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Judge Mary Ellen Ring speaking at the ICJA Conference, with Secretary General Oonagh McPhillips, DPP Catherine Pierse and ACJRD Chairperson Mary Griffin seated.

ACJRD Events Calendar 2024

December 3rd: ACJRD

Networking Event - Towards research co-production in Irish criminal justice: lessons from recent projects. Law Library, 5.30-8pm. See [ACJRD's website](#) for details.

Keep an eye on [our Events page](#) for updates.

Upcoming Events

Northern Police Research Webinar, 15 November. Click [here for details](#).

Collaborative solutions: how schools and prisons can join hands to support children with imprisoned parents, 25 November, Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) Webinar. Click [here for details](#).

The Expansion of Criminal Law in Europe, 27 November, Queens University Belfast. Click [here for details](#).

Rethinking Justice International Legal Psychological Conference: Trauma on Trial, 30 November, Trinity College Dublin. Click [here for details](#).

Latest News

SAVE THE DATE: 'Towards research co-production in Irish criminal justice: lessons from recent projects' – ACJRD's December networking event

ACJRD are delighted to announce that their annual December seminar and networking event will take place on the evening of **Tuesday, 3rd December 2024** in the Blue Room of the Law Society from 5.30-7pm (registration 5pm) with a reception afterwards until 8pm.

Dr. Ian Marder (Maynooth University School of Law and Criminology) will chair a seminar to introduce the concept, benefits and challenges of research co-production in a criminal justice context. Attendees will hear from researchers and practitioners involved in a wide range of research projects and consider the potential to expand the co-production of research on crime and justice in Ireland. Speakers (by project):

- Words Matter: Promoting Best Practice in Media and Cultural Representations of Gender-Based Violence; **Mary Crilly** (CEO, Sexual Violence Centre Cork)
- Community or Custody? A Review of Evidence and Sentencers' Perspectives on Community Service Orders and Short Prison Sentences; **Dr. Niamh Maguire** (Senior Lecturer in Law and Criminology, South East Technological University), **Prof. Nicola Carr** (Chair of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin) and **Barra O'Duill** (Research and Evaluation Unit, Department of Justice)
- A Peer-Led Toolkit: How to Increase the Participation of People Who Use Drugs in Service Delivery and Policy Design; **Andy O'Hara** (Coordinator, UISCE) and **Dr. Peter Kelly** (Assistant Professor in Mental Health Nursing, Trinity College Dublin)

Details are [available on ACJRD's website](#). This event is free to ACJRD members, who will receive priority booking, and €10 to non-members.

Navigating Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System, the 10th Irish Criminal Justice Agencies Conference

The 10th ICJA Conference on the theme of 'Navigating Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System' took place on 4 October 2024 in Dublin Castle. This marks a decade of collaboration in addressing critical issues in Irish criminal justice.

This conference addressed the current state of mental health care within the criminal justice system. Despite the significant challenges to mental health care, there are opportunities for improvement, particularly in community mental health services and diversion schemes.

Individuals with mental health difficulties can often find themselves within the courts or prison system rather than receiving appropriate support. Research has found strong links between mental health issues, substance use, and youth offending, highlighting the critical need for accessible community services and effective diversion programs especially when these individuals come into contact with the criminal justice system.

We wish to thank organizations who presented and exhibited at the conference, as a unified approach is essential to achieve real progress in criminal justice.

Speakers included Judge Mary Ellen Ring, The High Court of Ireland; Fíona Ní Chinnéide, Deputy Director of the Probation Service; Dr Clare Kambamettu, Psychology Service, Irish Prison Service; Nuala Ward, The Ombudsman for Children's Office; Ciairín de Buis, The Parole Board; and Prof Ciaran O'Boyle, Centre for Positive Psychology and Health, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; Dr Conor O'Neill, National Forensic Mental Health Service Prison Inreach & Court Liaison Service; Tony McGillicuddy, SC; Denise Dunne, ADAPT Domestic Abuse Services; Maura Howe, The Courts Service; Conor Boksberger, Jigsaw; Melissa Di Pede and Michael Abbott, Irish Red Cross; Dr. Oghenovo Oghuvbu, Garda Chief Medical Officer; Danica Kinane, ME Hanahoe Solicitors; and Dr Colette Barry, UCD Sutherland School of Law.

Exhibitors at the conference included: the Irish Penal Reform Trust; the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre; Care After Prison Project; Speire Nua; Deonach; Depaul Ireland on their Tus Nua project; The Cornmarket Project, Wexford Local Development; and the Churchfield Community Trust.

This annual one day conference is a collaboration of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Department of Justice, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána, The Probation Service, Policing Authority, Courts Service, Garda Síochána Inspectorate, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Parole Board, Maynooth University, University College Dublin, Limerick University, non-agency Criminal Justice System Actors and the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD).

Special gratitude is due to the lead partner for the 2024 ICJA Conference, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, for funding the conference and facilitating this important dialogue between criminal justice professionals, policymakers, researchers, and academics.

A conference report is currently being prepared and [will be published on the ACJRD website](#) in due course.



Pictured L-R: Mary Griffin, Chairperson of ACJRD and Oonagh McPhillips, Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality at the ICJA Conference in Dublin Castle.



Pictured: Fíona Ní Chinnéide, Deputy Director of the Probation Service presenting at the ICJA Conference in Dublin Castle.



Pictured L-R: Judge Mary Ellen Ring, Mary Griffin, ACJRD, Catherine Pierser, Director of Public Prosecutions and Deirdre Byrne, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions at the ICJA Conference 2024 in Dublin Castle.

Vacancies

EUAA/2024/SNE/005, Asylum Processes Expert, Seconded National Expert. European Union Agency For Asylum. Deadline **19 November**. Click [here for details](#).

Legal Officer. EU Agencies Network. Deadline **22 November**. Click [here for details](#).

Solas Project: Youth Worker - TRY Programme. Deadline **29 November**. Click [here for details](#).

Assistant Professor / Lecturer in Criminology x2. Maynooth University. Deadline **5 December**. Click [here for details](#).

Solicitors Criminal Legal Aid Panel 2025. Deadline **20 December**. Click [here for details](#).

USA: Law & Society Review call for Editors. The Law and Society Association is seeking its next Editor or Editorial Team. Review of applications will begin on **1 February 2025**. Book Review Editor(s) are also being sought. Click [here for details](#).

Charity trustee with a Legal background (Oasis Childcare Centre CLG). Click [here for details](#).

Trustees with Legal, Finance or HIQA experience/ knowledge (Mid West Simon Community). Click [here for details](#).

Board members with Financial or Legal experience (Inis Housing Association). Click [here for details](#).

Trustee with Legal / Governance experience (Helplink Mental Health). Click [here for details](#).

NI: New Prisoner Ombudsman appointed

Darrin Jones, a former PSNI chief superintendent, has been appointed as the new prisoner ombudsman for Northern Ireland. The Prisoner Ombudsman is responsible for investigating complaints from prisoners and visitors, as well as deaths in custody in Northern Ireland. See coverage in the [Belfast Telegraph](#), [Irish Legal News](#) and [Derry Now](#).

Prison Overcrowding Response Group report

The Prison Overcrowding Response Group report has become publicly available following a request made by Dr Ian Marder (Maynooth University) under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts. The report found "sustained over-utilisation of physical space", in cells not intended for multiple occupancy, which is against the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture recommendations.

For related stories see: RTE: [‘Prison overcrowding ‘stark’ and against EU recommendations – IPRT’](#); IPRT: [‘IPRT stresses that Prison Overcrowding Report is clear - State must prioritise alternatives over expansion’](#); Irish Times: [‘Prison overcrowding crisis is forcing policy makers to turn to increasingly radical solutions’](#) (subscriber); The Conversation: [‘Why overcrowded prisons are more dangerous than releasing prisoners early’](#); The Guardian: [‘In the Netherlands, we’re closing our emptying prisons. What can other countries learn from how we did it?’](#).

The EU Directive on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence

On 14 May 2024, the EU adopted a Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. Given that there are no binding treaty provisions at the United Nations (UN) level which refer expressly to violence against women, the adoption of the new Directive by the EU means that for the first time the EU member states which have not ratified the Istanbul Convention are now subject to legally binding obligations at an international level which specifically address violence against women and domestic violence, says Dr Ronagh McQuigg, Reader in the School of Law at Queen's University Belfast. Click [here to read more](#).

Facial recognition tech could mean innocent people being misidentified as criminal suspects

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL), ahead of the general election, has called on all political parties to commit to abandon current Government plans to introduce facial recognition technology (FRT) into Irish policing and protect people in Ireland from its well-established harms. See [ICCL press release here](#).

Landmark reform of An Garda Síochána and oversight bodies

The Minister for Justice Helen McEntee has announced appointments to the senior roles created under the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 commencing landmark reform of An Garda Síochána and its oversight bodies.

At its meeting, the government designated for appointment the first Chair and members of the new Policing and Community Safety Authority, which amalgamates the current Policing Authority and Garda Inspectorate. The government also nominated the first Independent Examiner of Security Legislation and noted the nominations to the newly created Garda Board. See [further information here](#).

Community Safety projects allocated €3 million

The aim of the fund is to allow the proceeds of crime to be directed into local community safety projects, such as projects aimed at addressing anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, drug-related intimidation, prison post-release support and more. Click [here for details](#).

An Garda Síochána and HSE Launch Mental Health Support Pilot Project 'CAST' in the Limerick Division

A pilot initiative under 'A Policing Service for the Future' aimed at assisting people who are experiencing situational trauma or a mental health crisis has been launched. For [further details click here](#).

Justin Kelly appointed as new Deputy Garda Commissioner

Assistant Garda Commissioner Justin Kelly has been appointed as the new Deputy Garda Commissioner. As new deputy commissioner, Mr Kelly will be responsible for policing operations and national security. Click [here to read in the Irish Independent](#).

Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act

Among the five Bills considered and passed in the Dáil in under six hours was the [Criminal Justice \(Hate Offences\) Bill](#) which was signed into law by the President. The bill had been amended to delete the references to incitement to violence or hatred and had removed reference to the EU framework decision on combating racism and xenophobia.

See coverage in The Irish Times '[Hate crime law among five Bills rushed through Dáil in six hours](#)' (subscription); RTE '[Dáil passes hate crime legislation](#)'; Gay Community News '[Dáil passes hate crime bill in win for LGBTQ+ and minority rights](#)'; and, Irish Council for Civil Liberties '[Coalition Against Hate Crime welcomes Seanad passage of Hate Crime Bill](#)'.

You may have missed...

Reconciliation and the Legacy Act: A Human Rights Perspective, Professor Anna Bryson and Professor Louise Mallinder, Queens University Belfast, May 2024 – click [here to read](#).

Character references for sex offenders must now be given on oath under new law, The Irish Times, September 2024 – click [here to read](#) (subscriber).

Race to the top – A PPN report on race and ethnicity in prisons, Prisoner Policy Network, June 2024 – click [here to read](#).

Project Stories: Peer literacy outreach in prisons, Derv Ryan discusses the Literacy Ambassador Programme. Since 2022, NALA has run the programme in ten prisons. ELM Magazine, October 2024. Click [here to read interview](#).

Chairs of Local Community Safety Partnerships announced. The appointment of new chairs is the first step in the development of a Community Safety Plan in every Local Authority Area. Department of Justice. For [further details please click here](#).

Ireland's Chief Justice Mr Justice Donal O'Donnell's statement to mark the opening of the New Legal Year. Court's Service. To view a report of the event, which took place on 7th October, [please click here](#).

How to stop released prisoners reoffending: what the evidence says. Jake Phillips, Reader in Criminology, Sheffield Hallam University in The Conversation. Click [here to read the article](#).

You may have missed...

UK: Prison isn't working for women, ministers say. Can it be fixed? BBC, 6 October 2024.

InDepth has spoken to people with experience of the criminal justice system to hear how they think it can be reformed for female offenders. To [read the article please click here](#).

Irish Legal News

series facilitating dialogue between criminal justice policymakers/practitioners and academic researchers. The series includes: 'How open research partnerships can change justice for the better' and 'Policing and procedural justice'. Click [here for further details](#).

Showcase session: the future is now – artificial intelligence and the legal profession.

International Bar Association, September 2024. Click to read about the [IBA AI Task Force's session](#).

What minority ethnic police officers face on the job – and how to fix policing culture. Tara Lai Quinlan, Associate Professor in Law and Criminal Justice, University of Birmingham in The Conversation. Click to [read the article](#).

Growing old and dying inside, Dr Jane Price in partnership with the Prison Reform Trust's, September 2024. Click [here to view](#).

Programme to focus on children in courts system. The Cabinet has approved a new pilot programme to ensure the voices and views of children are heard in the courts system. Click [here for more information](#).

Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2024 signed into law

The Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2024 amends the Criminal Justice Act 1990 in order to dis-apply the mandatory life sentence for murder for those who commit murder when under 18 years of age but who have reached 18 years old prior to the time of the imposition of sentence. "An 'aged out' child who is convicted of murder can still receive a life sentence, however, it will no longer be mandatory. An amendment to dis-apply the minimum custodial period for the offence of capital murder to the same cohort is also included in the Act. This legislation addresses an issue identified by the High Court. See the [Department of Justice press release](#), and coverage in Irish Legal News ['Law passed on 'aged out' murderers'](#).

Research and Innovation Bill 2024 signed into law

Bill entitled an Act to make further provision for the funding of research and innovation in all fields of activity and disciplines and, for that purpose, to provide for the establishment and functions of a body to be known as Taighde Éireann. View [further information here](#). See also:

- Irish Research Council's [Notice to research community on the establishment of Taighde Éireann – Research Ireland](#)
- [Minister O'Donovan announces establishment of Taighde Éireann – Research Ireland](#)

Stalking victims can now seek civil orders in District Court aimed at preventing behaviour

The new system of civil orders allows for earlier intervention as it does not require the level of proof required to secure a criminal conviction. The measure is being introduced by Part 5 of the Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2023 Act that was signed into law by the President in July 2023. This extends protections currently available to certain victims under the Domestic Violence Act 2018 to all victims of stalking behaviour, regardless of their relationship with the perpetrator; provides for the making of orders on an ex parte basis, where the court is satisfied there is an immediate risk to the safety and welfare of the applicant and allows the court to grant an interim order pending the final determination of the application. See [report in The Irish Times](#) (subscriber).

The Bar Review: Chapter and Verse

In The Bar Review, Gráinne Fahey takes an in-depth look at Chapter 3 of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2020 regarding the admission of business records has the potential to be used in a broad range of civil litigation contexts. Click [here to view the article](#).

NI: Supporting Parole Commissioners

The Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland, Jacqui Durkin called for improvements to be made to support and oversee the work of the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland (PCNI) as well as the wider parole system in Northern Ireland. Click [here for further detail](#).

A new role within the Probation Service

Mark Wilson, Director of the Probation Service speaks to Eolas about the role of probation assistants, a brand-new grade to the Service designed to bolster the work it does in building safer communities by supporting probation officers. Click [here to read the interview](#).

Professional operational support ‘essential’ to the administration of justice in NI’s criminal Court

CJI Chief Inspector Jacqui Durkin has highlighted the importance of effective administrative support that ensures the smooth operation of Northern Ireland’s criminal Courts and the accurate recording of Judicial decisions made in the Crown, Magistrates’ and Youth Courts. Inspectors identified that performance management and quality assurance processes required significant improvement. Staffing pressures within the NICTS and the organisation’s difficulty in recruiting staff especially to fulfil Court Clerk roles was also highlighted. See [further detail here](#).

Judicial Appointments Commission established

The Minister for Justice Helen McEntee commenced legislation providing for the establishment of the Judicial Appointments Commission on 1 January 2025. The Judicial Appointments Commission Act establishes a new, independent Judicial Appointments Commission to select and recommend persons for all judicial offices in Ireland and in the EU and international courts.

The reforms include a reduction in the number of recommendations, only candidates recommended by the Judicial Appointments Commission to be nominated by the government for appointment by the President, all nominees will have been interviewed. For [further details click here](#).

Sentences for knife crime increase

The Minister for Justice Helen McEntee has signed a Commencement Order under the Courts, Civil Law, Criminal Law and Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2024 to increase the maximum sentences for four knife related offences with effect from 30 September 2024.

- Section 9(5) offence of possession in a public place of an article intended to cause injury to, incapacitate or intimidate a person: increased from 5 years to 7 years
- Section 10 offence of trespass with a knife, weapon of offence or other article which has a blade or sharp point: increased from 5 years to 7 years
- Section 11 offence of production of an article capable of inflicting serious injury: increased from 5 years to 7 years
- Section 12 offence of manufacture, importation, sale, hire or loan of prescribed offensive weapons: increased from 7 years to 10 years

Click [here to read further detail](#).

You may have missed...

London calling, Law Society Gazette interview with Armagh-born Caroline Carberry KC, one of Britain’s leading criminal barristers. Click [here to view](#).

Defending the Rule of Law, The Bar Review talks with Aonghus Kelly, Head of the International Crimes Legal Unit at the EU Advisory Mission to Ukraine, about his career, and his work advising war crimes investigators. Click [here to view](#).

How does ‘Game with Mum & Dad’ strive to embed child safeguarding within prisons? Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) write about child safeguarding standards, taking into account the unique challenges that arise when children visit or interact with their parents in prison. Click [here to read](#).

Watch/Listen

Irish Courts Podcast. This collaborative initiative has been created to commemorate the centenary of the Courts of Justice Act, 1924 that established our modern Courts system. Episodes include: The David Norris Case, From Revolution to a New Court System, Eileen Kennedy, Ireland's first woman Judge, Two seminal District Courts cases: The State (Healy) V Donoghue, DPP v Gary Doyle, and The Julia Clarke Case; Jail for a Kiss. Click [here to listen](#).

On Probation podcast with Colm O'Regan. Available on Spotify and Apple. See also 'I've learned recently that most crime is the result of a series of bad decisions' on [The Journal here](#).

Expert Voices: A fast track to injustice? Perspectives on the Single Justice Procedure. Video of Centre for Justice Innovation expert panel discussion about the Single Justice Procedure which system has come under heavy criticism, with multiple stories highlighting that vulnerable people are being convicted despite having strong mitigating circumstances and often when they were not aware of the proceedings. View [the recording here](#).

Tricky Times for Democracy

Aoife McMahon BL in The Bar Review on steps the EU and the Irish Government are taking to protect democratic processes from disinformation in the political sphere. Click [here to read the article](#).

NI: ToR published for CJINI Inspection of Community Resolution Notices

Community Resolution Notices (CRNs) were introduced as a non-statutory disposal available to the PSNI from 30 June 2016 and were the only informal 'out-of-court' outcome assigned to crimes recorded by the police in Northern Ireland. Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland proposes to undertake an inspection of the PSNI use of CRNs. Click [here to read](#).

Judges to receive specialist training in dealing with sexual violence cases

Judges will undergo a one-day specialist training to assist them in dealing with cases of sexual violence. Click [here to view article in The Irish Times](#) (subscriber).

Recent Publications

The emergence of ketamine on the Irish drug scene

In January 2024, addiction services warned of a concerning increase in the use of ketamine in Ireland. The drug, known for its use as a horse tranquiliser, has become popular among revellers at festivals and parties. Results for ketamine use in Ireland from the European Web Survey on Drugs 2021 were considerably higher than the overall proportion of ketamine use reported from the other 30 participating countries. They suggest that the upward trajectory may lead to increased risks for people who use drugs and new issues for healthcare providers. Click [here for further information from Drugnet Ireland](#).

Self-Harm in Irish Prisons 2020/2021

The Irish Prison Service published its 4th report on episodes of self-harm recorded in Irish Prisons. The highest rates were among female prisoners, albeit based on small numbers. The rate was higher amongst prisoners aged 18-29 years. The rate of self-harm decreased amongst sentenced prisoners and those on remand since 2019, although it was still 2 times higher among prisoners on remand. Click [here to download the report](#).

The Barlinnie Special Unit: a radical experiment keeps Scotland talking

The Barlinnie Special Unit (BSU) in Scotland, which polarised opinions for its therapeutic approach and shared decision making between prisoners and staff, is the subject of a comprehensive new book. Click [here to view press release](#).

HIQA publishes Report of Oberstown Children Detention Campus

Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has published a report of the 2024 inspection conducted during 11 and 13 June 2024. Click here to download the report. See also '[Oberstown welcomes 2024 HIQA inspection report](#)' and Irish Legal News '[Concern youth detention is not being treated as last resort](#)'.

Ireland still lags on judicial spending

Ireland's level of spending on its judicial system, as measured by percentage of economic output (GDP), was the lowest in Europe in 2022, according to a new report published by the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), part of the Council of Europe. It said that Ireland spent 0.07% of GDP on its judicial system in 2022 – well below the 0.31% median. Click [here to view the Law Society Gazette article](#).

Garda Inspectorate report published on transnational organised crime

This report contains 68 recommendations, which include: enhancing the Organised Crime Group Threat Assessment Tool to include information gathered by other law enforcement agencies in order to fully understand the impact on local communities; developing a Transnational Organised Crime Strategy; and establishing a National Crime Centre to provide a strong platform for relevant agencies to conduct joint operations. Click [here to access the report](#).

Community or Custody

The Department of Justice has published a report on Community or Custody - Evidence and Sentencers' Perspectives on Community Service orders and Short-Term Prison Sentences by Dr Niamh Maguire and Prof. Nicola Carr. Click [here to view the report](#). See also: [Community-service order under-financing criticised](#), Law Society Gazette.

England: A decade of declining quality of education in young offender institutions

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and Ofsted have published a review of the quality of education in young offender institutions (YOIs) in response to their concern about the declining quality of education in YOIs over the past decade. Recommendations include a reduction in isolation due to the absence of an effective behaviour management strategy, a focus on leadership efforts on resolving conflict, a number of recommendations aimed at prioritising education. Click [here to read the report](#).

Falling Through the Cracks

The Child Law Project's Analysis of Child Care Proceedings from 2021 to 2024. Click [here to view](#).

Annual Reports & Strategic Plans

[Criminal Assets Bureau Annual Report 2023](#)

[Irish Council for Civil Liberties Annual Report 2023](#)

[Mental Health Commission Annual Report 2023](#)

[Oberstown Annual Report 2023](#)

[Parole Board Annual Report 2023](#)

[Solas Project Annual Report 2023](#)

[Care After Prison Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#)

[Cuan Corporate Plan](#)

Le Chéile Mentoring [Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028](#) and [Annual Report 2023](#)

[Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Annual Report 2023](#)

Office of the Attorney General [Annual Report 2023](#) and [Statement of Strategy 2023-2026](#)

Consultations

Consultation on developing a strategy to combat Economic Crime and Corruption, The Advisory Council against Economic Crime and Corruption. Deadline **15 November**. Click [here for details](#).

Invitation to Tender

Awareness Campaign for the Office of the Inspector of Prisons. Click [here for details](#).

To submit notices for the ACJRD newsletter and website, please email enquiries@acjrd.ie

ACJRD Mailing List

To sign up for the mailing list [please click here](#).

If you wish to unsubscribe, please email enquiries@acjrd.ie stating 'unsubscribe' in the subject line of the email.

ACJRD Website Updates

We are adding notices of events, vacancies, research calls and articles of interest to our [News section](#), so keep an eye on this section for notices that we receive between newsletters.

Remember also to check the [ACJRD Events section](#) for announcements and updates on speakers, dates, times and tickets for all ACJRD events.

Drug use and current alternatives to coercive sanctions in Ireland

The Centre for Justice and Innovation published a report, presented by Tony Duffin, the chair of the National Drugs Strategy Strategic Implementation Group 5 (SIG-5), which aimed to map existing alternatives to coercive sanctions (ACS) for individuals found in possession of controlled drugs for personal use in Ireland. The authors explored how ACS are delivered in Ireland, stakeholders' views on how these could be improved, and the potential for the expansion of ACS in the Irish context. Click [here for more information from Drugnet Ireland](#).

A New Model of Treatment for Sexual Violence in the Irish Prison Service

The Irish Prison Service has developed a new model of intervention for people who are convicted of a sexual offence called 'New Chapters'. This means anyone committed to custody from 1st November 2024 who is convicted of a current sexual offence will be managed under this new model. Click [here for more information](#).

Neurodivergence in Irish Prisons

Independent Senator Lynn Ruane has collaborated with key stakeholders in the Irish CJS to design a new wraparound model of care to support neurodivergent people in custody and following their release to the community. Click [here to view information on phase 1 report](#).

ACJRD Membership 2025

Memberships run for the calendar year January – December and entitles members to discounts for our Annual Conference, preferential bookings for certain events and invitations to a limited number of member-only events.

Three types of ACJRD membership are available: Individual Membership €35.00, Organisational Membership €155, Student Membership €25.

Click here for [further information on ACJRD Membership](#).