



European Forum for Restorative Justice

Annual Report 2005

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Leuven, March 2006

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Foreword

We are happy to present the 2005 Annual Report of the European Forum for Restorative Justice v.z.w. The Forum has, thanks to an excellent Secretariat, dedicated members and associates, succeeded in keeping up the work of promoting and further developing restorative justice in Europe.

In 2005 the Forum has focused on international networking and cooperation on more arenas and in different settings. For example, the AGIS 2 project has greatly added to the cooperation across national borders, stimulating the development of restorative justice both in the participating countries and in general. Also the communication and cooperation with the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations has become more frequent and closer in 2005.

In June 2005 a *Summer School for Mediators* was organised in Plzen in the Czech Republic. This was a follow-up of the AGIS 1 project which focused on the training of mediators and legal practitioners, and was finished in 2004. The positive experience with the summer school was important and will be of great value in the future for further developing and organising training for different groups such as mediators and legal practitioners.

The AGIS 2 project on *Meeting the challenges of introducing victim-offender mediation in Central and Eastern Europe* was successfully finalised with an expert meeting and seminar in Sofia in September-October 2005. The two years' project has contributed to bringing restorative justice forward in the Central and Eastern European countries, and also to establishing and strengthening a more structured and systematic dialogue and networking in the field of restorative justice between the Central, Eastern and Western European countries.

Of great importance has been the follow-up of the initiative to create a European Union Council Decision setting up a European Network of national contact points for restorative justice. The final break-through came when the Austrian and the Finnish Presidencies of the European Union agreed, in 2006, to cooperate with the Forum to take further steps in this matter. The first meeting will be held in Vienna in June 2006, followed up by a meeting in Helsinki in December 2006.

In addition to the Network of national contact points that will need our attention in 2006, the Forum will organise its biennial conference on 15-17 June in Barcelona. The conference is titled *Restorative Justice and Beyond – An Agenda for Europe*. For the first time the programme of the conference includes also restorative practices not directly associated to the criminal justice system.

A constant challenge is the fundraising activities that also have to be done in 2006 and 2007. In 2006 we are hoping for fresh AGIS money to implement an ambitious project with more restorative justice related objectives. One of them will address the conditions of restorative justice programmes and practices in the southern parts of Europe.

Last but not least, we would very much like to improve the dialogue with both our individual and organisational members. To be able to create an even more dynamic organisation that can support and bring forward the development of restorative justice even stronger than so far, we are dependent on active contributions and the cooperation of our members all over Europe. We are interested to hear your opinions, views and ideas about how the active

participation by the members can best be facilitated. Which arenas and forums should be created to make such cooperation more easily accessible?

If you have comments on this report or the functioning of the European Forum in general, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat or the members of the Board.

Siri Kemény

Chair

1. Short information about the Forum

The European Forum for Restorative Justice v.z.w. is a non-governmental not-for-profit organisation established according to Belgian law. It was officially created during the first General Meeting, organised in Leuven (Belgium) on 8 and 9 December 2000. Its statutes were published in the Belgian Official Journal on 19 April 2001.

The *general aim* of the Forum is to help establish and develop victim-offender mediation and other restorative justice practices throughout Europe. To further this general aim, the Forum pursues, amongst others, following *objectives*: promoting international exchange of information; promoting the development of effective restorative justice policies, services and legislation; exploring and developing the theoretical basis of restorative justice; stimulating research; and assisting the development of principles, ethics, training and good practice.

The Forum has a permanent *secretariat*, located within the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Catholic University of Leuven, Hooverplein 10, 3000 Leuven, Belgium.

2. The European Forum Board

The *Board* of the Forum, which was elected during the 2004 General Meeting, is composed of: Siri Kemény (Norway) as Chair, Ivo Aertsen (Belgium) as Vice-Chair, João Lázaro (Portugal) as Treasurer, Martin Wright (United Kingdom) as Secretary, Frauke Petzold (Germany), Jaime Martin (Spain), Vira Zemlyanska (Ukraine) and Vidia Negrea (Hungary). Margaret Carey (United Kingdom) resigned from the Board in April 2005.

3. Membership

The Forum has a mixed *membership* structure. There are full (with voting rights) and associate (without voting rights) members. Both individuals and organisations (governmental and non-governmental) have the right to become a member.

In 2005 29 new members were accepted: 17 individual members with full voting rights, 8 associate individual members, 1 local organisation with full voting rights, 1 national governmental organisation with full voting rights, and 2 national NGOs with full voting rights.

Seven members with full voting rights resigned in 2005.

The membership of 28 members was terminated by the 2005 General Meeting since these members had not paid their membership fees.

This means that at the end of the year 2005, the Forum had 200 members.

4. Overview of the activities

4.1. General Meeting

The 2005 General Meeting was held in two different sessions.

The first meeting was organised in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 1 October 2005, right after the closure of the final seminar of the AGIS 2 project (see below). It was attended by 33 members and 3 non-members. Proxy votes were given by another 29 members. The minutes of the meeting can be found on the website (<http://www.euforumrj.org>), under the heading activities.

During the meeting, reports were presented of the activities of the Board, the Secretariat and the committees.

Next to recurrent formal issues, like the approval of the report of the previous General Meeting, the approval of the accounts and budget and membership matters, following important issues were handled:

- The functioning of the Forum and its priorities. For the first time since the start of the Forum the membership fees were increased.
- Changing the name and the constitution of the European Forum.

Changes to the constitution (which include changing the name) can only be made at a General Meeting where 2/3 of the members with full membership status are present or represented and if 2/3 of those present or represented agree with the changes. This meant that, taking into account the changes in membership that were made during the General Meeting, the total number of members with full membership status at that moment was 159. To make the changes, at least 106 members should have been present or represented. However, only 61 full members were present or represented at the General Meeting.

The Belgian law allows a second General Meeting to be organised if the first one does not reach the quorum for making changes to the constitution. For this second General Meeting, which must be announced 15 days on beforehand, there is no minimum limit for number of members present or represented.

A second meeting was then organised in Maastricht, The Netherlands, on 26 October 2005. It was attended by 22 members and 1 non-member. This meeting was devoted almost exclusively to the discussion about the changes to the constitution and to the name of the Forum. All changes were accepted unanimously. The name of the European Forum was hence changed to "European Forum for Restorative Justice".

4.2. Board meetings

In 2005 the Board met twice; once in Ljubljana (Slovenia) on 6-8 February, and once in Sofia (Bulgaria) on 2-4 October.

Important elements of discussion during these meetings were the Barcelona conference, the financial state of affairs, and the work of the committees.

During the Board meetings, concrete projects were also discussed, for example the AGIS 2 project (see further), and any new projects to be introduced.

Strategies for actively involving the membership in the activities of the Forum were discussed as well as different ways to increase the membership benefits.

Much attention went to the overall policies of the Forum and to the internal functioning of the organisation.

Finally, the changes to the constitution and the renaming of the organisation were prepared during the Board meetings.

4.3. Committees

Five committees have been set up within the Forum. The *information committee* gathers and processes information on restorative justice developments in the different countries. The *communication committee* provides the mechanisms of dissemination of information to the outside world and within the Forum. The *newsletter editorial board* is part of this committee. The *practice and training committee* identifies, promotes and supports principles of good practice. The *research committee* promotes and develops research that informs and supports practice and policy developments.

As in previous years it proved quite difficult to get active participation in the committees.

The *information committee*, which has no chair for 2005, took a break after having worked hard on the *Mapping Restorative Justice* book in 2004.

In 2005 the *communication committee* (Chair: Christa Pelikan, Austria) focused on organising the bi-annual conference "*Restorative justice an Beyond – An Agenda for Europe*", which will take place in Barcelona (Spain) on 15-17 June 2006.

During 2005, the members of the *practice and training committee* (Chair: Niall Kearney, UK) focused on organising a summer school for trainers and managers in victim-offender mediation and restorative justice. The summer school took place in June 2005 in the Czech Republic.

The chair of the *research committee* (Inge Vanfraechem, Belgium; replaced by Borbala Fellegi, Hungary, as from 2006) regularly sent out information concerning conferences, research initiatives, etc. to the members of her committee. The committee functions as a network of interested persons.

4.4. Newsletter

In 2005 there was no co-ordinator of the newsletter editorial board, and responsibility for producing the newsletter was divided between the members of the editorial board. In October 2005, Board member Vira Zemlyanska agreed to take on the position as co-ordinator of the newsletter editorial board.

The newsletter appeared only twice in 2005: a normal issue (8 pages) in April, and a double issue (20 pages) in December.

The main articles in 2005 covered developments in Slovakia, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Portugal. Much attention was given to the results of the AGIS2 project (see further). Reports of conferences were included, as well as information about European projects and developments within the Forum. The Bulletin Board, Newsflash and Readers' Corner were regular sections in the newsletter.

The newsletter was sent to all the members as part of their membership benefits. It was also presented at several restorative justice and related conferences as

promotion material. One organisation is buying the newsletter for its library without being a member of the Forum. With other organisations the Forum has established an exchange of newsletters.

4.5. Information provision

The Secretariat, the Chair and the Vice-Chair dealt with numerous requests for information. They pertained to information about the Forum, information about contact persons or institutions in other countries, information about training or educational programmes in restorative justice, and information about specific aspects of restorative justice.

As the Secretariat is hosted by the Catholic University of Leuven, information and literature is provided on a regular basis to students, not only from Leuven but also from abroad.

4.6. Website

In 2005 the Secretariat tried to keep the information on the website up-to-date. However, this is a time-consuming job. Also, only a small amount of requests to put information on the website are being received. Updating the website and providing current information would be easier if the membership of the Forum contacted the Secretariat regularly with news about events, publications and developments. This information could then be made available on the website as well as be included in a newsflash.

The discussion room on our website is still not being used very often.

Work is still being done to improve the reading room on the website. Although the database is in need of updating, it can still be a valuable source of information with its + 1600 entries.

In 2005 the structure of the website was re-organised a bit, and a new section for country-specific information was added.

4.7. Representation of the Forum

In 2005, the European Forum was represented at the following events by the Chair or Vice-Chair:

- A small conference organised by the Nordic Mediation Forum in Haikku, Finland, 2-4 September 2005. A draft book on mediation in general in the Nordic countries was the main subject of discussion.

4.8. Financial situation and funding applications

In 2005, the Norwegian government, together with the Norwegian National Mediation Service, agreed to support the Forum for three consecutive years. Unfortunately this funding is not enough to keep the Forum up and running. This means that searching for funding remains the number one priority for the year 2006.

4.9. Projects

2005 was the second year of the AGIS 2 project on *Meeting the challenges of introducing victim-offender mediation in Central and Eastern Europe*.

This project started in December 2003 and ran until the end of November 2005. The general objective of the project was to realise, in two years, an effective support to the development of VOM in Central and Eastern European countries. The specific objectives of the project were:

- 1) to study, at the conceptual and practical level, what the possibilities are for implementing VOM in Central and Eastern European countries given their specific political, economical, cultural and legal background.
- 2) to discuss how the experience in Western European countries can inform and support the development of VOM in Central and Eastern European countries.
- 3) to prepare strategies for promoting the development of an integrated policy concerning VOM in Central and Eastern European countries.
- 4) to actively work towards creating dynamics for exchange and co-operation (networking) between Central and Eastern European countries in this field.
- 5) to discuss what Western European countries can learn from the developments in criminal justice in Central and Eastern European countries.
- 6) to study what can be learned from the previous points in terms of policy development concerning VOM at the level of the European Union.

In the framework of this project, 2 expert meetings and 2 seminars were organised.

The second expert meeting and second seminar took place in 2005.

The final report of this project can be downloaded from the website of the European Forum.

4.10. International initiatives

European Network

In 2002, the Belgian government took the initiative to adopt a Council Decision setting up a European Network of national contact points for restorative justice.¹ The idea was that this network should support the effective implementation of restorative justice through national policies and by criminal justice agencies. The initiative had been taken in close co-operation with the European Forum, and the proposed network should be seen as complementary to, and supportive for, the work of the Forum.

The Belgian proposal was sent to the European Parliament for consideration, and it gave a positive advice in April 2003. The next step is that the proposal should be dealt with by the Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs in the Council of the European Union. When this will happen is completely dependent on the political initiative of the Council.

In the second part of the year 2005 it has become clear that the upcoming Austrian and Finnish Presidencies of the European Union were willing to pick up this idea again. In 2006, two meetings will be organised to discuss further steps to be taken.

¹ Official Journal: C 242/20, 8.10.2002, p.20.

COST

A number of members of the European Forum are taking part in COST Action A21 "Restorative justice developments in Europe".

COST ('European Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technological Research') is an intergovernmental European framework for international co-operation between nationally funded research activities. COST is not financing research directly, but the exchange, analysis and co-ordination of research.

COST Action A21 aims at enhancing and deepening the knowledge on theoretical and practical aspects of restorative justice in Europe. In this respect, a network of researchers has agreed to work together during four years in order to exchange and discuss research needs, methods and results; co-ordinate research projects in the respective countries as far as possible and desirable; and stimulate and support further (common) research projects. More precisely, the action is focused on four domains around each of which a working group has been established:

- Evaluative research on RJ practices: the study of the process and the effects of VOM and conferencing, the study of national recording systems of data and the study of organisational features, job evaluation and satisfaction (the contact person for this working group is Ida Hyde: Ida.Hyde@hia.no);
- Policy oriented research: the comparative study of national legislation in relation to VOM, the study of the relation between criminal justice and RJ practices and agencies, the study of training models and training of legal professionals in the RJ area, and the study of new RJ models and applications (the contact person for this working group is Michael Kilchling: M.Kilchling@mpicc.de);
- Theoretical research: the study of theoretical concepts, approaches and frameworks on RJ (the contact person for this working group is Robert Mackay: remackay@pkc.gov.uk)
- Restorative justice, violent conflicts and mass victimisation (the contact person for this working group is Jana Arsovska: jana_arsovska@hotmail.com).

In the year 2005 the working groups met twice: once on 3-4 February 2005 in Ljubljana (Slovenia), and once on 27-28 October 2005 in Maastricht (the Netherlands).

More information about COST Action A21 can be found on the Forum's website since the European Forum is providing webspace for the Action.

5. Financial report

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Letter from the accountant

Attachment 1: Balance-sheet Forum 31/12/2005 (in Euro)

Attachment 2: Costs-Incomes and Budget 2005-2006 (in Euro)

ABS

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3000 LEUVEN
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FAX 016-20 70 06

ACCOUNTANTS & BELASTINGCONSULENTEN

To whom it may concern

9th of June 2006

Datum

Re: Auditors' report of the VZW European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice, Hooverplein 10, 3000 Leuven (abbreviation : the Forum).

As auditor we have examined the balance of 31 december 2005 of the VZW European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice, as well as the profit-and-loss account and explanations for the year 2005 as it was closed on december 31, 2005.

We are not part of the Board of this VZW.

Our examination has been performed according to the standards for control and consequently include the sample surveys and the controle methods that were considered necessary in the given circumstances.

The bookkeeping-entries were controlled and were found to be consistent with the available pieces of evidence.

The situation 2005 is the faithful reflection of the costs incurred and incomes received in the year 2005. In our opinion the attached balance gives a faithful image of the capital and of the financial situation of the VZW on 31 december 2005, as well as of the results of its activities for the year that was closed on before-mentioned date, composed in accordance with the bookkeeping legislation and the commonly accepted Belgian bookkeeping principles which are being applied in an identical way.

The financial year was closed with a profit of 3.745,22 euro.

This means that the VZW's own property was 21.541,26 euro on 31/12/05 (2.796,04 euro from 2004 + 16.100,00 euro mutation in provision personnel + 3.745,22 euro profit from 2005).

The final balance on 31 december 2005 provides a total balance of 67.650,56 euro.



Dominique Vaes
Business Manager of ABS Accountants BVBA
Accountant I.A.B.
With number of legitimisation 221433 N 96



BURGERLIJKE
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ONDER DE VORM
VAN EEN BESLOTEN
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ATTACHMENT 1

Balance-sheet Forum 31/12/2005 (in Euro)
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Assets		Liabilities	
Fixed assets	400,47	Own capital	21.541,26
Customers	612,00	Suppliers	35.470,98
Membership fees receivable	1.785,00	Invoices receivable	2.114,75
Other receivables	40.812,18	Vacation provision	2.678,57
Bank account	9530,36	Deferred income	5.845,00
Savings account	14.009,34		
Cash	501,21		
Deferred charges	0,00		
TOTAL	67.650,56	TOTAL	67.650,56

ATTACHMENT 2

COSTS-INCOMES AND BUDGET 2005-2006 (IN EURO)

COSTS	Budget '05	Result '05	Budget '06
Postage	2.000,00	1.618,86	20.000,00 for all 'running' costs
Copies	350,00	33,79	
Travel, accommodation	2.000,00	2.410,81	
Office supplies	725,00	351,59	
Documentation	0,00	0,00	
Computer supplies	100,00	0,00	
Other	0,00	202,32	
Software	180,00	157,30	
Website	0,00	1.948,10	
Accountancy	1.100,00	1.923,90	
Newsletter	1.050,00	633,53	
Publications	700,00	751,03	
Membership	90,00	95,00	
Financial	400,00	684,93	
Representation	250,00	256,47	
Meetings	500,00	0,00	
Conference organisation	0,00	0,00	22.000,00
Conference travel & accommodation	0,00	0,00	
Conference office supplies	0,00	0,00	
Conference publications	0,00	483,71	
Conference financial	0,00	0,00	
Conference postage	0,00	0,00	
Summer school	0,00	5.808,54	
AGIS II staff costs	35.900,00	40.651,24	
AGIS II equipment	550,00	550,65	
AGIS II documentation	400,00	0,00	
AGIS II conferences & seminars	36.370,00	33.604,11	
AGIS II publications	1.550,00	2.349,48	
AGIS II overhead	2.600,00	2.743,87	
Personnel	2.000,00	2.014,05	27.500,00
Vacation provision	100,00	-221,34	
Provision personnel	-25.000,00	-16.100,00	
Provision computer supplies	0,00	0,00	
Memberships not paid	0,00	680,00	
Overhead KUL	125,00	433,21	
TOTALS	64.040,00	84.065,15	69.500,00
INCOMES	Budget '05	Result '05	Budget '06
COST	0,00	2.000,00	0,00
Norway	0,00	12.329,46	12.000,00
AGIS II	54.159,00	49.668,19	0,00
AGIS II registration fees Sofia	0,00	3.685,00	
Summer school	0,00	7.216,00	
Conference	0,00	0,00	27.000,00
Membership	8.000,00	10.845,00	10.000,00
Books, newsletter	1.500,00	1.300,00	400,00
Financial	100,00	566,72	
Other	0,00	200,00	10.100,00
TOTALS	63.759,00	87.810,37	59.500,00
REST	-281,00	3.745,22	-10.000,00