

SPORE Final Conference

Aleid Sperna Weiland

Dutch Probation Service

Bas Vogelvang

Avans University of Applied Sciences

avans
hogeschool

The Netherlands

Riga, September 16-17, 2013



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe

SPORE Final Conference

Rationale of participation in the project

- High interest of HR-department in staff resiliency
 - Protocols regarding safety installed
 - Solutions welcomed for relatively high staff turnover and stress-related sick leave
- Organizational stress
 - Tension between productivity demands and quality driven vision
 - Budget cuts
 - Shift towards greater staff autonomy



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe

SPORE Final Conference

Local Research Report

- Respondents:
 - Internet survey: 162 probation workers
 - Focus groups: Works Council, probation officers, unit managers (28 participants).
 - Working group, commenting on the internet survey and focus group results: police academy and probation HR-department



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe

SPORE Final Conference

Top 5 Conclusions

1. Very high intention to stay with the service
 - Positively related to age and working years
 - Relatively positive evaluation of management, workload and empowerment. Low evaluation of product driven system
2. Workers regard themselves empowered and highly competent
3. Clients have no negative impact on resilience of probation workers
 - Clients do *test* resilience, but account for only 25% traumatic incidents
4. Strongest unique predictors of resilience:
 - Organisational culture, work structure, facilities and physical working environment. *Mixed results*: high dependency on organisational and team support 'versus' low scores on individual situational management and positive evaluation of daily work related stress
 - Positive disengagement and conscientiousness (carefulness and dutifulness): stronghold for further individual development
5. Importance of resilient teams



SPORE Final Conference

Difficulties and opportunities

- Productivity demands vs. quality/content driven mission.
 - “I am dealing with numbers in stead of people”
 - “I expect changes from the organisation, not from me”
- Budget cuts / career turmoil
- Young workers:
 - Aggressive career behaviour
 - Weak boundaries in client contact
 - Vulnerable / thrown back on themselves when expected to work more autonomously without sufficient support (
- + High team support and reciprocal trust
- + Solid organisational foundation regarding worker safety, education/training and working processes
- + Strong work ethics and conviction of being empowered



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe

SPORE Final Conference

How will the future look like?

- Results discussed at CEO & management level
- Strong support from HR-Department
- Possible inclusion of results in 'Project Probation 2.0 – The Professional in Focus'



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe

SPORE Final Conference

National Action Plan (09-09-2013)

- Overall strategy: structural involvement of employees in implementing the recommendations in the local report
- Discuss the research results and recommendations during a 1-day conference ('knowledge-day'). Working group installed.
- Agreed developments:
 - Improving new staff recruitment and selection procedures; tightening the policy
 - Probation worker resilience training
 - Manager training for the development / support of resilient teams
- Incorporate the recommendations in 'Project Probation 2.0 – The Professional in Focus', investing in increased and shared responsibilities on worker and team level
- Start of the national action plan: January 2014.

SPORE Final Conference

Sharing the lessons learned

- Do not get 'hung up' on individual characteristics when improving resilience
- Cherish offender supervision craftsmanship, working ethics and professional pride
 - Show young workers the value of life-long learning in stead of fast careers
- Facilitate and monitor the development of autonomous, safe and resilient teams, led by resilient role-models
- Help workers to experience variety, autonomy and to assertively express their boundaries

SPORE Final Conference

Thank you for your attention!

a.sperna.weiland@reclassering.nl

bo.vogelvang@avans.nl



The project has received support from the European Union. Sole responsibility lies with the author of the text. European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.



SPORE
Sustaining Probation Officers'
Resilience in Europe