

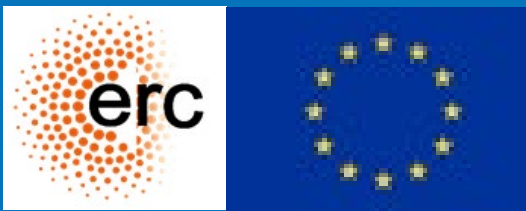


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Vulnerable Prisoners: The Use of Complaints Procedures and Monitoring Mechanisms.

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PRILA



Overview

Usage of
Complaints in
Prison

Experience of
Complaining

Awareness of
Monitoring
Mechanisms

Views of
Monitoring
Bodies

Implications
for Oversight
in Prisons



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Complaint Usage and Experience of Complaining



Brief Overview of Irish Complaints Procedure

- Complaint System introduced by Prison Rules (Amendment) 2013 S.I. No. 11/2013 (only outlines Cat A and Cat B procedures)
- Complaints categorised from category A to F – according to seriousness/nature of complaint
- Complaints can also be directed to the Minister for Justice, Director General, Visiting Committees or can make requests at the Governor's Parade

For Office Use Only	Categorised by:	Category of Complaint	
Name:	<input type="text"/>		
Grade:	<input type="text"/>		
Date:	<input type="text"/>	Complaint Number:	<input type="text"/>
COMPLAINT FORM			
Name:	Prisoner Number:	Cell / Location	
Details of your complaint:			
<hr/>			





Complaint Usage

■ Have not complained ■ Have complained



Difference	No Difference
Length of sentence	Age
Protection Status	Nationality
	Education Level
Level on Privilege Regime (Basic, Standard, Enhanced)	Prison



Experiences of Complaining

[Complaining] was not worth the hassle, they win in the end.

I'd rather try sort things out by the word of mouth, do you know by going to someone and talking about it.

Futility and Powerlessness

Stoicism

Relationships and other methods of resolving disputes

Fear of Reprisals

I just think complaint forms anyway are for little weasel people like, do you get me. I wouldn't do that like.'

if you complain and you are being ... If you're annoying them all the time and you're complaining about stupid things, you're just making life hard for them. They make life hard for you. They can make life difficult for you.





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Awareness and Experience of Inspection in Prison



Inspection and Monitoring Bodies in Ireland

Inspector of Prisons



- Established in 2007
- Carries out Inspections in all Irish Prisons
- Oversight role of the complaints mechanism

Visiting Committees



- Established in 1925
- One committee per prison of 6 to 12 laypeople
- Report on specific prison and investigate individual complaints

European CPT



- Established in 1989 by Council of Europe
- Visits across CoE states and reports to government
- First Irish visit in 1993
- Most recent visit September 2019





Prisoners' Perceptions of Oversight

Low Awareness

Almost 70% of respondents aware of Visiting Committees

About 1/2 of respondents aware of the OIP
1/4 were aware of the CPT

Engagement

Only 7% had met the Inspector
Only 2% had met the CPT

Trust and Credibility



You could make trouble for yourself in here and to me the quietest way is the best normally.

[Inspectors] always come when prisoners are locked up

Low Trust Environment

Visibility

Understanding the Inspection Process

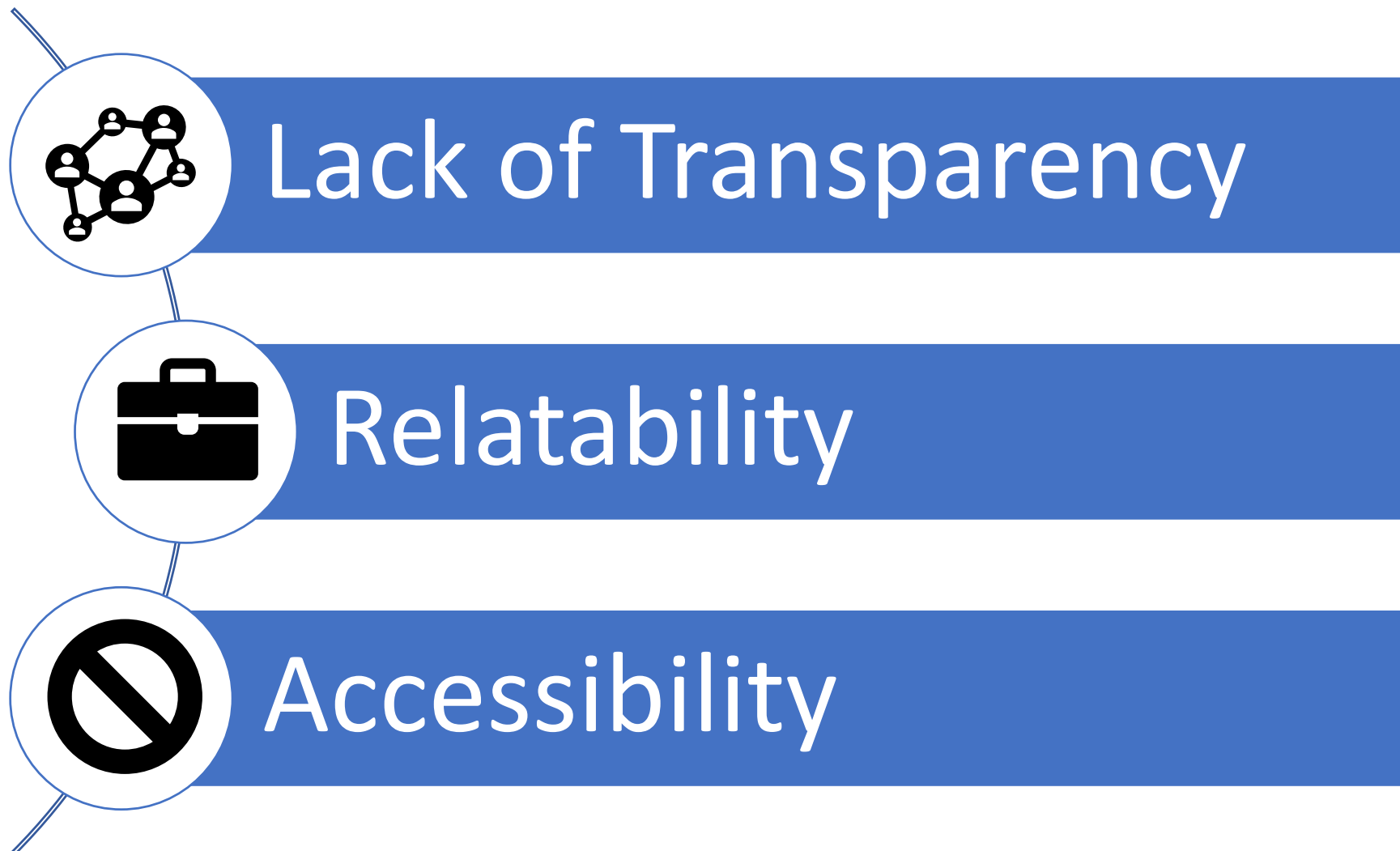
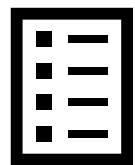
Survival tactics

...in prison you have to have your wires around you like, you know, you have to watch what you are saying.





Widening the Gap between Human Rights Protection and Experiences



Whose Voice Counts?



Everyone is made well aware of it [the inspection].
The place is painted and refurbished and made to look like a hotel when it is not an actual proper representation of the rest of the prison and they are brought into that section and made interact with prisoners who are trustees who are not going to act in any sort of a way.

**Not being
seen**

The prisoner's a fucking liar. Sure the man's in prison, isn't he? **How would you believe him.**

**Not being
believed**





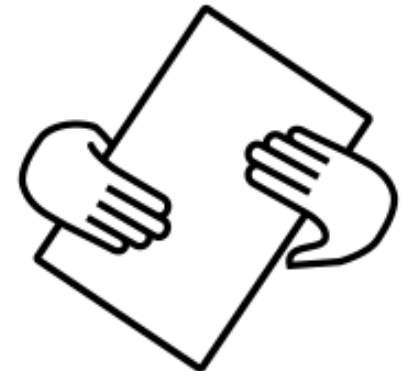
Wasted Agency



[J]ust, I don't know, just listening, 'cos no one seems to be listening.

Well I would only go to him if I know ... if I had a good chance of winning my case.

- Opportunities in prison
- Worth speaking up
- Challenging authority



Overcoming Barriers

- ✓ Trust Building
- ✓ Inclusion
- ✓ More than data sources
- ✓ Strengthening Engagement

[The Inspector] called to the prison a good few times like and spot checks as well like, you know and he done a report there as well like you know, on the place and **he even called to the cells to see guys and ask how they were getting on like.**

... the Inspector did spot a few things in [the prison] that needed sorting out like, you know, and he included it in his report like, which I thought made a big difference, you know what I mean like.





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Thank you

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