

Editorial

This final edition of our new online newsletter for 2013 has been possible due to the wonderful efforts of members of the EFRJ. We are delighted with the contents and thus want to begin by acknowledging and thanking the authors for taking the time to write contributions for us so that something could be sent out to our members.

I would also encourage you, the reader, to email me with any thoughts or responses that you might have to the articles that have been written in this edition as we would like to develop a new feature which highlights your reactions or feedback on other members' work. Furthermore, any ideas that you may have about the structure or content of the newsletter, any offers to contribute to it in the form of written articles and information about events would be very welcomed. We really strive to achieve greater involvement of our readership with the editorial board and other readers.

Our first contribution is focused on discussing policy developments in restorative justice. This has been written for us by Davy Dhondt and his colleagues who report on the findings from their project which sought to implement peace-making circles in Belgium, Germany and Hungary. This is quite a step outside of the comfort zone of many European countries that have become familiar and comfortable with using victim-offender mediation as their principle form of restorative practice. The authors not only outline how and why such an experiment of this kind was devised, but also the principles that underpin such practice and the process that circle meetings follow. The article highlights the benefits of such an approach but is also very honest about the limitations of such practice in Europe. I have no doubt that you, the reader, will find this contribution stimulating and interesting to read. Please do let us know your thoughts!

Our second contribution is from Judge de Vicente who outlines her initial reservations with the use of mediation in criminal matters. This largely stems from not having first-hand experience with such a process as well as the usual challenges that lie in trying to implement restorative practice within a system based on rule of law. Despite these concerns, Judge de Vicente argues passionately for the perceived benefits that can come from such a process for all stakeholders as well as the system. My sincere thanks go to Cristina for providing such an interesting contribution.

This edition also contains a few new features. The first is an article from Michael Kilchling, Chair of the EFRJ Board, who shares his reflections on EFRJs achievements from this year and plans for future projects. The second feature is on a reflection of two of the EFRJ's Board members who attended the CEP World Congress on Probation in London earlier this year. The authors highlight the place of restorative justice within probation settings and suggest that there is perhaps some overlap in the issues that both restorative and desistance scholars are grappling with. Further detail is given on the members of the Forum who contributed to the Congress. Thank you both for taking the time to reflect on your attendance at this event, I hope it will encourage other readers to do the same. The final feature draws attention to a professional journal published by *Servicebüro für Täter-Opfer-Ausgleich und Konfliktschlichtung* in Cologne, Germany. I hope our German members will find the publication stimulating.

I hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to receiving any thoughts, advice or contributions over the next coming months.

With very best wishes,

Dr Kerry Clamp

Chair of the Editorial Board

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Implementing peacemaking circles in Europe: a European research project

Peacemaking circles (further referred to as PMC) are a way of dealing with conflict. At their core, they are an inclusive and non-hierarchical approach to conflict resolution rooted in the tradition of First Nation people of Canada. In recent years, PMC have also been used as a way of dealing with crime in common law countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States, (often referred to as sentencing circles in these contexts). Our project is the first international experiment to use and implement circles in three European countries: Belgium, Germany and Hungary.

In our view, PMC have the *potential* to fulfil the aims of restorative justice even more effectively than other RJ approaches. Therefore we set out to conduct a research study¹ to develop a model which fits the conditions of the European legal and institutional framework, and to explore its possible implementation in criminal justice.

Peacemaking circles: more than a method

According to Bazemore and Umbreit (2001), circles are a flexible tool that can be adapted to the needs of the local community. Thus, there is not one clear model that would apply to all methods that could fit under the term ‘peacemaking circles’. Moreover, circles are also more than just a tool. The essence of circles does not lie in its methodological aspects, such as sitting in a circle or using a talking piece (see below), but lies in the reasoning behind their use. As such, although the uses of circles may differ somewhat depending on the community in which they are implemented, there are some common elements that can be found in all circles; here, we will focus on two key aspects: inclusivity and equality.²

Inclusivity

One of the basic ideas behind circles is that you cannot come to a good solution for a conflict, including crime, if you do not include everyone who is responsible for and/or affected by that conflict. Circles try not to individualise the conflict by considering the context and setting of the conflict. In cases of crime this means that not only is the offender expected to take responsibility for his actions, but action is also expected on the part of the community — those both of the offender and of the victim alongside that of the broader community. The questions asked are: what did the community do (or not) to let such a crime happen and how can the community contribute to the reparation of the harm?

These community aspects set circles apart from other

restorative methods, such as victim-offender mediation or conferencing, which both have a more individualising approach to crime. Consequently, ‘circles invite not a few but everyone to participate’ (Pranis et al., 2003, 17).

Furthermore, inclusivity also refers to the content of the discussion. A conflict brings imbalance to our lives; to restore the balance a holistic perspective is needed that looks at the conflict as one aspect among others of the people concerned and their lives. Phil and Harold Gatensby (personal communication, October 2011), two experienced First Nation circle keepers,³ stated that in Western society too much attention goes on the mental and physical aspects of conflicts. However, to create more balance, more attention is needed to their emotional and even spiritual aspects — which are fundamentally part of PMC, more so than of other restorative methods.

Equality

Another important aspect closely related to inclusivity is that in circles all participants are equal. Everyone participates in the circle dialogue as human beings; titles and professional positions are ‘left at the door’, as it were. This means that no one has more of a right to speak or more decision power in the circle than others, including the circle keepers or judicial actors if present. Though this may be an aspiration of many restorative methods, this is secured in the circle meetings by the talking piece (see further) and consensus-based decision-making. As a result, this adds to their inclusivity as well.

Overview of the research project

In each of the three member countries (Belgium, Germany and Hungary) a research institution was involved (KU Leuven, University of Tübingen and Foresee Research Group/National Institute of Criminology respectively) who made a partnership with a medi-

¹This research project took place during the period of September 1st, 2011 to August 31st, 2013 and was made possible thanks to the financial support of the European commission.

²Further in this article we will additionally focus on two common methodological aspects of peacemaking circles: the talking piece and role of the circle keeper.

³The persons facilitating the circle meetings are called facilitators or circle keepers.

ation service provider (Suggnomè vzw, Handschlag and the Probation Service respectively) that could conduct PMC's.

The goal of this research was to experiment with circles in the three countries. For doing this, a theoretical methodological model for conducting PMC was drawn up, based on the pertinent literature and training given by the Canadian brothers Phil and Harold Gatenby as well as through interviews with experts in each country. During the course of the project this was further refined and adapted to the specific needs and conditions of the three European countries. This developed; more refined model consists of two main parts: the selection/preparation of cases and the facilitation of circle meetings.

Selecting and preparing circles

No criteria have been established yet for distinguishing which types of crimes are eligible for PMC. In countries where sentencing circles are used, the cases handled vary from alcohol abuse to domestic violence and even sexual abuse cases (Johnson, 2010; Lilles, 2001; Rieger, 2001). Essentially speaking, any case suitable for VOM is also suitable for PMC and there are no fundamental impediments against it. However, in accordance with our project goal of providing guidelines for circle keepers we started off by outlining basic case selection criteria for finding cases deemed *most* suitable for circles. The resulting list of criteria can be summarized as follows: The conflict affected multiple victims and/or offenders, or happened within or between groups, or involved people who were not 'officially' or 'judicially' considered an offender or victim, or the people affected seem emotionally extremely attached to the case.

For preparation, we deemed the following steps crucial for a successful circle meeting: (1) examining if the case is suited to a circle process, (2) informing every participant of the values, goals and basic ground rules of the circle process and (3) giving the conflict parties personal time and space to 'vent' and prepare for the actual circle meeting.

The circle meeting

The circle meeting is the tip of the iceberg of PMC; it is the most visible and apparently the most important aspect of the whole. However, it is built upon a set of values and ground rules that resonate from the preparation phase into the circle meeting and its outcomes. Pranis et al. (2003, 33–47) refer to this as the inner framework of PMC which consists of the core values of love, respect, honesty, humility, sharing, courage, inclusivity, empathy, trust and forgiveness.

Our delineated model the circle meeting consists of four stages:

1. Meeting and introduction

2. Building trust
3. Identifying issues and
4. Developing an action plan.

Our developed model places a high importance on starting the circle through connecting as human beings by not referring to victim and/or offender roles or going into detail about the conflict in the first two stages. As such, all circle participants have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other in a safe setting. By paying attention to the act of speaking and listening itself before looking at the conflict, the space is created to talk about this conflict in a more genuine, respectful and constructive way.

Furthermore, the action plan is not pre-set. In this last stage, the goal is that all circle participants try to find a way of dealing with the conflict and overcoming it, which may include how to prevent similar conflicts in the future. As mentioned before, all circle participants (and not only the offender) can take the initiative themselves regarding ideas or actions they may want to carry out or support in order to change the circumstances leading up to the conflict or those created by the conflict.

In the circle meeting itself, the inner framework becomes visible as its translation into roles and rules, namely the 'outer' framework; this consists of five main elements (Pranis et al., 2003, 81–125):

1. The use of ceremonies
2. The setting of ground rules
3. The role of the circle keeper
4. The use of a talking piece and
5. Consensus-based decision making.

It would take us too far to go into detail about each element listed here. For the purpose of this article, two elements are selected due to their relevance for our developed model, which also help in differentiating PMC from other restorative dialogue methods: the talking piece and the role of the keeper.

Firstly, the talking piece is an object that is used in each circle meeting. It is passed through the circle clockwise from person to person. The specific use of the talking piece is that only the person holding it may speak. All the other participants — including the keepers — have to listen and wait until the talking piece reaches them before it is their turn to say something. Besides other advantages of using a talking piece, foremost it invites *all* participants to speak and obliges all participants to listen. As such, it prevents only the verbally strong getting a chance to speak and others listen while waiting for a moment of silence to interrupt.

Secondly, the role of the keeper is specific to PMC and differs from the role of the mediator or facilitator in a conference or VOM. The circle keeper's primary role

is the preparation of the circle meeting. Once the circle has started, he shares the responsibility for the course of the dialogue with all circle participants. As such, the keeper becomes one of the circle participants and consequently has to follow the same rules. Moreover, the keeper can share personal stories and questions with the circle, though they are attentive of remaining ‘all-partial’.

Translation into practice

During the ensuing phase of the research we conducted circles with the aim of holding ten to fifteen circle meetings in each country — in (mostly) criminal cases. The keepers used the above described model, although reasonable alterations were allowed. Within the action research framework each circle was observed by the researchers and reflected upon afterwards in debriefings between the keepers and the researchers. Adaptations and refinements of the circle methodology were made as an outcome of these reflections from different perspectives.

Furthermore, we asked all circle participants to fill out questionnaires before and after the circle. We also did in-depth interviews with selected circle participants a couple of months after the circle meeting to see how they looked back at the experience and if the circle meeting had any lingering effects.

All this data (observations, keepers’ reflections, questionnaires and interviews) was combined in an effort to further answer our main question: can PMC be implemented in Europe, and if so, how?

Additional findings We will conclude this article by giving a concise overview of selected results that can be drawn from this research project.⁴ In total, approximately 30 circles were held in the three participating countries. This alone made it clear that it is possible to hold PMC in a European context. The enthusiasm of the circle keepers about the effectiveness of circles only strengthens this statement, as they all agreed that circles create added value on many levels. Moreover, the questionnaires also reflected that at least two-thirds of the circle participants were pretty satisfied to very satisfied with the PMC.

Although it became clear that community involvement adds great value to the circles, identifying, reaching and involving community is not an easy endeavour. On the one hand, the conflict parties seem to have some resistance to sharing their stories, which often include very personal pain, grief and concerns, with others than their own community of care (family members, friends, etc.). On the other hand, it has proven to be difficult sometimes to find community members who are willing to participate. It was also a question to what extent is it the keepers’ or the parties’ — or a sort of ‘peacemaking circle committees’ — task to involve the

community and how to reach out to them. The group who was the most difficult to include was the geographical community — people living close to the offender, the victim or the place of the crime. Their attitude could be different, dependent on how they are invited and by whom.

Macro-community members, which we defined as the persons who were affected indirectly by the cumulative effects of crime (see also McCold, 2004), and members of the community of care were included with relative ease. In some cases it also happened that we could not identify the community behind the conflict but there were several people affected by the crime and the PMC itself created a community.

When community members do participate, we have ascertained that their presence has a significant added value to the circle meeting, as they bring in a perspective that goes beyond the conflict and helps the conflict parties to see the other point of view. When asking the circle participants afterwards, *both* victim and offender indicate that they received a lot of support from these community members, e.g. by being offered help, by the expression of empathy, etc. Especially offenders stated that they found the open and non-condemning attitude of the community members helpful and even restorative for them. This finding validates the notion that PMC do not individualise crime and focus more on all circle participants as equal human beings.

As a last point, we want to share some findings on the methodological level. The talking piece was seen by almost all circle keepers as a tremendous added value. The same was true for circle participants, although a few of them criticised its use somewhat. Considering that it requires a lot of patience with everyone and teaches listening, this does not seem surprising.

Conclusion

This research project not only demonstrated that it is possible to implement PMC in a European context but, more importantly, it provided insights into their added value and confirmed that circles live up to their promise. As a pilot study, it was the very nature of this research to plan, observe, evaluate and experiment with different ways of implementing and conducting circles accompanied by an elaborate dialogue process at the national and international level. This produced a wealth of data regarding the nuts and bolts of a ‘best practice’ model for circles that can hopefully help paving the way for others taking similar steps in this direction.

It also raised a number of important questions: who is best suited to select and invite participants to the circle meeting, how can community be involved even after the circle meeting and can PMC really fulfil their promise of ‘building community’?

⁴The more in-depth results and conclusions of this research can be found in the research report of this project, which will be made available in the fall of 2013.

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Mediation and the law

My interest in mediation started in 2007 when I took part in the creation of the penal mediation service in Baracaldo (a big city near Bilbao in the Basque Country) where I work as a judge. Mediation in criminal matters had started to develop in Spain on a voluntarily basis some years before being promoted by the General Council of the Judiciary with the support of some local institutions.

To be honest, I must recognize that at that time the subject of mediation did not make me feel good. It was a combination of the fact that it was not regulated by law and the fact that the parties received the power to discuss and, to a certain extent, ‘arrange’ the matter under discussion. These two elements, particularly in a system like the one that we have in Spain, where the rule of law is strongly rooted in all the institutions prevented me from having sympathy for the concept.

However, when I saw it in practice some of my initial points of view changed. I quickly realized the effectiveness of these particular arrangements: in general, parties do not like complexity; they simply want the harm done to them to be recognized and to be repaired in some way. They do not want to waste time; they want to find quick solutions and to forget about it. Only a few people wanted to go to trial. As these arrangements only took two to three months to be implemented, the cost effectiveness of the model was another ingredient to take into account especially in a process that can take several years to deal with an issue.

So, some of the things that I was initially concerned about was no longer so serious. It was definitely better that parties could have the space to discuss the incident

so that they could resolve the matter in a manner that was suitable for them. This, despite the fact, that it implied in some ways a loss of control of the process by the judge. It became clear to me that a loss of control does not necessarily mean loss of power, provided that all the arrangements in the Spanish system involve a sentence and a punishment.

Sadly, the lack of law remains unsolved. For this reason, I want to stress the importance of the law. Last year, I had the opportunity of studying all the mediation systems in Europe, and I concluded that the seriousness with which a country takes mediation can be measured by the legislation passed on mediation. In other words, a law on mediation speaks about the importance conceded to mediation in each country. Of course I am talking of laws accompanied by all measures required to implement them.

It is certainly difficult to have access to all the legislation in Europe. By access to legislation I mean access to the full text of the law *in English*. There are lots of studies and publications about several questions that concern the mediators but none or almost none about the judicial issues around mediation. This may explain the lack of studies from a judicial point of view.

Legal certainty is an essential ingredient of justice. Citizens must know beforehand under which conditions and circumstances mediation is a possibility and the potential outcomes of an agreement. This would contribute to avoiding misunderstandings and false beliefs (for example: mediation only favours offenders or that it is a way of avoiding a trial), and would also reduce the effort made by the social workers and members of the mediation team explaining the meaning and purpose of the mediation. Judicial operators cannot work effect-

ively without legal support for their decisions. I know that some people understand that regulation could contradict essential aspects of mediation like creativity or voluntariness, but I firmly believe that without good and complete regulation mediation will not survive. A process that some judge's use and some others do not on a voluntary basis has no future.

There are a number of countries in Europe that have sought to create standards and guidelines and thus integrated mediation into the criminal justice system. I look with envy at the Finnish legislation on mediation which has a basic and complete regulation of penal mediation that includes a definition of mediation and also a definition of its goals: 'Compensation for the victim of a crime but also, active acceptance of responsibility, on the side of the offender, develop the sense of responsibility and break down the crime cycle in early time' (Unofficial translation © Ministry of Justice, Finland).

The Austrian legislation on mediation, which is included in the Code of Criminal Procedure amended in 2008, is connected with diversion and also includes very interesting references to the victims such as: 'The authorities have to act in the best interest of the victim and should ensure that the victim is compensated as fully as possible.'

Sweden is another country which has a separate law on mediation which includes a definition as follows: 'Mediation is a meeting between a victim and an offender together with an impartial mediator with the aim of talking about the offence and the consequences

of it.' It also provides a definition of the goals: 'It is for the benefit of both parties: Increase the offender's level of insight into the consequences of crime and gives the victim the opportunity to work through his/her experience.' Norway also has a regulation that stipulates mandatory mediation in certain civil cases. Mediation is mandatory in connection with separation, divorce and separation of cohabitants with children below sixteen and the court must order mediation in every case dealing with parental responsibility. The experience in Spain over the last seven years demonstrates that mediation, if used early in the process, offers clear benefits such as: reducing the duration of procedures; addressing issues linked with the origin of crime; reassuring victims, and providing prompt repair of the damage. The mediation service is offering a response time under two months, ending with an agreement in 80% of the cases referred. But without a law, mediation will not be consolidated nor be offered on a widespread basis.

Restorative justice has the potential to make criminal justice move from a system where no-one thinks about recognition or apologies, to a system where all the parties can consider the approach to the victim as a real alternative. By doing so, it will hopefully pave the way to growing the desire to desist from crime. This benefit alone will be worth the effort. The ball is in the lawmakers' court.

Cristina de Vicente

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New feature!

News from the Board

Dear members and friends of the European Forum for Restorative Justice,

At its recent meeting in Leuven the Board discussed a variety of topics, including the Forum's 2013 activities and our forthcoming ventures. I'd like to address and summarise the most relevant ones. First of all I have to inform you about a significant change in the Secretariat. Sadly Monique Anderson who became our Executive Officer in Autumn 2012, had to be replaced in early summer 2013 for health reasons. During the vacancy in the secretariat the remaining local team in Leuven and the board had to deal with a long list of additional tasks in order to keep the Forum functioning. Many thanks have to go to Katrien, Edit, Malini, Tzeni (the team of researchers) and temporary assistants Valery and Emanuela, to Annemieke (the vice-chair), to Ivo Aertsen who supported the Secretariat with a variety of tasks during this time. Monique will

hopefully be able to re-start as a researcher at KU Leuven in early 2014. In November, 2013 we welcomed Kris Vanspauwen as the new Executive Officer. He and the Leuven team developed a set of beautiful thematic postcards which have been launched for the 2013 Restorative Justice Week.

Good progress was made with all research-related activities. In addition to the ongoing research projects — on the topics (1) Training of the Judiciary, (2) Accessibility and Initiation of RJ programmes, (3) Desistance and (4) Alternative (FP7) — the Board decided to prepare a portfolio of preliminary research proposals on different topics from different thematic areas (and different funding streams) which can be submitted in forthcoming calls. The list of potential topics include perspectives for an integrated model of RJ, data protection in RJ, trans-border scenarios of RJ, practical challenges of RJ such as mediation with interpreters,

and some more. The next step to be taken is the search for potential project partners in Europe who would like to participate in such projects. Any notification of interest, in particular those from our members, is highly welcome, as well as any additional project ideas.

Policy activities were likewise successful in 2013, and the prospect for 2014 is promising too. In the centre of activities is the establishment and development of the Criminal Justice Platform Europe. With this joint initiative EFRJ, [Victim Support Europe \(VSE\)](#), the [European Organisation for Probation \(CEP\)](#) and the [European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services \(EuroPris\)](#) work together on criminal justice related issues of common interest. Through this initiative the interest for the work of the participating organisations will become more visible and its impact increased. In addition, the political attention for the different practical aspects of European criminal policy will be strengthened. The vision is to reach a better treatment for all parties affected by crime. An initial activity will be a co-operative project in the context of the implementation of the EU Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime which addresses a variety of issues that are of major relevance for the policy work of all platform members. From the perspective of restorative justice, Article 12 of the Directive which promotes a right to access to RJ for victims, is our core provision. As a preparatory step for the development of the joint project, a workshop was held in Barcelona in June 2013, to which experts with different expertise were invited by the four organisations to come up with ideas for concrete action plans to make the implementation of the Directive a success on issues like information, communication and RJ.

The most visible practice-related activity of the Forum of 2013 was the summer school 'Restorative Justice in intercultural settings: business as usual?', which took place in Vienna. Frauke Petzold and Niall Kearney did again a very good job in making an attractive programme and training the students in dif-

ferent aspects of RJ. We are also thankful for the local co-organiser, IRKS for their excellent job. The summer school attracted more than 30 participants from different countries in Europe. As in the years before, the feedback by the participants was very positive. The Board discussed the possibilities for a further broadening of the concept including a multiplication of its impact by initiating a series of regional events. A concept will be prepared for further discussion in the coming year.

The major event in 2014 will of course be our bi-annual international conference titled, '*Beyond crime: Pathways to desistance, social justice, and peace building*.' The conference will take place from 11 to 14 June and will present a variety of prime speakers. In addition, the board and the local organisation team have the interest to promote new and innovative workshop formats. The call for papers, panels, workshops and other kinds of will be published at the beginning of December at the latest. Please do already note the dates, not lastly also with regard to the AGM which will have to elect three new board members. An additional attraction will be the ceremony of the presentation of the prestigious European Restorative Justice Award. Like Ivo Aertsen and Martin Wright, who received the Award in 2010 and 2012 respectively, the third laureate will again be a person with outstanding merits for the development restorative justice. I am happy that the Board has received more proposals than ever before.

With this prospect I'd like to thank everybody for the manifold contributions to the successful performance of EFRJ in 2013. Neither chair, vice-chair and Board, nor the executive officer and the secretariat can bring forward the vision of restorative justice alone. Active contributions by the members are of the same if not even of more significance. I wish all of us a happy 2014.

Michael Kilchling

Chair

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New Feature!

Reflection: EFRJ participation in CEP World Congress on Probation

The European Forum for Restorative Justice has since 2011 been part of a Criminal Justice Platform together with three other European organisations: the European Organisation for Probation (CEP), Victim Support Europe and Europris (a recently formed European prison organization).

What binds these four organizations is a common attitude and goal towards changing justice and people. In the last two years they have been building trust and have worked together to lobby at the level of the European Commission, for example, on the EU Victim Directive on Victims of 2012. The partners also try to follow some of each others' conferences in order to further enhance collaboration and learn from different

ways of working and build new networks.



Annemieke Wolthuis

On 9th and 10th October CEP and partner probation organizations held a World Congress on Probation in London with the title: 'A World of Probation: Perspectives on Community Justice'. Marc Cerón, the President of CEP and John Scott, the former President and a local resident, opened the conference. There was a welcoming address by the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Justice of the UK, Chris Grayling, who talked about transforming rehabilitation in England and Wales. Among the main speakers was Frank Porporino, a criminal justice expert from Canada who spoke critically of the high incarceration rates in his country compared to many other countries. He also warned that some half-way houses in America have very severe regimes. Stephan Farell (University of Sheffield), Fergus McNeill (University of Glasgow) and Shadd Maruna (Queens University Belfast) talked about de-

sistance research and evidence-based probation. Interesting to see is that in this field there are familiar questions that we face in the restorative justice area about the right research methods to use.

EFRJ was able to present itself at the reception on the first day following the welcome by Jeremy Wright, Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation, together with the other Platform organizations. Annemieke Wolthuis, vice chair of the EFRJ, gave a short overview of the background and main goals of the Forum and how important this cooperation with other European organizations is in the field of criminal and social justice. To have joint lobby goals and to bring justice in Europe further by involving people themselves in resolving conflicts for example.

What else was there on RJ? Ivo Aertsen from KU Leuven presented an overview of RJ developments in a plenary session, also in light of probation work at the plenary morning session. He made the link with probation work clear. In some countries RJ practices are explicitly initiated by probation officers, in other countries they play another relevant role. A multi-agency approach will create an exchange between different cultures and restorative justice and probation should be each others natural partners.

One of the workshops was also dedicated to restorative justice. Jo Stein from Germany gave an overview of the effects of European international cooperation in regional developments in the field of restorative justice. Tim Chapman and Hugh Campbell of the University of Ulster presented their work with politically motivated prisoners in Northern Ireland. Their approach was based upon both desistance theory and restorative practices. As a result the prisoners gained accredited qualifications in restorative justice.

Annemieke Wolthuis and Tim Chapman

Board Members of the European Forum for Restorative Justice

New feature!

Attention: German Free Access Journal on Mediation

Servicebüro für Täter-Opfer-Ausgleich und Konfliktschlichtung in Cologne, Germany has been publishing its German language professional journal three times a year for everyone involved in restorative justice practices within the German speaking community for over ten years.

This autumn they are re-launching their website with a new design and new opportunities for an exciting new communication platform for professionals. One signi-

ficant change is the availability of their journal as a free access online professional publication. Each issue will concentrate on one theme, allowing for an in depth exploration of current topics, providing academic, political, practical and personal opinions and experiences.

The first issue to be published online, with its new design and new name — 'TOA-Magazin' deals with the topic of Victim-Offender Mediation within prison settings. It critically assesses the current situation throughout Germany and comes to the conclusion that there is still a long way to go before a satisfactory level

of operation in this area is reached. Articles describing international projects, political legislative developments and personal stories of victims of serious crime serve to provide a broad picture of the current situation of restorative justice practices within prison walls.

If you are a German speaker, then it is worth reg-

ularly logging on to the new website. It will be updated with news and events within Germany and beyond and hopefully become a lively platform providing up to date, topical information: <http://www.toa-servicebuero.de/>

Calendar

Restorative Justice: Maximising the Benefits, 22 January 2013, Sheffield, England. The aim of the day will be to explore the potential role of restorative justice across the criminal justice system and the benefits of developing models of restorative practice in both social and financial terms. For more information, email: rj@remedi.org.

Revisiting to Revisioning: Restorative Justice to Transformative Justice, 29–31 May 2014, Towson University, Baltimore, MD. The event challenges participants to reflect on restorative justice that is transformative. JSA welcomes any research, experiences, activism, teaching related to the conference topic. There is a current call for papers. More information can be found at: <http://www.justicestudies.org/Justice-Conf-topics.html>

Beyond crime: Pathways to desistance, social justice, and peace building, 11–14 June 2014 EFRJ. The biannual EFRJ conference this year brings together diverse and alternative topics. They range from the personal to the societal and political, seeking to go beyond the sometimes narrow focus of restorative justice. The intention is to understand and to reflect on the limits and potential of restorative justice in an increasingly complex, intercultural, and divided world. More information will be available soon at the EFRJ website: www.euforumrj.org

Readers corner

Implementing restorative practices in schools: a practical guide to transforming school communities (2013) by Margaret Thorsborne and Peta Blood. Restorative practice is a proven approach to discipline in schools which favours relationships over retribution, and has been shown to improve both discipline and teaching and learning. However, in order for it to work, restorative practice needs a restorative school culture. This book explains what has to happen in a school in order for it to become truly restorative. The book highlights

not only the benefits of RJ in a school environment and the process to implement changes that stick, but also provides useful pro formas and templates to guide educators, administrators and school leaders in this process. The book costs £25 and can be ordered from [Jessica Kingsley Publishers](#).

Call for submissions

Book reviews

We very much welcome reviews of books and articles from our membership. If you have published a book and would like to submit it for review, please send it to the Secretariat.

Articles

Each edition we will feature a review of the field of restorative justice, reflections on policy developments and research findings/project outcomes. Please consider sharing your perspective with colleagues.

Events

Please let us know about upcoming restorative justice related conferences and events. We are happy to share this information via the Newsletter or Newsflash.

Contact Kerry Clamp for more information:

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The views presented in this Newsletter are the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the EFRJ.

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