

Report

**CEP Workshop
Electronic Monitoring in Europe
Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands
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ELECTRONIC MONITORING IN EUROPE : UPDATE

The CEP Interim Group, which continues to monitor developments in Europe in advance of the planned 2003 workshop, met in Germany in June. The following summary provides a picture of the fast moving developments which continue across the continent. The sheer diversity of schemes provides useful material for comparative learning - and current prison population growth, (prison numbers in the countries concerned are over 340,000 at present) means the potential for further development continues.

In **England and Wales**, the current daily caseload is over 4400 and the total number of offenders tagged since the Curfew Order and Home Detention Scheme were expanded nationally is nearing 70,000. Juvenile use is set to grow in terms of curfew orders, bail and as a post release phase relating to Detention and Training Orders and legislation is in place to make use of Exclusion Orders (useful for a range of cases including domestic violence and stalking) once the technology is fully developed.

The most rapid expansion, however , will be in the 'back door' scheme, where EM can be used as a quick and simple way of controlling prison numbers. Extension of the existing two month supervision period, and of the length of sentence to which it can apply, as well as a move to automatic rather than selective use are all under way. As one member noted, it might be easier to list the groups which Ministers were not prepared to tag.

The **Swedish scheme** is undergoing some changes. Since the start of the 'front door' scheme in 1994 more than 17,000 prison sentences have been replaced with Intensive Supervision by Electronic Monitoring (ISEM). 400 prison places (10 small institutions) have been closed and cost savings of 90 million Skr are quoted. The current daily average caseload, however, has fallen by about one third to around 270 since the introduction of Community Service Orders as an alternative penalty. The spare capacity is being taken up by a new 'back door' scheme for prisoners serving at least 2 years, which will bring forward release dates by up to 4 months.

The Netherlands still has both 'front and back door' schemes available, but growth has never been more than limited, with the current daily caseload around half of the scheme's capacity of 200. Legal and Government changes may well alter this situation in the months ahead.

The **Belgian early release scheme** has dealt with 1200 prisoners so far. There is pressure to increase the current daily average caseload of 200 to 600 before the end of this year--no easy task, but this is now a well established scheme with good social work support.

In **Spain**, the small pilot 'back door' scheme in Catalunya has now been confirmed as permanent. The Madrid based prison department has recently begun an ambitious national scheme which aims for 3000 early release cases a year and the daily caseload is expected to rise from the current 160 to 500 by the end of 2002.

France has 9 local pilot projects, some of which are run wholly by prison staff. Growth has been much slower than expected, with an average daily caseload of around 100. A decision on whether to move to a permanent scheme is expected in the next few months.

In **Germany**, only the state of Hessen has , so far, completed a pilot project - it is combined with a probation order to form a 'last chance' community penalty. This option has now been confirmed as permanent, but growth is likely to be slow. New Federal legislation would be needed (and it is not expected) if a 'back door' scheme were to be implemented.

Switzerland has a pilot project, covering 6 cantons, which ends in August 2002, but will continue as an option for the Courts until evaluation results are available in 2004 and national legislation is considered. Over 600 offenders have been tagged so far , with a successful completion rate of 93%.

Portugal has a pre-trial (bail) scheme, which may be extended as a sentencing option before long.

Scotland has moved from the pilot scheme to a new national scheme.

Finally, **Italy** , which had a pilot scheme run by a variety of police organisations, appears to have finished with fewer than 100 cases started. The exact number is difficult to confirm, as Police regard it as 'classified' information and will not divulge it - but it is certainly a long way from the original target of 3000 cases.

Much interest across Europe is now centred on the likely availability of '**second generation**' schemes, which provide active tracking in addition to existing passive monitoring. This will certainly be one of the subjects explored in the May 2003 workshop, full details of which will be circulated by CEP this autumn. The dates to book are **May 8 - 10**. To register an interest, contact Martine Dikmans, Executive Officer, CEP at CEP@srn.minjus.nl