

DIGICOR

Digitalisation in Corrections
Recidivism Reduction

Inmate Telephony

Scenario Description



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DIGICOR Digital Scenarios

Recognising the marked resistance of European penitentiary services towards technological modernisation, the Digital Scenarios seek to directly influence senior officers and those responsible for the operational management of penitentiary settings by aggregating and disseminating innovative and evidence-based practices in the field of digital readiness in prisons.

Raising these stakeholders' awareness regarding the benefits of well-implemented digital solutions in the prison setting, namely in what concerns inmate rehabilitation, will contribute to enhancing the prison services openness towards modernisation.

Scenarios to be developed:

Inmate communications

- Scenario 1: Telephony
- Scenario 2: Videocall and video visitation
- Scenario 3: Secure e-mail/text messages/digital letters

Education and e-learning

- Scenario 4: e-learning and access to online resources

Digital self-service solutions

- Scenario 5: implementing integrated digital self-service solutions

Training and treatment using Virtual and Augmented reality

- Scenario 6: Inmate's treatment and training using VR
- Scenario 7: Officers training using VR and AR

Videoconference with courts

- Scenario 8: Implementing videoconference systems with courts

Telemedicine

- Scenario 9: Implementing telemedicine

Offender and Case Management Systems

- Scenario 10: Implementing offender and case management systems

Electronic monitoring in prisons and probation

- Scenario 11: Implementing an EM project (RFID and GPS)
- Scenario 12: Implementing an EM project (mobile phone)
- Scenario 13: Implementing an inmate monitoring system in a correctional environment

Smart Prisons and digital transformation in corrections

- Scenario 14: Implementing a "Smart Prison initiative"

Artificial Intelligence in corrections

- Scenario 15: Using AI and xAI in prisons and probation

DIGICOR Digital Scenario Form

Scenario #: 1 Inmate Telephony

Problem/problems that it aims to solve:

Over the past decade, research has consistently shown that regular contact of inmates with their relatives/friends positively affects their behaviours and significantly contributes to social reinsertion and reducing recidivism.

Several studies highlight that incarcerated people who have supportive relationships with their families/friends are more likely to avoid engaging in illegal activities while serving a sentence, end their criminal careers, and are therefore less likely to relapse.

Description of the solution:

Telephony regarding prisons can be solved in several ways:

- Telephones on the landings or in Kiosks that are easily accessible to inmates.
- Telephones in the cells.
- Softphones on a digital device in the cells or in Kiosks on landings.
- Mobile phones that are provided to certain categories of inmates.

Expected benefits:

For the organisation and staff:

- Reduces tensions between inmates and staff.
- Reduces the smuggling and the use of illegal phones.
- In cell phones/mobile phones reduce the staff's need for accompanying and monitoring inmates while on phone calls outside the cell in corridors/yards and reduces the likelihood of flashpoints.
- Staff are freed up to do more high-value duties.

For the inmates:

- Positively affects the behaviours of inmates and significantly contributes to social reinsertion and reduction in recidivism.
- Reduces tensions and conflicts between inmates.
- Allows inmates to maintain relationships with their families/friends
- Reduces the likelihood of engagement in illegal activities while serving a sentence.
- Reduces recidivism.
- Where in cell phones are installed/mobile phones provided allows inmates increased privacy and allows for the making of calls at a time convenient to the inmate and his/her family/friends.

Evidence of effectiveness:

Empirical evidence shows that increased availability of secure communication has positive impacts on prison security, reducing tensions and conflicts, reducing the number of illegal mobile phones and their attempted entry - often generating corruption, debt, violence, and extortions inside and outside the prison environment (Bredin, S., 2018). Several studies highlight that incarcerated people who have supportive relationships with their families/friends are more likely to avoid engaging in illegal activities while serving a sentence, end their criminal careers, and are therefore less likely to relapse (Glaze, L. & Maruschak, L., 2008; Shinkfield, A. & Graham, 2009; Duwe, 2021).

Key phases of the implementation:

Phases of implementation will vary depending on the extent of the project undertaken. The list below outlines some of the key phases for a successful implementation.

- Extensive market soundings are undertaken to ensure best-of-breed solutions.
- Consideration is given to having a Proof of Concept and/or Pilot Phase to ensure that the requirements are fully understood and agreed upon.
- Funding for the project will be dependent on the option chosen for example:
 - Will the provider develop an end-to-end solution and recoup the costs from the inmates/family? Note that where the provider is required to provide an end-to-end solution this may impact the tender duration.
 - Will the jurisdiction provide part of the solution for example the infrastructure and equipment?
- A comprehensive tender process is undertaken once the requirements are agreed upon.
- Buy in is obtained from Senior Management, Staff and Staff representatives through extensive engagement.
- Communication to ensure the benefits are understood by management, staff and inmates.
- A change management exercise is undertaken and local champions of change are put in place.
- Where the inmates will be charged for the calls that a cost benefit exercise is undertaken to ensure the chosen solution will both pay for itself and be fair to the inmates and their families in terms of the price to utilise the system.
- The project is carefully planned and managed from start to finish.
- Clear and agreed objectives are outlined so it is understood what success means.
- Post project reviews are undertaken.

Key success factors:

It is recommended that before undertaking any project of this type that it is understood what helps to ensure a successful project.

- Clear and clearly articulated project goals.
- A comprehensive and detailed Project plan.

- Early definition of deliverable quality criteria.
- Active senior management support with a shared vision throughout the project's life.
- A fully representative Project board in place from the start of the Project.
- Carefully planned Project implementation.
- Concise, consistent, complete, and unambiguous business and technical requirements.
- Realistic cost estimates and Project schedules.
- Early risk analysis and ongoing risk management.
- A clearly defined business process change management implementation plan.
- Proactive Project issue resolution.
- Stakeholder involvement throughout the Project life cycle.
- Defined and consistently executed Project management to minimize scope increases.
- A skilled Project Manager experienced in the execution of project management best practices.
- Execution of a formal Project development methodology.
- An experienced implementation team(s).

Key risk factors:

Key risks to note are:

- No proof of concept and/or Pilot Phase to ensure that the requirements are fully understood and agreed upon.
- Depending on the option chosen the funding requirements for the project are not agreed upon or understood. Will the provider fund the project and recoup the costs over time from the inmates/family or will the jurisdiction fund or part fund the project?
- If the inmates and/or their family/friends are to pay for the calls no consideration is given to the rates to be charged resulting in overcharging.
- No clear understanding of the market options available that potentially lead to a poorly tendered solution.
- Lack of buy-in from Senior Management, Staff and Staff representatives.
- No change management and/or local champions of change.
- Systems are not properly secured leading to abuse by inmates.
- Lack of proper project planning.
- Insufficient engagement to ensure the benefits are understood by management, staff and inmates.
- No clear and agreed objectives for the project.

Jurisdictions in which it has been implemented:

Most countries in Europe have implemented some form of telephony solution for inmates in their prisons. In the past number of years, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom have all implemented in-cell telephones. Ireland has also

commenced the implementation of in-cells telephones throughout its prison estate. Some jurisdictions in Europe are also implementing inbound as well as outbound calls to inmates and some are providing an inmate voice messaging service.

Specific Regulations to consider:

These will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction it is therefore recommended that an exercise to consider the specific regulations in your jurisdiction is undertaken as part of the pre-project planning phase.

For example, in some jurisdictions inmate calls can be recorded while in others they cannot be recorded or can only be recorded by court order.

Estimated implementation period:

This will vary depending on the extent and complexities of the project undertaken. It is recommended that a detailed project plan is developed and agreed upon in conjunction with the selected service provider.

Estimated cost:

This will vary depending on the option chosen. Will the provider fund the project and recoup the costs over time from the inmates/family or will the jurisdiction fund or part fund the project? It is recommended that detailed market soundings are undertaken in advance of tender commencement to gain an understanding of potential solutions that best suit the requirements of the jurisdiction. The tender process itself will also serve to ensure the most economic and advantageous solution is obtained.

Useful resources:

Bredin, S. (2018). Correctional reform in France: more prison places, fewer incarcerations. Interview: Stéphane Bredin Director General of the Prison Administration, France. 3rd Edition, June 2018. Pp.34-39. Available: <https://justice-trends.press/correctional-reform-in-france-more-prison-places-less-incarcerations/>

Mateus, R. (2021): Challenges and priorities for the Portuguese prison system... And the ongoing transformation despite COVID-19. JUSTICE TRENDS Magazine, Edition nr7, June 2021. Available: <https://justice-trends.press/challenges-and-priorities-for-the-portuguese-prison-system-and-the-ongoing-transformation-despite-covid-19/>

Examples from the UK, France, and Portugal: "In-cell phones for more prisons in drive to cut crime". Available in: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/in-cell-phones-for-more-prisons-in-drive-to-cut-crime> ; "La prison de la Santé rouvre équipée brouilleurs et de telephones fixes". Available in: <https://www.lepoint.fr/justice/la-prison-de-la-sante-rouvre-equipee-de->

brouilleurs-etde-telephones-fixes-07-01-2019-2283773_2386.php; “The government will install 150 telephone booths in the prisons”. Available in: **<https://tvi24.iol.pt/sociedade/ministra-da-justica/governo-vai-instalar-150-cabines-telefonicas-nas-prisoas>**; “The government approves new law to install phones in prison cells”. Available in: **<https://www.sapo.pt/noticias/atualidade/governo-aprova-decreto-sobre-instalacao-de>** **630797a5c9a1265914db1c0f**

Main suppliers:

There are several suppliers in the market. The following list serves to give examples of some of the European service providers. It is recommended that jurisdictions carry out detailed market soundings in advance of project commencement to gain an understanding of the market suppliers in their area.

- National telecom companies (incumbent TelCo)
- Telio
- Unilink
- Via Path
- Securus
- Synergy



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