

Summaries

Justitiële verkenningen (Judicial explorations) is published six times a year by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security in cooperation with Boom juridisch. Each issue focuses on a central theme related to judicial policy. The section Summaries contains abstracts of the internationally most relevant articles of each issue. The central theme of this issue (no. 3, 2019) is *Supervising offenders in society*.

Some reflections on supervision in the Dutch criminal sanction system

Jeroen ten Voorde

Dutch legal scholars have expressed their concern over an increase in (the relevance of) supervision as part of the criminal sanction system. They endorse the need for a more fundamental research on the nature and position of supervision within the Dutch criminal sanction system. This article discusses some fundamental issues: the meaning of autonomy and the position of the autonomous person as an object of supervision, the possible consequences of supervision for and the various purposes of supervision within the criminal sanction system.

Control or guidance? Experiences with probation supervision during the conditional release

Jennifer Doekhie, Esther van Ginneken, Anja Dirkzwager and Paul Nieuwbeerta

Little is known about how ex-prisoners' parole supervision experiences relate to desistance. The aim of this article therefore is to gain insight into the nature of release conditions and parole supervision of ex-prisoners and parolees' perceptions of their supervision related to the desistance process. A total of 23 Dutch parolees were interviewed in depth at three waves starting in prison up to one year after their release, and the 69 interviews were combined with their parole files containing information about conditions, violations and sanctions. Parole files revealed the practice of highly engaged parole officers, who worked with parolees to strengthen factors known to foster desistance. However, the interviews showed that most parolees found their parole experience predominantly surveillance-oriented and not

very helpful for desistance. Parole was experienced as most beneficial when parole officers used their discretionary power to adjust conditions creating 'space' for trial-and-error.

And what happens if things go wrong? The transposition and revocation of supervision of offenders in society

Miranda Boone

The decision to revoke or recall a conditional sanction is barely researched in criminal justice research, despite the interests involved for the offender as well as society. This article reflects on some results from a comparative research project on breach decision-making (COST Action on Offender Supervision in Europe). Using Hawkins' concept of serial decision-making, the interdependence of early stage and final stage decision makers is highlighted. The significant power exercised by early stage actors raises the issue of the need to ensure credibility of community sanctions and appropriate due process protections, without reducing their discretion so much that they cannot perform their role of supporting the offender to complete the supervisory order successfully.

Circles of Support and Accountability. A social network for sex offenders

Mechtild Höing and Audrey Alards

In Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) a group of trained and supervised volunteers support a medium to high-risk sex offender in his process of re-entry after detention. Sex offenders participate on a voluntary basis. Circles have a double aim: the prevention of new sexual offences and the rehabilitation of the sex offender. Circles offer social inclusion and support for behavior change, and monitor risk. They are embedded in the professional network of sex offender after care. Through a professional circle coordinator relevant information is circulated between the circle and professional agencies, to enable adequate support and interventions. Effect studies show that COSA contributes to a reduced risk of reoffending. The model was developed in Canada almost 25 years ago and has been picked up by a growing number of countries in Europe, the America's, Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand. Variations in the model become apparent and raise questions about the essentials of COSA.

Technological tools for monitoring offenders in society

Katy de Kogel

How can technological tools contribute to supervising and reintegrating offenders in society? Globally, technological tools for supervision are broken down into so-called first generation (GPS tracking) and second generation (smartphone and sensor technology). An overview is given of what is globally known about the effectiveness and assumed mechanisms of action of first-generation technical tools. Then it is explored what added value second-generation technical aids can have and to which working mechanisms they could connect. Smartphone and sensor technology have the potential to contribute to the rehabilitation functions of the supervision, inter alia because they offer possibilities for more personalized supervision and for the combination of supervision and treatment. Although initiatives have been started in this regard and research is ongoing, hardly anything is known yet about the effectiveness of these new technological applications. The reliability and safety of IT, as well as ethical and legal aspects also require attention.