “open” system keep their civic rights, can freely communicate with the outside world, can see their families once a week and are allowed to go home every third week end. Even detainees in the “closed” system are granted such visits on a regular basis, because “prison must resemble life outside as much as possible”. The punishment for not returning to prison after a weekend outside does not provoke a police hunt; it entails only the transfer to the “closed” regime without increase of the time in prison (it is no doubt for that reason all Scandinavian countries have high rates of “escape” - Sweden 49, Finland 55, Denmark 64, Norway 34 per 10.000 detainees - compared with the more “security-minded” countries such as France 3,9, Holland 3,5, England 5,7 and Italy 3,2)
- The understanding of the sentence for the offence committed and the acceptance of individual responsibility by the detainee are essential elements for the successful Danish reinsertion policy.
- The rate of incarceration is limited by the availability of places in prison, because the prison staff’s union in their own interest, will not allow overcrowding. Sentenced individuals remain free until the prison administration calls them to start the incarceration; a concept which would give nightmares to the prison administrations in other countries.
- Danish prisoners are obliged by law to work in the maintenance of the prison, in in-house production facilities and/or participate in educational programs, detoxification, anger management, etc. Those who refuse are automatically transferred to a “closed” prison system.
- The detainees vote for their delegates who are in contact with the prison management. The function of an “Independent Monitoring Board” was deemed unnecessary, because the detainees have free access to the media and the parliamentary Ombudsman.
- Remand prisoners are separated from sentenced inmates. The conditions of remand prisoners (max. 1 year) can be quite severe (in 2002 the “European Committee for the Prevention of Torture” required the Danish Government to change the rules, because Denmark had an unusually high suicide rate (16,8) compared with other Nordic countries (Finland 8,7, Sweden 11,8) the reason for which was thought to be too much isolation of remand prisoners.

- All prisoners are followed by a probation officer for 12 months after leaving prison; 2 to 4 months before the end of incarceration, the individuals are placed in “half-way-houses” (semi-freedom) to re-acustom them to normal life.

In 2003, the BBC (Den1) wanted to know why the English prison system apparently worked so ineffectively compared with Denmark. Some comparisons:

	England	Denmark
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- Rate of incarceration (per 100.000 inhabitants)	139	60
- Re-offending rate	55 %	27 %
- Rate of prison occupancy	112	95
- increase of prison population in the last 10 years	+ 55 %	+ 21 %

Some of the reasons for these differences were apparently:

- 50 % of the prison staff in Denmark are women: attitude less aggressive, more intuitive understanding, motherly touch. The prison staff has predominantly a social role and is not responsible only for security,
- Only 15 % of the detainees remain in detention for more than one year; 50% of the inmates stay in prison for less than 3 months,
- The aim of incarceration is “normalisation”, the protection of an individual from himself (drugs) and not punishment,
- Family visits are frequent and without many formalities,
- “Daily life skill” courses, anger management, conflict resolutions, respectful treatment of the detainee and personal discussions with the proportionately numerous probation staff allow a response to the specific needs of the prisoner in addition to the general offer of education and work,
- In normal prisons, there are no bars on the windows and the prison staff does not normally wear “military” uniforms.

Jens Tolstrup, the prison governor of the state prison of Nyborg, gave a presentation in 2002 in South-Africa (Den 2) in which he explained the essence of the “Danish Prison Model” with the main characteristics of “normalisation, openness and responsibility; a humanly dignified and, nevertheless, successful prison system”. A wonderful lesson for those countries in which a combination of frequent and long prison sentences, strict surveillance, generalized boredom, lack of perspective and a repressive prison policy keep producing a permanent climate of aggression in the prisons, and high re-offending rates.

“A Program of Principles for Prison and Probation work in Denmark” (De 3) says clearly what the main purpose of prison and probation work is: reducing criminality. Not much is said about “Prison Visitors”, only that “Visit-friends” and priests (Lutheran Danish State Church) can be made available by prison staff, if the detainee has no family or friends who could visit him. The Danish Red Cross (Rode Kors) has trained volunteers who visit such prisoners. “Guidelines for detainees and remand prisoners” are published by “Kriminalforsorgen” in 17 languages (De4)

The 3 Copenhagen prisons (Københavnsfængsler) explain their organisation and mission on a very comprehensive website (De5). “Skema Ungeprojektet” (De5) specifies the daily “occupation planning” from Jan to March 2007 for young prisoners.

Kriminalforsorgen presents on the website 3 re-education centres for 15-17 old youths (Brøndbyhus, Engelsborg, Lysholmsgård – De 5/6). A study, concluded in 2003 by Kriminalforsorgen on the “Drug situation”, shows not only the usual statistical evidence and evolution, but emphasises the complementarity of professional Public Health Officials with the voluntary aid organisations. The conclusions and actions of his thorough study could apply to most other Western European countries too.

SWEDEN

“Kriminalvarden” (the Swedish prison and probation service) at Norrköping (Sw1) gives on its website detailed information about the aims of imprisonment, the organisation and the detainees. In 2005, there were

- 5500 prisoners in “normal” prisons (cat. B and E) and in the “open” system (cat. F),
- 313 “ in high security prisons,
- 7300 individuals are on probation for usually 3 years,
- 4930 “ on conditional release,
- 1270 “ in detoxification centres,
- 1180 “ doing community service.

As, according to “Kriminalvarden”, the lack of professional qualifications is the principal reason for criminality and re-offending (Sw2), great emphasis is given to general schooling and the professional training of detainees. As alcohol and drugs are main reasons also for offences and crime, the rehabilitation efforts in these domains are considerable. As everywhere in Scandinavia, special treatment of sex offenders and violent individuals is available in courses for anger management and conflict resolutions. “The aim of incarceration and probation is not storing away people, but to achieve change for a better life after serving their sentence”.

Electronic tagging has been in use since 2001. The average age of the male prisoners is 35 and the females 39. In spite of this “liberal” system, over 50 % of the prison population re-offend and over 50 % of them have consumed drugs before their incarceration. 2967 of the 5500 inmates were foreigners from 107 countries. 20 % of the foreigners have deportation orders as part of the sentence.

All the volunteer organisations mentioned hereafter (Sw3) are approved by “Kriminalvarden” and receive state subsidies for their social work:

- Riksförbundet För Frivilliga Samhällsarbetare – non-confessional, National Association of Voluntary Supervisors,
- Sveriges Kristna Rad – religious organisation,
- Sveriges Muslimers Riksförbund (Swedish Muslim Association),
- Kriminellas revansch i samhället (Criminals return to Society) – KRIS is an organisation of more than 5300 ex prisoners and drug addicts which unites 23 associations in 25 Swedish towns. Funds come from the European Equal program and local social sources. Kris members are working in prevention on all level, go into prisons, offer accommodation with the primary aim: keep people away from drugs and re-offending, (Sw3A),
- LP-stiftelsens ideella riksförening – religious organisation, “listening”, moral support, detoxification,
- Forum för frivilligt socialt arbete (Forum for Voluntary Social Work),
- Riksbryggan – help for incarcerated parents,
- Hela människan – religious association with thousands of volunteers in prevention, drugs, alcohol and re-socialisation,
- Röda korset – The Swedish National Red Cross
- Utlandsbryggan – help for Swedish prisoners abroad.

In Sweden, as in other Nordic countries, professional probation offices work frequently together with volunteers (5000 altogether for 13300 people under probation in 2005 !) and foster families accept frequently petty delinquents in their own home and as part of the family. The protestant culture is open to such civic action at relatively small expense for the state.

From the Council of Europe's project on "Foreign Prisoners in European Penitentiary Institutions", the National Report on Sweden by Agneta K. Johnson (Sw4) gives an excellent insight into the Swedish sentencing practice from simple fines to minimum 15 day's incarceration; to life-long prison verdicts; the preconditions for "conditional releases" and the reinforced probation for the young and the re-offender. The 22-page report goes into the policy of Kriminalvarden to achieve their goal which is "treating the detainees with respect, making prison a safer place in order to induce offenders to become law-abiding citizens".

There are details such as that only 30 % of a total of 1 Million crimes are elucidated (for that reason the Police force has been increased by 10 % in the last 3 years), remand prisoners can be held in custody only if a prison sentence of more than one year is to follow and that prisoners are generally released on condition after 2/3 of their sentence has been served. Out of the 58600 sanctions 38% were fines, 26 % imprisonments, 15 % conditional verdicts and (only) 10% had a probation sentence. The daily cost of a probationer/parolee is Euro 16,-, whereas it varies between Euro 200 and 622,- according to the security conditions and kind of treatment the detainees receive. Most prisoners have single room of 6 m2 (!) and they are locked up generally between 8 pm and 8 am. 60 % of them had a documented drug addition on arrival in prison and 46 % of them participated subsequently in drug rehabilitation programs.

In Sweden too, the need for more prison places is apparent, because of more and longer prison sentences for violent, sexual and drug-related crimes. It is interesting that "foreign offenders" include in Sweden second-generation migrants too. This explains why 61 % of all young detainees have a "foreign background" which means that integration is as big a problem as in England, Germany or France and that the prisons are swamped disproportionately with "migrant-type" people. This report has detailed information on the Swedish prison system and, in particular, on the position of the foreign detainees.

SKANSKA, a private company, has already built 7 prisons for the Administration (Sw5). The company has received a so-called "total response" order for an additional prison at Sollentuna, which probably means construction, financing, administration for 25 years.

"The Cognitive Skills Program and Offenders Recidivism in Swedish Probation", (Sw6) by Andreas Svensson/Anne Berman, describes the principles of sentencing practice and the usually following probation time, the evolution of rehabilitation programs since the 60s in different countries and the 6 presently accredited programs of which the "Cognitive Skills program" (method "that works") is the most frequently used in Sweden. It consists basically of a 72-hour course carried out by trained personnel within 3 months with groups of 6 to 8 participants (education, group discussions, role play). A previous report of 2006 covering Sweden and 4 countries, said that crime recidivism was 14 % lower for "Cognitive Skills" participants. The present study states, however, that the CS program seems to have made some difference only in the case of violent offenders, but virtually none when all participants were taken into account. In other words, the CS program does not work in Sweden in the way it is taught at present.

NORWAY –

Katinka Steenstrup, criminologist and adviser to the Norwegian Red Cross, not only describes on 3 pages (NO 1) the main features of prison visiting in Norway, but also analyses the essence of it which is very close to how the French ANVP and the English NAOPV understand it. Extract:

- Since 1952 the Norwegian Red Cross has been active in prison visiting. Today there are 500 volunteers working in 33 prisons. A volunteer must be min. 25 years of age, go through a screening process and follow a basic 12 hour training course. He must attend additional meetings and has access to professionals for guidance. All contacts must cease after the inmate is released from prison. Multilingual prison visitors are of great help as 29 % of all prisoners are foreigners.
- She says that the current prison philosophy is based on a punitive perspective. Whether prison has any rehabilitative potential at all is an issue of controversy. However, there is a large political consensus on the Scandinavian model of imprisonment which is based on humanitarian ethics.
- Being visited by someone who does not represent the penitentiary system, has a very different and positive effect on the prisoner. For him, there is a clear difference between the “unequal relationship” before a professional (lawyer, therapist, guard, social worker, everyone with an authority) on one hand, and the encounter with a volunteer on the other, because the prison visitor’s role is totally different: it is meant to alleviate the prisoner’s loneliness, contribute to the rebuilding his social skills and self-respect, act as a trustworthy friend and maybe adviser. The regular visits of that non-judgemental person from outside are important for a lonely and isolated prisoner in a quite hostile environment.
- As in England, Norwegian volunteers may meet prisoners in their cells. Voluntary prison visitors circulating freely among the prisoners in their confined environment is a visible proof of civil society in their lives. But prison volunteers usually meet their prisoners during family visits and in the presence of other people.
- The prison visitor believes that his friendly relationship with the prisoner can make a difference for people who suffer from the moral stigma of crime, the physical isolation from the normal world of family and friends who often reject and abandon them during incarceration.

Additional activities of the Norwegian Red Cross in prison are detailed in document (No2), in particular the networking for former drug addicts in which 180 volunteers are involved.

The “International Prison Fellowship” is represented in Norway too (NO 3).

In 2003, the “Western Australian Attorney General” undertook a trip through Western Europe. His report on “Reducing re-offending focusing on re-entry to the community”, reflected his astonishment about the liberal prison serving practices in Denmark and Norway where effective imprisonment depends on availability of prison places, that all detainees with no risk to the community benefited from a 18 days per year home leave and that alternatives to imprisonment produced such good results. The rate of imprisonment was at the time around 65 in Scandinavia and 196 in Australia.

FINLAND

According to the “Contextual Report” on the 108 Prison Rules (Div 2), Finland is a good example of how in a national consensus, successive governments of different political colour, the press and the public can change the penitentiary conditions in a lasting way. Whereas Finland had an incarceration rate of 187 before 1960, it fell to 55 in 2000, increased to over 100 in 2006 and lowered to 68 in 2007. Contrary to England, France and Germany, the penitentiary policy has never been a hot electoral item and the media have not dramatized the situation in an unfair and disproportionate way. Key points of that national consensus are (Fin1)

- Penitentiary policy is inseparable from general policy and the economical and social development of a society,
- To heal the consequences of crime, an equitable redistribution of its cost must be sought between the offender, society and the victim.
- Although imprisonment should not be eliminated as a means of deterrent, there are more subtle and efficient ways of combating criminality.

Not everything is rosy in Finland. In 2000 the CPT advised strongly against locking up prisoners up to 23 hours without occupation, whatever the circumstances.

In Finland, the “prison sanctions agency” is called “Rikosseuraamusvirasto” and the Prison Services “Vankeinhoitolaitos”. In their “goals, values and principles” (Fin2), they indicate as their main aim the protection of the population and only then the reduction of re-offending.

Apart from the Lutheran State Church, chaplains and volunteers of the Orthodox, Pentecostal and Adventist Churches are present in Finnish prisons as well as the Salvation Army. The Catholic Church and a Muslim organisation deal mainly with foreigners (Fin3)

100 “Official Prison Visitors” of the Finnish Red Cross visit inmates and give them moral support (Fin4).

There is also a Christian anti-alcohol Organisation called “Siniauhaliitto – Blue Ribbon”. Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous are present too.

“Rikosseuraamusvirasto” (Fin 5) has carried out a study on 100.000 convictions involving 30.000 prisoners between 1993 and 2001. Some results are:

- 59 % returned to prison within 5 years,
- 85/95 % of the under 18 re-offended at least once during that time,
- men re-offend more often (59 %) than women (45 %),
- only 18 % of those incarcerated for homicide and sexual offences committed another offence (including a simple fine),
- 35 % of the first-time prisoners re-offended, but only 10 % of them ended up in Prison,
- Recidivism increased by 1 % annually.

The 2006 Prison Reform (Fin 6) resulted in more centralisation of the 22 prisons and a reduction of the prison population by more than 10%. 14.000 “clients” served a community sentence.

The Criminal Sanctions Agency is not only part of the CEP, but of the IRCE (International Roundtable for Correctional Excellence) too. The problem of mentally ill prisoners was discussed in their last meeting in 11/2007 (Fin7).