



**MINISTÈRE
DE LA JUSTICE**

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ROUND TABLE ABOUT RESTAURATIVE JUSTICE IN FRANCE

APRIL 18TH 2024, THE HAGUE, WORLD CONGRESS ON PROBATION

Speakers

Mr Romain EMELINA, Head of Execution of sentences in probation, parole and prison, Parole Department in Prison Administration Department

Mrs Noémie MICOULET, Coordinator, French Institute for Restorative Justice

Mrs Anaëlle CASTERAN, Probation officer, Haute-Garonne Probation Service

Origins and history of restorative justice in France



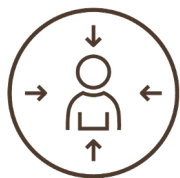
The french legal definition

In all criminal proceedings and at **all stages of the proceedings**, including when the sentence is being served, the victim and the perpetrator of an offence, provided that the facts have been acknowledged, may be offered a restorative justice measure."A restorative justice measure is any measure that enables a victim and the perpetrator of an offence to play an active part in resolving the difficulties resulting from the offence, and in particular in repairing the damage of any kind resulting from its commission. **This measure can only be taken after the victim and the offender have been fully informed about it and have expressly agreed to take part.** It is carried out by an independent third party trained for this purpose, under the supervision of the judicial authority or, at the latter's request, the prison administration. It is confidential, unless otherwise agreed by the parties and except in cases where an overriding interest linked to the need to prevent or punish offences justifies information relating to the progress of the measure being brought to the attention of the public prosecutor".

Principles and forms of restorative justice

Direct meetings	Indirect Meeting	Circles of Support and accountability
Victim/offender mediation	Offenders/Victims meetings	
Family conference	Restorative circles	

Key data



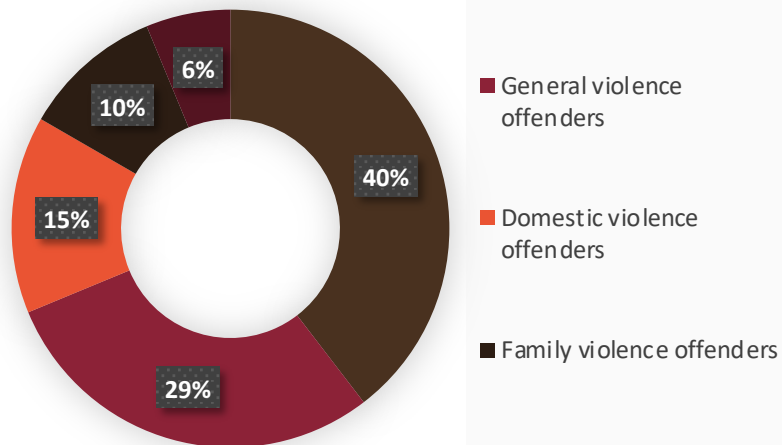
In 2022

94 offenders

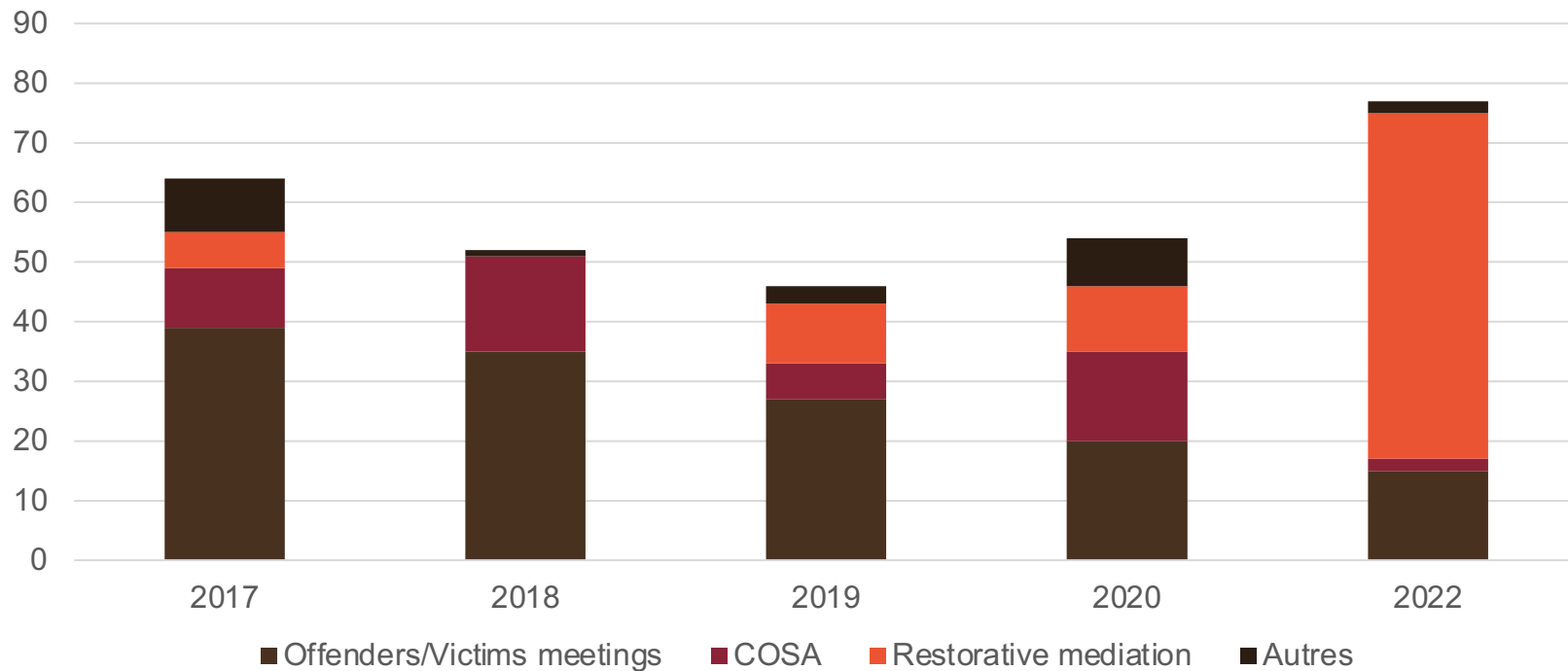
71 victims

49 volunteers

144 probation officers



Key data



Innovative approaches

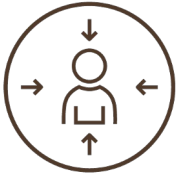


The desistance sponsorship programme

began in 2016 and continues today. Declination of circles of support and responsibility, this programme proposes the establishment of supportive social relationships between volunteers who are members of civil society (sponsors) and people placed under house arrest (godchildren) who are monitored in an open environment. The meetings, which are voluntary for the participants, aim to strengthen the human capital and develop the social capital of people serving sentences. It helps to support, from a position of responsibility, the process of change needed to get out of delinquency, by breaking with the isolation that is detrimental to any integration project, while at the same time making it possible to build and implement such a project.

The Sycomore project, which is present in 33 countries including 10 in Europe, is accredited and benefits from a grant from the European Commission. In France, it has been implemented within the probation service of the department 77 since a study trip that took place in 2018 in London. The main aim of this English-inspired restorative justice model is to make detainees aware of the impact of their actions on others, both direct and indirect victims, and to gain an understanding of the effects of committing offences in order to rebuild their lives. The Sycomore programme, as implemented by the probation service of the department 77, helps to rebuild the lives of victims and offenders by listening to them and establishing a dialogue between participants, with the broader aim of restoring social peace

Key data



Since 2011

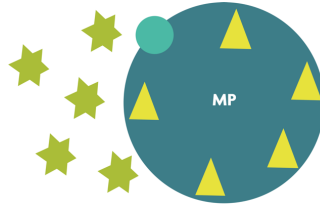
Training

- 2971 peoples trained
 - 416 Victime offender's mediation
 - 763 Victims offenders Dialog

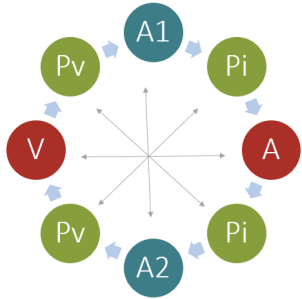
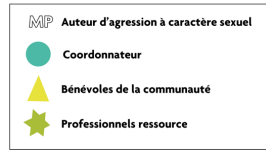
In 2022

- 139 interventions to raise awareness
- Programs
 - 109 restorative justice programs
- Measures
 - 60 completed
 - 113 ongoing

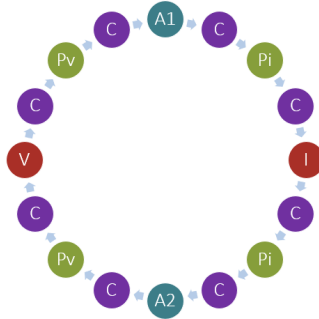
Different forms of restorative justice



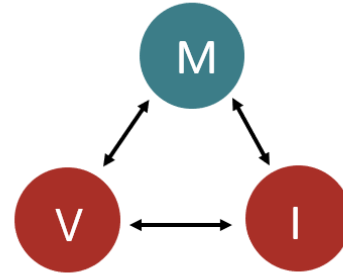
COSA



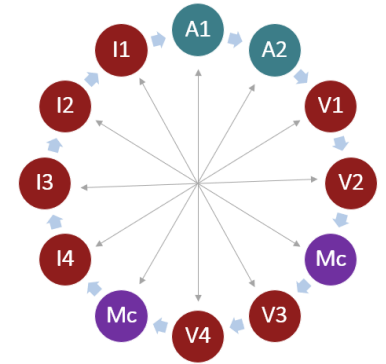
Restorative conference



Restorative dialogue



Victim Offender Mediation



Victim Offender Dialog

Expectations

- **Victims' expectations**
 - Talking about repercussions
 - Understand why "they"?
 - Understand how the perpetrator got there?
 - Contribute to ensuring that "it" doesn't happen again?

- **Perpetrators' expectations**
 - Help victims understand the act
 - Express their feelings
 - Improve self-image
 - Define themselves as something other than a monster

Benefits

Specific benefits for perpetrators :

Awareness of the repercussions of
the offence and the experiences of
victims
Projection into the future
Empowerment
Improved self-esteem

Common benefits :

- Freedom of speech
- Soothing
- Feeling of being recognized as a human being
- Feeling of not being alone

Specific benefits for victims :

- a feeling of being listened to, heard and understood;
- reduced feelings of shame, fear and guilt ;
- a feeling of taking back power over their lives ;
- a feeling of recognition through dialogue and listening ;
- changes in behaviour, habits and/or perceptions ;
- freedom to speak without taboos or judgement ;
- a sense of calm and well-being.

Testimonies

How did you hear about restorative justice?

M. H : While I was in prison, I came across a report about this system in Canada. Then I ask my probation officer about it.

MS C : It was my son's abuser who asked for mediation. Then I spoke on the phone with two ladies who explained to me what it was all about. All of this reassured me.

What motivated you to apply for a JR measure?

Ms C : I didn't ask for it, but I agreed to follow the process and see where it would take me and if I could get anything positive out of it.

M. H. : For me, the main aim is to put emotions and feelings on what I did and what I put people through, because the trial itself doesn't help with personal reconstruction.

What did you expect?

MS C : I had no expectations at the beginning.

I was then able to tell him what i want so that he'd never do it again. I was eventually able to put words on the consequences of his abuse and on everything we'd been through.

M. H. : Hearing about the real impact of my actions and their consequences.

Answer any questions the victim may have.

How did you deal with the mediation process?

Ms C. : Everything went smoothly, through discussion, exchange and listening. Things were clearly explained.

M. H : Reading the letter written by the victim's mother was like an electroshock for me, because even though I was aware of the consequences for the victim, I had no idea what her family had suffered.

What do you gain from this process?

Ms C. : For me it happened at the right time and with the right people. I feel more understood, heard and at peace too.

M. H. : It's rather complicated to establish at the moment, especially as the process is ongoing.
