

11<sup>th</sup> international conference of the European Forum for Restorative Justice

## JUSTICE BEYOND BORDERS

Restorative connections through space and language

Sassari, Italy 25-27 June 2020

The 11<sup>th</sup> international EFRJ conference takes place in the island of Sardinia. The choice of the location is not coincidental. The Mediterranean sea has always been a place of encounters, exchange, and hospitality, but also of conflict, clashes, and confrontation. The sea, apparently infinite and without borders, enabled human beings to travel towards places where they encountered natural, social and political borders.

It is the liminal metaphors of borders, boundaries, and frontiers that will inspire and challenge us throughout our 3-day event. Our main focus is understanding together the way in which restorative approaches can contribute towards undoing suffering and injustices that are experienced by people because of physical, economic, cultural, political and social borders. Only by getting closer to limits, can we re-examine identities, transcend constructed barriers and discover new ways to embrace diversity and live together at peace.

Also, 2020 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EFRJ. Restorative justice itself has come of age and it is part of a larger eco-system. In the light of modern global challenges, we want to understand also the way in which the restorative justice community challenges its own borders, discover new spaces and forms of practice and overcome language and cultural barriers.

### Themes

#### 1. Space and time

This theme focuses on space and time, either literally or figuratively conceived. We invite presentations that tackle these themes from various angles. Some examples could be:

- *Restorative justice and closed institutions*: How can restorative justice be conceived and done in prisons, centres for undocumented migrants, psychiatric hospitals, drug rehabilitation units, etc.? How can we create restorative spaces in oppressive spaces? How can restorative justice contribute to make the bridge with the outside world?

- *Restorative approaches in urban contexts:* How can we create and sustain restorative cities? How to stage restorative justice in unusual settings? How can buildings and borders reflect restorative values to shape people's relationships?
- *Restorative approaches in educational settings:* How does a school become a restorative space? How does a school find time for building restorative relationships?
- *Restorative justice and relational borders:* How can restorative processes tackle class, gender, generational, religious, national, and racial differences, acknowledge them and transform relations of oppression?
- *Boundaries in restorative processes:* When are boundaries appropriate between stakeholders, and between practitioners and stakeholders? How to make of a restorative justice an ordinary day to day practice?
- *Restorative justice and time:* How can we conceive of the notion of restoring the future by generating new meanings or memories of the past? How can we engage in intergenerational or historical forms of conflict?
- *Restorative justice and criminal justice:* How can we create distance and proximity with the criminal justice system? How can different uses of "time" be adjusted in both systems? How can we align spaces? How to use restorative justice in cases of cross border crimes?

## 2. Language and narratives

This theme focuses on language and narratives. We invite presentations that tackle these themes from various angles. Some examples could be:

- *Restorative justice across languages:* How does the word "restorative" translate in different languages and does it retain the same meaning in all cultures? What is the meaning of this word and its roots? Why do English speaking countries refer to restorative justice while so many other countries stick with penal mediation?
- *Restorative justice beyond language:* Do all participants understand words in the same way? What of people with different verbal and cognitive abilities? How can they be supported to participate actively in a process dominated by verbal communication?
- *Restorative justice across borders:* How do key restorative justice values and principles travel across cultural and relational borders?
- *Restorative language and narratives:* What are words that polarise (e.g. victim-offender labels), and which words restorative justice should cultivate?
- *Restorative justice practices:* Is the "script" really restorative? How can restorative justice be integrated and complement other practices (e.g. therapy)?
- *Beyond restorative justice practices:* What innovative non-verbal communication practices are emerging to engage people in dialogue (rituals, song writing, storytelling, drawing, movement, painting, gift making, diaries, letters)? How to connect with practices sharing the same restorative justice goals and values but not necessarily following the "restorative justice rules"?