

Editorial

Hello everyone,

A very warm welcome to the first edition of the EFRJ Newsletter for 2016! This is the only edition that I have responsibility for this year as I will be going on maternity leave again — we are expecting another little girl which is very exciting for our family! In my absence, the editorial team will be rotating responsibility for the next two electronic editions and the final print edition. They have some really good ideas and I hope that you will enjoy what they produce. I will then be resuming my responsibilities from January 2017. Please note that the team will be monitoring the inbox, so please continue to send any comments, queries or suggestions for content that you might have.

In this first edition, we begin with some news from the new Executive Director. Daria Nashat introduces herself as the new Executive Director of the EFRJ. She has had a long and varied history of working within conflict resolution approaches and her underlying philosophy is undeniably restorative in focus — the questions that arose from her experience will be familiar to us all. It is exciting to have a new Executive Director so passionate, committed and driven joining the EFRJ at a time when a lot of questions about focus and change are underway. I hope you will enjoy her contribution and support the work that she plans to do during her tenure. We appreciate Daria for taking the time to write this overview for us.

In terms of substantive content, this edition offers two very different and thought provoking articles. The first describes an innovative programme which seeks to reignite the practice of mediation within schools. The authors provide an honest account of both the challenges and the benefits of working in these settings. Many thanks to Dr Ulrike Tabbert, Steffen Güll and Stefan Jäger for sharing their experience with us; I hope that they have future success in further stimulating practice in this area!

In our second contribution, Patrizia Patrizi, Gian Luigi Lepri and Ernesto Lodi provide an overview of their project and attempt to develop a 'restorative city' much like those that have been developed in England. Their commitment to the potential of restorative justice as a mechanism for transformation within the ways in which individuals perceive problems and resolve them is inspiring — as is the support and involvement of the local community and government agencies!

There is no doubt that forging alliances with criminal justice practitioners with a commitment to social justice will offer fruitful outcomes in terms of moving restorative justice from the periphery of the system and offer more tangible benefits on a daily basis. I hope that you find this article interesting!

Finally, Mandy Thompson has written us an overview of the 'Building Bridges Conference: Supporting Victims of Crime through Restorative Dialogue' which took place in Rome in November last year. The 'Building Bridges Project,' as you will recall from edition 16.3 in 2015, looks into the challenges of spreading restorative justice across Europe and explores how we might create more and better opportunities for restorative dialogues between groups of victims and groups of offenders. We are very grateful to Mandy for taking the time to provide insight into what happened at this conference. If you are attending any events and would like to share your impressions, please feel free to send us your contribution — we would be happy to include it in future editions!

We would be keen to hear your thoughts on any developments on restorative justice, theory or practice; so please feel free to get in touch with the team at Editor@Euforumrj.org. I would also encourage you to email us with any thoughts or responses that you might have to the articles that have been written for this edition as we would like to develop a new feature which highlights your reactions or feedback on other members' work. Any ideas that you may have about the structure or content of the newsletter, any offers to contribute to it in the form of written articles and information about events would also be very welcomed.

We hope that this year will begin a greater involvement of our readership with the editorial committee and other readers.

We look forward to receiving any thoughts, advice or contributions from you over the next coming months.

With very best wishes,

Dr Kerry Clamp

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The new Executive Director

Dear Members,

It is my pleasure to introduce myself to you as the new Executive Director of the European Forum for Restorative Justice. I can imagine that you may be curious to know a little bit more about my background and experience. If I only had one sentence to introduce myself, I would probably say that I like to build bridges, to educate and to work in the fields of peace, community building and restorative justice. My interest in these areas was shaped by my youth in the American sector of West Berlin and the historic fall of the wall in 1989, which left a lasting impression. I will never forget the emotions and expressions of joy, disbelief and gratitude about the newly won freedom — a precious good I had taken for granted and had never questioned.

The experience in Berlin strengthened my interest in international politics and led me to study political science with a focus on international relations and education at Tübingen University. During this period, I also had the chance to study abroad at the University of Minnesota and the University of Leuven and to spend time researching civil-military cooperation for my Master's thesis at NATO in Brussels. Shortly thereafter, I began working at the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe dealing with regional refugee and displacement issues in the former Yugoslavia. The Stability Pact's objective was to address regional challenges and to facilitate a dialogue between the countries of South-Eastern Europe with donors and international organisations for post-conflict development and European integration. During my extensive travels throughout the region, I listened to the stories of those displaced by war and I started to understand that, in addition to basic needs of life, we all have an overarching need for dignity, self-determination and justice. It also gave me new insights into the complexity of post-conflict environments, return and integration questions, and very practical issues such as property rights and restitution.

I have since continued to work in related fields in Europe and the United States, including on international human rights at the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in the US House of Representatives and local community building in the former Yugoslavia at the Dutch peace organisation PAX, among others. The work and collaboration with local partners — individuals and NGOs — was one of the best aspects of my work: their resilience, leadership, and resourcefulness was inspiring and I have learned much about community building by observing their work in the most challenging places such as Mitrovica. As a res-

ult of these experiences, I became interested in resilience questions and started getting involved with the 'Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience' (STAR) training at the centre for Justice and Peacebuilding in Virginia, USA. As part of my journey to become a STAR practitioner, I studied the impact of trauma, cycles of violence, ways to build resilience for individuals and communities, and the role of restorative justice. In this context, I also started working on self-care and on organisational strategies of how to take better care of staff working in high-risk and high-stress environments.

I believe that the key restorative justice principles of respect, dignity, interconnectedness, responsibility and healing can guide our personal as much as our professional lives. I therefore hope that restorative justice approaches will not only advance our criminal justice system, but will help transform our societal responses to wrongdoing by addressing the needs and obligations of all affected. How would our homes, schools, workplaces, institutions, and societies look like if we were to empower those harmed and encourage those who have done harm to take responsibility and to 'put things right?'

As a European network, the EFRJ can move forward a shared vision of more restorative justice in our societies. It is an exciting time to be joining an organisation that is in the process of a strategic review. Let me thank you for your feedback and input to this process via our Membership Survey. Together, we can further develop the EFRJ as a vibrant network, community and a centre of excellence in the field. I am also pleased that the EFRJ is exploring what role RJ approaches can play in addressing contemporary challenges in Europe such as the refugee situation. The re-

cent ALTERNATIVE action research on new understandings of security and justice in inter-cultural settings clearly demonstrates that we have something to offer here.

After my first two months with the EFRJ and based on the insights of the Forum 15 process, there are three areas that I together with the Board will focus on in order to move the EFRJ forward as a successful and thriving network organisation:

1. Strengthen the EFRJ secretariat by focusing on core priorities, strategic planning, internal structures and procedures including work-life balance;
2. Engage with the EFRJ members in order to
 - a) further develop the potential of the network:
 - i. as a learning community for the exchange of knowledge and experiences;
 - ii. for research partnerships and mutual assistance; and
 - iii. for contributing actively in the ongoing policy debates;

- b) expand the network, explore synergies, further liaise with strategic partners (European Commission, Council of Europe among others) and follow policy implementation to increase awareness and visibility of RJ in Europe and beyond;

and to

3. Make better available research findings on the effectiveness and evidence of restorative justice and restorative practices, which will show the practical relevance of our field.

It is my pleasure to be joining the EFRJ at such an important moment in its history. I look forward to a fruitful partnership and to meeting you in person at our 2016 Leiden Conference in June!

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International Mediation Day at a private school

Despite mediation being perceived to be on the rise, social workers in schools often do not have time to regularly provide training courses for our next generation. We, a team of voluntary mediators in Schwerin/Germany, a medium-sized town on the Baltic coast of north Germany, embarked on a project to revive peer-mediation in a secondary school. The second International Mediation Day which took place on the 18th June 2015 provided us with an opportunity to do just that.

Initiated through private contacts, we got in touch with the [Ecolea International School](#) in Schwerin. They welcomed our idea as they previously had run a training programme for peer mediators. However, with these pupils leaving school after their A-Levels, restorative practices had died out. The school hoped our project could be the spark to bring it back to life. On the day, a class of 12-year-olds was eagerly awaiting us, curious to know why we had come. We had compiled a programme to introduce the idea of mediation in a playful way. To begin with, we asked the 21 pupils whether they had ever experienced quarrelling or even fighting over something. They immediately came up with a wealth of examples which we then used to explain the key notions of restorative practice. Next, we laid out a rope on the floor asking all children to step onto it. The boy at the far right was invited to move to the other end of the rope while not leaving it. He did a great job asking his classmates who remained standing on the rope to help him get past either verbally or through non-verbal communication. After he had led the way, we successively asked all the others to follow

which created a bulk of kids at the left end of the rope. Once they figured out that they needed more space at the left end, they shouted that the others should move further to the right to enable everybody to stand on the rope.

At the end, we asked the pupils to reflect on what this exercise taught them. They pointed out that it was easier to cooperate with those they liked but harder with others. Some kids openly expressed dislike for some of their classmates which we tried to re-phrase. Although we sensed several lingering conflicts in this class, one girl said that she had seen her class working together as a team solving a task for the first time. We used this honest account to initiate a discussion about individual needs like comfort zones, respectful interaction, cooperative behaviour, politeness and verbal and non-verbal communication on a level adequate for children. Our second exercise was a task called 'building the highest tower.' The kids were grouped randomly into five teams. Four groups were each given the task to build a tower as high as possible out of three sheets of paper using one pair of scissors and one glue stick. The

‘builders’ were given five minutes to complete the task. The fifth group, the ‘observers,’ was briefed additionally on feedback rules. We asked them to observe the other four groups with a particular focus on how any conflicts were solved. The exercise confirmed our impression of existing resentments between some of the pupils which manifested in loud shouting or complete withdrawal of participation when disagreements arose.

The observers were subsequently asked to identify the techniques of conflict resolution they witnessed. They mentioned that the groups which solved the task best were the ones which had a constructive, inclusive atmosphere. Interestingly, although not everybody had the same share of actual work to do, the observers only mentioned this concerning those who withdrew. Following this, we introduced a ‘talk-stone’ together with the rule that only the person who has got the stone is allowed to talk while the others have to listen until it was their turn. This calmed down the atmosphere heated by some very active pupils. We continued reformulating offensive remarks without talking with a wagging finger. The observers came to our assistance by formulating their impressions in a neutral way. This way of presenting their observations was visibly strenuous for them, as was indicated by a slower pace of speaking. One boy even started to recall every detail he had observed which we cut short after a while by asking what the most important observations were for him. Eventually two observers openly expressed their difficulties in not evaluating their observations.

After the observers, the builders were given time to express their thoughts initiated by the question what they found easy or difficult in relation to the task. Here again, antipathy was openly expressed but it was not as salient as before. Some pupils were able to express feelings of being overlooked or excluded when working on the task; others expressed wishes such as ‘we should do this more often.’ We highlighted active listening as one key technique for problem solving as well as

detecting other people’s wishes and needs. After 90 minutes, we presented them with the ‘talk-stone’ as a gift. The teacher mentioned that the class had agreed upon rules of collective behaviour which they had written down and hung up in their classroom. However, the teacher said, these rules were not observed. She hoped our session would be a reminder of those rules and the ‘talk-stone’ a means to channel discussions. To sum up, our initiative can only be a first spark and shows that it makes a difference whether a school has a continuing programme to establish peer mediation as part of their school concept or whether this is just a one-time project. As for the conflicts we expect to be present in this class, mediation could be a tool to solve them. We hope that our session will contribute to implementing restorative practices in the next generation and that peer-mediation can have a long-term impact.

Meanwhile we introduced mediation to a class at another school in Schwerin ([Niels Stensen Catholic School](#)) by using a similar concept. As these schools both employ social workers we hope that the need for implementing restorative practices will be seized by them and that mediation turns into common learning content in schools. We plan to continue our initiative on the occasion of next year’s International Mediation Day.

For more information, take a look at [the Mediation-Berlin-Schwerin website](#).

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Toward a relational and restorative community to prevent crime and to promote well-being: building an Italian restorative city in Tempio Pausania (Sardinia)

Our project took place in Tempio Pausania, a town in northern Sardinia in Italy. The title of the project is ‘Study and analysis of the restorative practices for the creation of a model of restorative city’ which forms part of a larger regional project entitled: ‘Information System and Governance of intervention policies and contrast of crime’ (R.L. 07/2007). Taking inspiration from the model of the UK Restorative Cities program, we used an action research methodology to test whether and how restorative practices are able to involve the whole community — schools, families, police, courts, municipalities and associations — in solving conflicts in a peaceful and relational way.

Our underlying premise was that the task of modern institutions is to reorganise and regenerate well-being and hope through the reconstruction of the relational bonds of citizens in the community where they live (Wachtel, 2013). This position has largely been based on an interest that the group, directed by Professor Patrizi, has cultivated over the last twenty years in the fields of crime prevention, evaluation of effectiveness of the standards of justice, restorative justice and the promotion of community well-being. The idea for the project emerged from the social conflict that arose in 2013, in response to the opening of the new Penitentiary of Tempio Pausania-Nuchis. The jail was supposed to 'host' prisoners of mafia-related crimes coming from outside the region of Sardinia and the local community was not very happy about this development. The aim of the project was to build a community based on social inclusion and social cohesion, as recommended by [Europe 2020](#).

Thus, the project has been shared with the Penitentiary of Tempio Pausania-Nuchis and the Town Hall allowed us to start a process of restorative conferences, focus groups and specialist seminars conducted in a framework of community approach. All of the activities that took place during the project had the main objective of raising awareness and engagement in restorative practices. As we see it, restorative conferences build the opportunity to connect the inside world to the outside world. Furthermore, conferences allow the expression of strong emotions but with a more integrated outlook. As such, we encouraged participants to view the prison not in isolation from the community, but rather as a network of people and the relationships that could exist between prisoners, operators, free citizens, external professionals. This was the initial step for us to build a community based on restorative practices.

The specific aims of the project were:

- to build a restorative community model applicable to the Sardinian context with social and institutional actors involved according to the indicators that evaluate their feasibility and effectiveness;
- to detect, disclose and promote good practice at the local, national and European level in relation to restorative justice programmes and mediation;
- to analyse the state of restorative practices initiated in other contexts and their feasibility in view of governance;
- to explore the strengths and critical elements in the implementation of a restorative community model highlighted by involved key informants; and, finally
- to engage with the various agencies involved in order to share experiences and practices aimed

at the implementation of the model.

Theoretical framework

The project operates according to the UN Economic and Social Council (N. 2000/14 of 27/06/2000) definition of restorative justice as:

[...] any process in which the victim and the offender and, where appropriate, any other individuals or community members affected by a crime, participate actively together in the resolution of matters arising from the crime, generally with the help of a facilitator.

In this way, we used an approach that considers the offence mainly in terms of the harm caused to others and the 'fractures' in relationships that occur within a community as a result of offending. Our model focuses not on the penalty and the offender, but on ways to heal the harm (Zehr, 1990) beyond mere financial compensation to the victim. In our framework, we prefer an orientation to the generation/regeneration of social harmony between social partners through a search for consensus, sharing and social peace (Patrizi and Lepri, 2011, 2012).

Since restorative justice has the immediate potential to combine the needs of rehabilitation and social security through community involvement and conflict management, we tried to build in Tempio Pausania an occasion to initiate a cultural change:

- trying to involve all communities to bring a sense of a 'Restorative City' (such as has happened in Hull and Leeds in England);
- involving schools to adopt a restorative justice model of conflict resolution; and
- trying to organise all the services and commercial stores to promote a peaceful management view of everyday life and to give back to the community the ability to manage and resolve conflicts (Wright, 2002, 2010).

The literature on restorative justice contains a complex international debate about implementing measures and operational protocols in the judicial system, with the purpose of promoting individual and collective welfare, combating recidivism and spreading societal security (Braithwaite, 1989; Chapman, 2012; Miers and Aertsen, 2012). These indicate the need to revise penal systems in the light of scientific evidence and operational considerations. Recently Italy has introduced new laws that lead in this direction (including Law No. 67 of 28/04/14 and [Directive 2012/29/EU](#) of 25/10/12). The model of conflict management at the community level allows the development of early years education, supporting the use of restorative approaches

as educational tools for reciprocity and responsibility in relationships with others.



Our project is founded on several studies that have shown that community-based programmes are more effective in reducing re-offending and societal conflicts and encouraging responsibility and participation by supporting people to manage conflicts and problems (McIvor, 1991; Petersilia and Turner, 1993; Aos et al., 2006; Cellini, 2009). In recent decades the contribution of positive psychology to this has been acknowledged, redirecting research attention to the growth and development of persons in their environment, aiming to promote skills and attitudes that match the complex reality in which they live (Catalano et al., 2004; Nota et al., 2015). Central constructs in this perspective are:

- Hope (the ability to set goals and identify the strategies needed to pursue them, Snyder, 2000);
- Optimism (the propensity to learn the lessons of experience, Seligman, 2005);
- Resilience (the ability to engage and persist in the face of failures and negative events, Masten and Powell, 2003); and
- Courage (continuing to face challenges for equity and social well-being, Snyder et al., 2011), including challenging current norms and barriers in pursuit of the greater well-being of the community (Spreitzer and Sonenshein, 2003).

We adopt a positive view of persons and context because we think that restorative practices are the best way to activate positive resources in the people and in their environment (family, friends, work, school, services, community, etc.).

A sense of community is another important part of restorative practices. It refers to the similarity with others, a recognised interdependence, a desire to maintain this interdependence by offering or doing for others what you expect from them, the sense of belonging to a completely stable and reliable structure (Sarason, 1974). Developing this sense of community involves:

- becoming aware of the boundaries that define who is (and is not) part of a community;

- a sense of emotional connection and security through having significant ties with the people and with a place;
- personal investment in the community through contributions both tangible and intangible;
- the quality of the relationship and the sharing of a common history; and
- having a voice in decision-making that increases the sense of influence over how the community is shaped and developed (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

Intervention tools: Restorative Conference

The main instrument to build a sense of community in Tempio Pausania are restorative conferences: a series of meetings in which the different parts of the system come together to identify resources and channels for building peaceful approaches to conflict resolution (Patrizi et al., 2015). The aim is to encourage all people present, in different roles and capacities, to reflect on the meaning and potential of a relational community. Restorative Conferences give, to the prisoners and to all the community, the opportunity to think about the links between territory and imprisonment. Thus, the meeting between those living in prison as a prisoner and the operators, institutions and citizens is one of the main steps to building a community based on restorative practices. During the conference, open to the whole community, we have a diverse group of participants (judges, volunteers, educators, third sector, the PA administrators, law enforcement, etc.) and we have registered around 400 people who have attended eight restorative conferences.



Finally, during the restorative justice week, we had another opportunity to strengthen social ties by hosting a restorative lunch 'proloco' on the 19th November 2014 during the International Week of Restorative Justice. This lunch was attended by a delegation of prisoners who, for the first time in many years, had the opportunity to sit at a table outside the penitentiary with people who were not prison mates. Attendees

(130 people) included members from local authorities, magistrates, lawyers, mayor of Tempio Pausania and Mayor of Sassari along with various councillors. Each table was marked with the words — the values of the conference — that emerged from the first restorative conference, among others: responsibility, respect, trust, reciprocity.

Research instrument: focus group and questionnaires

To evaluate the results and changes in our community we used a mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative instruments. We used focus groups (specific for different areas of community governance: Justice, Health, Safety, Education and Politics) with the aim of exploring understandings of concepts like ‘justice’ and ‘conflict resolution’ and to evaluate its changes after the conclusion of the project. During the first meeting self-assessment tools¹ were delivered to participants (e.g., perceived support, resilience, hope) to evaluate possible impacts of the action research. The focus groups are also being used also to design the restorative practices community board. This aspect of the research is ongoing until the 31 December 2016.

Conclusion

The purpose of the project that we initiated in Tempio Pausania two years ago is to build capacity within and collaborate with the community to develop new ways to respond to harm that can be caused by a crime or by other types of action in ways that respect the rights and promote the well-being of all parties involved. One of the main results has been a recent city council meeting held within the prison, which was strongly supported by the mayor and the municipal administration. This marks a major shift in viewing the prison as external to the local community and indicates a move towards a sense of sharing, overcoming stereotypical visions of buildings and persons (especially for the prison and prisoners) and facing the previous integration problem with a new point of view.

In seeking to achieve this aim, we highlighted the importance of listening to all sides in an effort to reconstruct the social structures that can be threatened and damaged by actions where problems arise, and together we can build a restorative community. A ‘restorative community’ is therefore a community based on trust, established on the basis of relationships and on mutual respect: a society based on the well-being of all its parties. The restorative community of Tempio Pausania tries to solve problems collectively; it does not expect others to manage its problems, and there is an expectation that problems will be managed in more

peaceful and positive ways for everyone. Finally, the project of Tempio Pausania leads us to work on the start-up of a helpline and a restorative service *Riparacoltando* which clearly evoke the [Directive 2012/29/EU](#) of 25 October 2012, establishing Minimum Standards on the Rights, Support and Protection of Victims of Crime. The Directive makes explicit reference to the methods of implementation of restorative justice services as a tool, not only for faster resolution of the conflict and to reduce secondary victimisation, but also as a means for crime prevention, security development and the promotion of well-being for all parties involved.

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¹The tools are: ‘Perceived Social Support Perceived’ (Zimet et al., 1988); ‘Life Orientation Test’ (Scheier et al., 1994) evaluation of propensity to optimism; ‘Hope Scale’ (Snyder et al., 1991); ‘Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale’ (Connor and Davidson, 2003); ‘Social Self-Efficacy Scale’ (Caprara, 2001).

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An overview of the ‘Building Bridges Conference: Supporting Victims of Crime through Restorative Dialogue,’ 19th and 20th November 2015, Rome

‘Building Bridges’ refers to finding ways to work across all partner organisations involved in criminal justice, of bridging the cultural and systemic differences that exist between partner countries, between the social ecology that exists in each setting. The excitement about what had been achieved to date and the promise for the future was palpable throughout the two days. The project has attempted to ensure that restorative justice lives up to its promise to the victims of crime and has extended it to include serious crimes. It has enabled the development of diverse models which are culturally relevant and begun the work of spreading this practice across Europe.

The conference on the project began with a welcome by Dr Marcella Reni, Chairlady of Prison Fellowship Italy Onlus and the Building Bridges Project Manager for Italy to delegates who travelled from all over Europe and beyond to celebrate the culmination of a unique partnership between seven European Prison Fellowship affiliates and two research institutions. Since the award of European funding in November 2013, this project has centred upon the healing of victims of crime by bringing them together with offenders in carefully managed restorative dialogue in 14 pilots across 7 countries, reaching 66 victims.

The two day conference provided the forum for the dissemination of the project’s findings, along with opportunities for discussion and debate between politicians, academics, professionals and practitioners. The timing of the conference could not have been better, as EU [Directive 2012/29/EU](#) concerning the ‘Rights of Victims of Crime’ was required to be enshrined in the laws of member states by the 16th November 2015. The directive establishes: ‘minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (and) ensures that persons who have fallen victim of crime are recognised, treated with respect and receive proper protection, support and access to justice.’

Restorative justice considers crime from an alternative perspective, one in which those affected are the main protagonists in its resolution. Dr Daniel Van Ness, Vice President of Programmes and Strategic Issues, Prison Fellowship International (PFI), reminded the conference of PFI’s working definition of restorative justice: ‘Restorative justice is a theory that emphasises repairing the harm caused by criminal behaviour. It is best accomplished through processes that include all stakeholders. When this happens, transformation occurs.’

Based in PFI’s programme Sycamore Tree, Building Bridges sought to further develop models of support for victims of crime, especially emotional support and restoration, and to promote restorative justice processes between offenders and victims across Europe. Victims of crime have the opportunity to share their experience

of that crime with offenders who have been convicted of a crime not related in any way to them. In a variety of safe and respectful settings created by trained facilitators, the project sought to contribute to changing the value systems of offenders in the aftermath of crime.

Dr Van Ness and Professor Gerry Johnstone argue that restorative justice is a ‘deeply contested concept,’ often thought of in terms of victim-offender mediation. They believe the concept can be seen from three perspectives:

- first, as an encounter, where victims and offenders meet in dialogue about the aftermath of crime;
- second, as reparation where victims benefit emotionally and otherwise from amends being made by offenders; and
- finally as transformation, where individuals and institutions are changed by the healing that can take place.

Whilst not being centred in any one of these concepts, Sycamore Tree and Building Bridges fall within all three, providing opportunities for learning and transformation to occur by sharing truths about deeply individual experiences. Many of the partners testified to the transformative power of restorative dialogue for individuals taking part in the Building Bridges Project. Furthermore, they were united in their belief that justice systems in particular and our institutions more broadly need to be transformed by putting people at the centre of their activities and enabling them to resolve conflict in a respectful and positive way.

Talking about the impact of the project on individuals prompted delegates to use such words as ‘remarkable’ and as enabling people to ‘see each other as human.’ The power of restorative dialogue cannot be underestimated and those involved in this project are determined to do what they can to spread the word of this power to as many victims of crime as is possible. To conclude the conference on Friday evening, PF Italy organised a tour of the beautiful city of Rome before hosting a meal for the project partners. It was clear

that there have been many bridges built between those involved in this project and that those bridges will lead to further collaboration in the future.

In concluding his address, Professor Luciano Eusebi reminded us that we were learning to live in harmony with the planet and must now learn to live in harmony with each other. Building Bridges provides scientific evidence of the potential of restorative justice to achieve this goal.

Further information on the Building Bridges project and conference materials can be accessed by visiting <http://restorative-justice.eu/bb/publications-links/>

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Calendar

Criminal Justice Platform Europe *Radicalisation and violent extremism — mentoring, religious care, inter-agency cooperation* 26 April 2016 Barcelona, Spain. Further information from [Euopris](#)

Victim Support Europe 2016 Annual Conference *Taking victim support to the next level: Connect & Commit* 25–26 May 2016, Muntgebouw, Utrecht, Netherlands. Further information from [VSE](#)

European Congress *Restorative and therapeutic justice: towards innovative models of justice* 16–18 June 2016, Donostia — San Sebastián, Spain. English programme from the [EFRJ](#)

9th International European Forum for Restorative Justice Conference *Realising restorative justice: human rights and personal realities* 22–24 June 2016, Leiden, The Netherlands. Early bird registration is until 15 April 2016, papers must be submitted by 31 March and registration closes on 1 June! Further information from the [EFRJ](#)

European Forum for Restorative Justice and the Asia Pacific Forum for Restorative Justice, with the support of Istanbul Bilgi University *The East meeting the West: Ideas on the development of Restorative Justice* 5–7 September 2016, Istanbul, Turkey Further information from the [EFRJ](#)

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