



New expert group

on

Staff Wellbeing in Prisons

Two-year term

## **Call for nominations: New expert group on Staff Wellbeing in Prisons**

### **New expert group**

EuroPris invites members to nominate experts for the first term of the newly installed expert group on Staff Wellbeing. At the AGM in Seville 2022, the members voted on the introduction of the topic of Staff Wellbeing as a new expert group in EuroPris. As every new group, it will operate for two years, spring 2023 until spring 2025. After this period, the Board decides about extending and refreshing the group to give other members the opportunity to join.

### **Introduction**

In the history of EuroPris, staff recruitment as well as training were addressed several times. Still, it is a focus, not least through its involvement in EPTA (European Penitentiary Training Academy network), being the Secretariat and having a permanent position in the Steering Committee. But for the first time, a long-term perspective on existing personnel and their wellbeing is now being considered.

Prison staff is the medium through which all prison activities are conducted. On a European level, it is already recognised that they can have the greatest positive impact on prisoners by modelling pro-social behaviour at their workplace. In the past, less attention has been paid to the care and welfare of staff, the relevance of this area was often underestimated in the prison sector. But in times where demands on staff are increasing, their wellbeing becomes crucial and gets more attention.

Difficult prisoners, inmates with psychopathological issues, suicidal, high risk or radicalised offenders - the prison environment can be challenging and may have a negative impact on both prisoners and staff. Creating a supportive and preventative culture of health and wellbeing at an organisational and prison level is critical in harnessing the positive role staff can play in the care and rehabilitation of prisoners. Prison services need to meet the health and safety obligations of their employed personnel. The aim of a wellbeing strategy and culture is to support staff in accessing initiatives and support to improve their mental, emotional and physical health (including obesity, smoking, drug and alcohol addiction) and to build their resilience and capacity to deal with challenging situations in a difficult working environment.

### **Planning for the term**

Implementing an expert group on this topic creates the opportunity for EuroPris members to gain specific knowledge on measures all over Europe and get insights about good measures of health prevention and general wellbeing at work. As an expert of this group, you will help identifying existing and effective methods to promote positive physical and mental health for all prison staff. Therefore, different methods and strategies could be discussed. Themes for the expert group to work on may be the following:

- Critical Incident Stress Management (models of intervention, guidance on how to manage and control stress in a prison environment)
- Sick Leave (innovative supports on sick leave, injuries on duty, return to work)
- Wellbeing initiatives
- Continuous Professional Development (programmes of training providing competencies, resilience, online resources and tools)
- Employee Assistance/Staff Support Programmes (staff support networks, confidential service offering information, advice, onward referrals on personal/work-related issues)
- Research, evidence and evaluation (research evaluations, effectiveness of practices, health care measures, law enforcement practices)

Activities are planned as follows:

- Two physical meetings (1,5 days annually, hosted by one of the group members)
- One physical event (one in two years e.g. EuroPris workshop)
- Online meetings (every second month)

### **Membership**

The expert group is to be composed of experts from 10 European national agencies, coming from different areas of Europe nominated by EuroPris members for 2 years. An expert of a topic is also an ambassador of the sending agency.

### **Purpose and Role of the Expert Group**

The expert group will work collaboratively to assist in the collection, sharing and dissemination of information that provides value to EuroPris Members. It can include:

- Sharing details on the experts' current work, significant projects and challenges they are facing in their jurisdiction
- Suggesting topics for the agenda of the meetings
- Outcomes of discussions and advice can be shared with the EuroPris members and the wider EuroPris network
- Creating reports, overviews or findings that serve the needs of the wider EuroPris network on best practices and lessons learnt
- Active role in dissemination on national and international level

### **Responsibilities/duties**

- Representation the country (*speaking in the role of own jurisdiction, sharing national-specific challenges and possible solutions*)
- Sharing own expertise and knowledge
- Preparing, attending and actively participating in the meetings
- Working on outputs (*Overviews, reports, best practice collections etc.*)
- Organising events and contributing (*speaker selection, providing content, presentation*)
- Reporting back to agency: Dissemination and promotion of the work and results

### **Requirements/Expert profile**

- Expertise, interest in, and experience with the subject
- Commitment to (international) working groups
- Appropriate time allocation for the tasks
- English language (not mandatory, translator also possible)
- Self-discipline, engagement, team player

### **EuroPris service/Role of EuroPris**

A member of the EuroPris Secretariat will act as a Coordinator. The EuroPris Secretariat will facilitate the work of the Expert Group and support the achievement of the set goals like publishing outcomes etc. For the in-person meetings and events, EuroPris covers the costs for travel and accommodation and makes all necessary logistical arrangements.

### **Nomination**

-*Motivation letter* for joining the expert group, including:

- Relevance of this topic for your country and experiences
- Reasons for your service to nominate this expert: What your expert is expecting to bring to and to take home from the group
- Nominees' specific expertise: Note on the professional background and relevant topic

-CV of the nominee

Submit your nomination to [secretariat@europris.org](mailto:secretariat@europris.org) at the latest until **10 March 2023**

### **Selection procedure**

EuroPris follows an established selection procedure for expert groups. Based on the number of nominations, EuroPris selects depending on the jurisdiction's participation in other EuroPris expert groups (priority for least participation), a regional balance (North-South / East-West), the countries' relevance of the topic and finally the nominees' specific expertise as well as expertise with the objective. In cases of equal qualification, gender balance is also considered.